

# KEY META-MAJOR QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

## PLANNING

Does the college want to implement meta-majors?

What are the college's goals? Or What problem is the college trying to solve?

- How will the college measure success? What data is available?
- Does the college need an evaluation?

What building blocks are already in place (e.g., first year experience, orientation, mapped pathways, etc.)?

What related technical software and hardware infrastructure is currently in place (e.g., SIS, LMS, early alert, course dev, placement and scheduling)?

- What are the opportunities and barriers?

Who will lead this implementation?

- Will they be supported by a committee?
  - Which internal stakeholders need to be involved?
  - Which external stakeholders need to be involved (e.g., K12 and employers, accreditors)?

Which other stakeholders need to know about this?

- What stakeholder perceptions exist (e.g., faculty, advisors, leadership)?
  - Are there influential champions or resisters?

What is the communications strategy?

- What are the college's key rationale, messages and evidence base for this implementation?
- What communications vehicles exist that can be used (e.g., newsletter, web site, committees)?

How much will it cost to implement? Examples of costs include faculty release time, purchasing new advising software, etc.

- What sources of funding are available?
  - Are there opportunities to braid funding across internal and external partners?

How does the college's broader environment (e.g., state or college policy) support or inhibit meta-majors?

- What related policies are already in place (e.g., admissions, placement, transfer, etc.)?
- Does the college need to conduct an institutional policy audit?

**REVIEW OF PROGRAMS**

What is the full scope of programmatic offerings at this college?

Do the college's programs align to the local labor market and/or transfer partner? Has the college validated its program offerings with employers?

Do the college's programs align to the local four-year transfer partner?

What are the high-level program groupings?

- How many meta-majors make sense for this college?
- Are there any low-performing programs that should be eliminated?

Which general education courses align best to each meta-major?

- What are the common courses across all programs?
- What is the required core within this meta-major that allows students to branch off into various majors without losing any credits?
- Which courses will introduce students to relevant faculty and career information early in their academic careers?
- Which courses might not be included, and who needs to be involved in that decision?
- Of the many electives we offer, which are recommended or required for each meta-major?

How can the college integrate developmental education to ensure it serves as an on-ramp into meta-majors for students?

- Does the college contextualize developmental education?
- Does the college offer accelerated developmental education options?
- Does the college offer differentiated math pathways aligned to meta-majors?

What type of curriculum governance model is required to guide decisions about meta-majors, course sequences, and future revisions?

- What type of documentation and tracking is required to ensure consistency?

STUDENT  
INTAKE

How will the college place students into meta-majors?

How does the college communicate meta-majors to prospective students?

Will mapped pathways be presented to students as their default registration?

How will the college present mapped pathway requirements to students?

- How does the college work with feeder high schools to align student pathways (e.g., dual enrollment, early college, early remediation, etc.)?
- How does the college work with adult basic education providers to align student pathways (e.g., basic skills support, non-credit coursework, etc.)?
- How does the college work with the workforce system to align student pathways (e.g., training programs, work-based learning, etc.)?

How does the college communicate meta-majors to entering and matriculated students?

- Is there a college-wide orientation that includes an introduction to meta-majors?
  - Is orientation mandatory?
  - What aspects of orientation are delivered in person and which online?
- What other means of communication should the college use (e.g., embed into application, add to web site, etc.)?

How does the college help students make informed choices about meta-majors?

- Does the college integrate career counseling into early advising sessions?
- Does the college have career assessment tools that align with the college's meta-majors?
- Does an advising session happen during orientation?
- Is advising mandatory before a student can register or at ongoing milestones?

How does meta-majors placement align with developmental education placement?

- Are there self-serve resources for students that are aligned with and compliment advising services?

What type of staff education, training, and documentation is required to ensure consistency?

## KICKOFF

What happens once students choose a meta-major?

Do orientations, first-year experience courses, and student success courses align to the meta-major?

Does the advising infrastructure align to the meta-major?

- Are professional advisors and faculty adequately trained on program requirements?
- If students transition from centralized advising to faculty advising, how seamless is that transition?
- Are there required advising milestones during the first semester?

What types of early career counseling experiences are aligned to the meta-major?

- How does the college introduce students to specific majors within the meta-major (e.g., medical imaging within allied health)? Does the college use activities like job shadowing, program overviews, or employer visits that tour various functions of a facility (e.g., floors of a hospital)?
- Do students engage in any of these experiences in the first semester?
- Are these experiences part of their major requirements or optional?

How will the colleges enforce pathway requirements to ensure progress?

- Does the college use an educational planning software to keep students on track in their mapped pathway?
  - Does the planning software offer recommended course schedules for each semester?
  - What happens if a student registers for a course that is off map?

## PROGRESS

How does the meta-major infrastructure facilitate improved student progress and persistence in their pathway?

What support services can improve retention for this meta-major?

- Do students have regular, mandatory check-ins with advisors?
- Are students required to use tutoring services for challenging courses?
- How do students develop relationships with the faculty?
- Are there student groups or activities designed to build camaraderie on the student cohort?

What work-based learning opportunities are relevant for each meta-major?

- At what point in the meta-major do these opportunities occur?
- Is work-based learning a requirement for the meta-major?

At what point in their academic career will students choose their major?

- By the halfway point for the major?
- After 30 credits or the appropriate milestone for the major, e.g. the first certificate?
- What automated triggers are appropriate for students and advisors?

Are industry-recognized credentials built into the major?

- At what point would we encourage students to pursue certifications appropriate to this major?
- Are students offered test prep activities?
  - Is this mandatory?