My Strategic ACADEMIC PLAN

Name:_____ Date:_____

StarID: _____ Current Major:_____

All MNSU students are encouraged to create a Strategic Academic Plan that includes planning for their current major and a parallel plan for an alternate major/program. Parallel plans are vital in the event a student's interest and career plans change, or a student is unable to gain admission to a particular major. Creating a parallel plan is about preparing for all the possibilities! Having a parallel plan will allow you to pivot with ease to your alternate major/program and complete a meaningful degree in a reasonable timeframe. Work through the next 5 steps to develop your Strategic Academic Plan.

Step 1: Self-Awareness

Reflect on the following questions:

- What interests me in pursuing my current major?
- What courses do I most enjoy?
- What courses am I most successful in?
- What courses do I dislike or have struggled in?
- What values are important in my life?
- What activities do I enjoy? When am I at my best?
- What types of problems do I enjoy solving?
- What are my top skills that I feel most confident in?

Resources to Help:

- ◆ Handbook for Students Choosing and Changing Their Major (pages 2-32)
  - ◆ http://www.mnsu.edu/cdc/majors/handbook/

- ◆ Take Career Assessments. The FOCUS is FREE!
  - ◆ http://www.mnsu.edu/cdc/assess/

- ◆ Visit the Career Development Center
  - ◆ http://www.mnsu.edu/cdc/

What did you learn?

List 3 of Your Interests	List 3 of Your Values	List 3 of Your Skills
1)	1)	1)
2)	2)	2)
3)	3)	3)

Step 2: Explore Alternate Majors & Programs

Reflect on the following questions:

- What other majors/programs/careers have you considered?

- What types of courses would you prefer not to take?

- What is your preferred work environment after graduation?

- What other majors align with your interests, values and abilities?

- What are some occupation titles for another major of interest?

- What are some examples of employers for another major of interest?

Resources to Help:

- ◆ Browse the Academic Catalog for other MNSU majors, minors and their requirements and visit the department webpages.
  - ◆ https://mankato.mnsu.edu/academics/academic-catalog/

- ◆ Review **What Can I Do With this Major?** website for outlines of marketable skills, possible work settings, and career paths for many different majors.
  - ◆ http://www.mnsu.edu/cdc/majors/

- ◆ Speak with professors and academic advisors to learn about the requirements for alternate majors or programs.

What did you learn?

Write down the alternate majors or programs you're considering developing your Parallel Plan for.

1)

2)

3)

Alternate Major	Area of employment/employers of interest

Step 3: Gather Occupational Information

Reflect on the following questions:

- What qualifications are employers seeking for job titles that interest you?

- What transferable skills have you gained from your classwork, jobs and extracurricular activities that can be applied to another career of interest?

- What additional experiences should you engage in to enhance your understanding of another career and make you a more marketable candidate?

Resources to Help:

- ◆ Read job descriptions on ONET https://www.onetonline.org/

- ◆ Use informational interviewing & job shadowing to learn how others got hired.

- ◆ Attend career fairs and other networking events on campus.

- ◆ Explore summer job, volunteer and internship opportunities.

- ◆ Get involved in student organizations and seek out leadership roles.

- ◆ Launch Your Career! http://www.mnsu.edu/cdc/launch/

What did you learn?

Career	Likes	Dislikes

Step 4: CURRENT MAJOR PLAN

Go to the Academic Catalog   https://mankato.mnsu.edu/academics/academic-catalog/ to review degree requirements for your plan.

My Current Major is: _____

Required GPA for Admission:_____

Targeted GPA:_____

Current GPA: _____

Notes:_____

Most majors require a minimum cumulative GPA for program admission, but some majors also use a specific GPA calculated from the required pre-requisites. Although minimum GPAs are listed in the Academic Catalog, these may be far lower than the average GPAs needed for program acceptance. Consult with an academic advisor to ensure you receive the most accurate information regarding admission.

How competitive is your current choice of major? ☐ Not Competitive ☐ Fairly Competitive ☐ Competitive

How certain are you about this choice of major? ☐ Very Certain ☐ Fairly Certain ☐ Not Certain

How confident are you in your ability to achieve this goal? ☐ Very Confident ☐ Fairly Confident ☐ Not Confident

What courses will you need to take over the next three semesters?

1st	2nd	3rd
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____		

What are the pros and cons of pursuing your current major plan?

Pros: _____

Cons: _____

What is your Pivot Point?
At what point will you change to your alternate major/program & follow your Parallel Plan?

For example:
- Will you change if you earn lower than a C grade in your pre-requisite course(s)?
- Will you change if you are less interested in this major after completing the introductory course?

I will pivot to my Parallel Plan when : _____

_____

Step 5: PARALLEL PLAN

My Parallel Plan is: _____

Required GPA for Admission:_____

Targeted GPA:_____

Current GPA: _____

Notes:_____

Most majors require a minimum cumulative GPA for program admission, but some majors also use a specific GPA calculated from the required pre-requisites. Although minimum GPAs are listed in the Academic Catalog, these may be far lower than the average GPAs needed for program acceptance. Consult with an academic advisor to ensure you receive the most accurate information regarding admission.

How competitive is this strategic parallel plan? ☐ Not Competitive ☐ Fairly Competitive ☐ Competitive

How certain are you about this choice of major? ☐ Very Certain ☐ Fairly Certain ☐ Not Certain

How confident are you in your ability to achieve this goal? ☐ Very Confident ☐ Fairly Confident ☐ Not Confident

What courses will you need to take over the next three semesters?

1st	2nd	3rd
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What are the pros and cons of pursuing this parallel plan?

Pros: _____

Cons: _____

How will you know this choice is right for you?

Follow up contacts for this Parallel Plan: