

Things to consider when choosing a minor specialisation

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One of the important decisions you'll be making during your undergraduate studies is choosing a minor specialisation. This is one of the less talked-about aspects of university, although it plays a significant role in your academic journey. You may find it difficult to select a minor specialisation due to uncertainty, a lack of information, and a lack of exposure, time, and resources. Since I have struggled with this overbearing dilemma myself, I am here to assist you in sifting through the myriad of options and reaching a decision.

To start, it's necessary to consider your passions and interests. Your minor specialisation should be aligned with your professional and personal goals. Spend some time thinking about the topics that truly interest you. What are your strongest suits and favourite hobbies? Think about how a specific minor specialisation can advance your expertise in the area you've chosen. Remember, your minor should complement your major for a well-rounded education.

Another important consideration is the relevance and advantage of the minor specialisation. You can boost your employ-



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ability by selecting an in-demand subject. Examine the market for experts in your desired fields to see how it can help your career. Many vocational fields are better suited to emerging industries or sectors with high growth potential.

I learned the hard way that pursuing a minor in subjects that genuinely interest you is equally important. I had initially chosen Sustainable Development as my minor because all of my peers did the same. With barely a few semesters left until graduation, I switched my minor to En-

glish Literature. Despite being concerned about developmental policies and the environment, I discovered that I enjoyed creative writing and literary analysis a lot more than field research, policy debates, and surveys. Some universities offer the same courses as open electives, so you can try out a few different courses from various specialisations to make a more informed decision.

Remember that your minor courses will require a significant amount of your time and effort, which is especial-

ly true for students whose universities don't follow the open-credit system. To prevent having a negative impact on your overall academic performance, balance the workload with your major courses in some areas that may require extra effort. Discuss your interests and ambitions with academic advisors, seniors, and faculty members, and ask for recommendations based on your strengths. They may inform you about the curriculum, potential career paths, and possible research opportunities in your chosen field and provide you with their insightful opinions.

Choosing a minor concentration for an undergraduate degree is an important decision that should be approached with caution. Your minor opens doors to additional knowledge and abilities, increasing your versatility and adaptability to the job market. This means that your major does not always limit you to a specific career route or determine the course of your profession. If you choose wisely enough, you may as well discover a career that wasn't in your original plan, so don't be afraid to explore your options, and seek advice when necessary.

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History, fascism, and the hijacking of children's fairy tales

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Long before the television was created or books were made widely accessible, stories, like fairytales, were one of the prominent forms of entertainment available to the vast majority of people. Reality was harsh, and these stories allowed them to escape it and venture forth into distant worlds of romance and adventure.

Many children grew up without receiving any form of formal education, and to them, fairytales were not just a vehicle for the imagination but also an introduction to the dangers of the world and the accepted moral standards of the time. With the evolution of society from the feather quill to the laser printer, fairy tales too have changed to suit the times.

It was the 1930s, a time when xenophobia and nationalism ruled Germany. To fit the vision the Nazi party had for Germany and its youth, Joseph Goebbels, the Reichminister of Propaganda, had many such tales remodeled to fit the Nazi narrative. In these fairytales, the Little Red Riding Hood wears a coat adorned with swastikas, and Snow White's father is one of the German commanders leading the invasion of Poland. Snow White herself and Cinderella would be made to represent the ideals of Aryan beauty and racial purity, while the evil witch and cruel



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stepsisters would embody the anti-Semitic stereotypes associated with the Jewish race.

In the east, the military elite of Imperial Japan would incorporate local legends and folktales into propaganda to convince the citizenry of the "righteousness" of their expansionist endeavours. In, *The Tale of Momotaro*, the demons of Onagashima were used to portray the British, Americans, Chinese, or Russians, while the heroic Momotaro represented the Japanese government. Momotaro's animal companions were meant to showcase the ideals of steadfast loyalty that future Japa-

nese citizens were expected to live by.

In the Cold War era, the Soviet Union was also known for using modified versions of Russian folktales. These were not just for domestic consumption, as the Soviets translated and exported these all over the world. Such fairytales were markedly different from western ones. The focus was on the common peasant, the impoverished Ivan as he always triumphed over the evil, greedy Czar. While the stories themselves weren't overly political, the real objective was always to bring up a generation of global youth sympathetic to the Soviet cause.

Fairytales, no matter how innocuous, serve as an effective method of delivering ideology. There is no accident in this. Children and youth are highly impressionable, and the biases formed in those formative years can dictate the sort of life a person may lead in the future.

Such tactics may seem like relics of the 20th century, but one can never really know for sure. To differentiate between what is innocent and what is not often proves to be a tricky business indeed. Awareness, therefore, is of the utmost importance.

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