

# ACADEMIC EXPLORATION PROGRAM

---

## For Students Exploring Majors

Carolyn M. Makey, Director

[www.niagara.edu/aep](http://www.niagara.edu/aep) (<http://www.niagara.edu/aep/>)

The Academic Exploration Program (AEP) helps students identify their interests, abilities, and values to make an educated and confident major selection. As a 2015 Outstanding Institutional Advising Program Award winner recognized by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), AEP strives to provide the most innovative and best advisement for students. Consequently the program attracts 15-20 percent of the incoming freshman class each fall. Advisers in AEP provide a supportive environment that encourages student academic success and aids in the transition to college life.

### Mission

The mission of the Academic Exploration Program is to provide a learning experience using resources from all areas on campus. Through individualized guidance, AEP creates an environment that fosters self-discovery. Students participate in the exploration process in order to select a major that supports their career goals.

### Goals

The goal of the Academic Exploration Program is to provide students with a systematic approach for discovering their interests, develop a career plan, and select a major. AEP also provides students with information regarding campus programs and resources to enrich their college experience. AEP's ultimate goal is to empower students by providing opportunities to foster independence.

### Program

Students have the opportunity to meet with a professional adviser as often as needed. During these appointments the adviser and the student explore the student's strengths and passions, in addition to their volunteer and work experiences. Together they select courses that allow the student to research areas of interest while fulfilling university requirements.

The exploration process begins with a questionnaire and a computer assessment. Students also have the opportunity to interview university professors and career professionals. In addition, they may participate in campus career fairs, complete online research, or attend a class lecture in a prospective major and discuss what they learned with their adviser. By narrowing down their major interests the adviser can provide students with suggestions for further review.

Students select AEP as their major upon application to the university. Individuals who have selected a major and have the required grade point average may transfer into their desired major at any time during the first two years. Students may also transfer into AEP from another major, college, or university if they have less than forty-five credit hours.

AEP helps students make life changing decisions and affirms their individual talents. It is a great way to sample the rich variety of academic life before declaring a major. Students will receive support, resources and guidance throughout their entire time in the program.