

The University of Massachusetts Amherst recognizes that many of our incoming students would benefit from learning more about all majors offered on campus that may be a good fit for their academic interests and aspirations. To this end, the university has implemented an exploratory track program to better serve students who are either undecided with their choice of major or did not receive direct acceptance into their first-choice major. The exploratory track program will assist students with their consideration and ultimate declaration of a major based on their interest, eligibility, and academic proficiency.

Students in the exploratory track program will benefit from working closely with academic advisors to explore potential majors within their collegiate unit and across campus. Students in this program will also participate in academic programming, including a first-year seminar, embedded within their school or college.

EXPLORATORY TRACKS

BUSINESS (INVITATION ONLY)

A select number of students who apply to the Isenberg School of Management but do not receive direct acceptance will be admitted to the business exploratory track. These students will explore their interests in business including the majors offered by Isenberg. Students in this exploratory track will be advised on appropriate coursework and requirements to be considered for Isenberg and will receive advising assistance on other majors across campus that have a business flavor and may be appealing to students given their interests and academic proficiency.

COMPUTING AND INFORMATICS (INVITATION ONLY)

A select number of students who apply to the computer science major or the informatics major but do not receive direct acceptance will be admitted to the computing and informatics exploratory track. These students will explore their interests in a variety of fields within computing and informatics (the application of computing and information systems). These fields include computer programming, networking, cybersecurity, and big data, and new fields such as multimedia, learning technologies, digital forensics, and health informatics. Students in this exploratory track will be advised on the appropriate coursework and requirements needed for admission to the computer science or informatics major, as well as on other majors across campus where they may pursue their interests in computing.

EDUCATION

The education exploratory track is for students interested in education as a career path in a variety of settings (e.g., formal, informal, or international). Students who are thinking of pursuing a career in teaching in early childhood, English as a second language, elementary, special education, or secondary education levels (i.e., mathematics, science, English, and history), or an advanced school professional career, such as reading specialist, school counseling, and school psychology, will benefit as well from the exploratory track in education. Students will be exposed to potential careers in education, learn about licensure requirements, and explore secondary majors that align with their career interests.

HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS

The humanities and fine arts exploratory track prepares students to be citizens in a rapidly changing world by challenging them to be creative, express themselves, and engage with others. By exploring an array of languages, music, art forms, ideas, stories, and shared human experiences, students are transformed into innovative problem solvers and thinkers ready to tackle careers in a myriad of fields, including business, law, medicine, and education. This exploratory track allows students to discover a major that allows them to pursue their passions—in history, art, literature, design, music, language, and many other fields—while gaining valuable skills. Striking this unique balance allows today's students of humanities and fine arts to develop useful and durable skills that are invaluable to employers for careers as creative individuals in a wide range of professions.

NATURAL SCIENCES

The natural sciences exploratory track is ideal for students who enjoy experimental sciences and testing hypotheses. Students can explore the life and physical sciences, as well as applications in areas such as the natural environment, the built environment, agriculture, and medical and healthcare professions. Investigating sciences from neuroscience and human and animal behavior to galaxies, from microbes to mathematics, from food safety to ecosystems, and from molecules to geological strata and climates, students exploring the natural sciences are curious investigators and data analyzers.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SCIENCES

The public health and health sciences exploratory track encourages students to discover how they can promote healthy communities, provide health education, and improve quality of life in diverse populations. Students are provided the opportunity to explore the fields of communication disorders, kinesiology, public health sciences, nutrition and other areas of interest that support their personal and career goals. Students interested in the quantitative, scientific, and behavioral aspects of population health and wellness; working directly with individuals and communities to maximize health education; or contributing to health policy and management will find the public health and health sciences exploratory track to be of interest.

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

The social and behavioral sciences exploratory track bridges the sciences and liberal arts by educating students interested in the areas of culture, society, and individual behavior while promoting global citizenship and engagement. Students explore their interests in social issues, policy, politics, economics, public service, legal studies, communication, journalism, and sustainable community development. In this track, students can explore College of Social and Behavioral Sciences majors, minors, and concentrations (e.g., economics, managerial economics, public relations, and communication) that build essential business knowledge and a broader understanding of leadership.

For more information and updates, visit umass.edu/admissions/exploratory-track-program.