Choosing a major:
A message to my younger self
By: Monica Murphy, Student Marketing Assistant

I wanted to know what I wanted to do right out of high school; I wanted to be graduated with my bachelor’s degree by the time I was 21. I had a set plan and I wanted to stick with it. But that’s not how it ended up, and that’s not the path I took. I took a detour.

Right out of high school I thought I knew what I wanted to do; I thought graphic design was my calling. I loved art, I loved hands-on experiences, and it seemed like the path for me. But class after class I took, I wasn’t happy, and I wasn’t doing well; I knew something had to change. That something was my major. A year and a half and 50 credits later, I finally changed my major to marketing. I was stressed, upset, and didn’t even know if I wanted to be in school anymore. I had to face the setbacks in front of me—another two years, only to get my associate’s degree, then another two years to obtain a bachelor’s degree. Did I really want to stay in school if it was going to take longer than I expected?

I decided to stick it out; I pushed through it. I obtained my associate’s degree, and this May I will graduate with my bachelor’s degree. The best part? Because I changed my major, I found what career path will make me happy, and I found what I am great at doing. Because I pushed through that bump in my road, I have gained countless opportunities and experience. I have held two internships, an actual job, and was accepted into NKU’s marketing agency. All this happened because I chose to take a detour. My life, my career path, and my future will exceed everything I thought it could be because I made a positive change for myself.

To my younger self, and to any student struggling to choose a major, who had a path and a plan that they didn’t want to change, I’m here to tell you that it is okay to take a detour; it is okay to change plans.

“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.”
-Charles R. Swindoll
Spotlight on a major

Major: Respiratory Care

What it is: Most people take breathing for granted. It's second nature, an involuntary reflex. But for thousands of Americans who suffer from breathing problems, such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and cystic fibrosis, each breath is a major accomplishment. Respiratory Care Practitioners deliver breathing treatments, under the direction of a physician.

What you can do with it: Respiratory care practitioners are members of the health care team that provide treatment for patients with heart and lung disorders. Tasks include:

- application of sophisticated life support mechanic ventilation to premature infants with under developed lungs
- giving oxygen and drugs to children with asthma
- measuring lung capacity for individuals with emphysema
- handling a variance in level of illness and setting of patients, from the emergency room to the patient's home
- balancing interpersonal skills with work in science and technology

Where you can work: Critical care, home care, rehabilitation, diagnostics subacute care. Clinical affiliations include Mercy Health, St. Elizabeth, UC Health, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Tri Health, and The Christ Hospital.

How you can get started: The Respiratory Care Program admits up to 20 students each fall through a selective admission process, including an academic screening, criminal background check, and proof of immunizations. For a complete list of admissions requirements, visit the Respiratory Care website.

The above information was provided by the Respiratory Care website. For more information, visit healthprofessions.nku.edu.