The Albright Alpha Program  
(For Undecided / Undeclared Students)

Some students enter college knowing exactly what they want to major in and exactly what career field they want to enter upon graduation. For many, however, things are a little less certain – they may need to explore different possibilities to find the right fit. If the second profile describes you, then Alpha Program at Albright College is designed specifically for you. Through academic guidance, peer support, special events and career counseling, the Alpha Program will help you to choose the appropriate major, as well as assist you in finding a fulfilling career.

- What Does It Mean to Be "Undeclared?"
- What Can You Expect As an Alpha Student
- Listen to Our Graduates
- Alpha Events
- Alpha Proactive Advising Syllabus
- Advising Self-Profile Survey
- Alpha Resources from the Experiential Learning and Career Development Center (ELCDC)
- 4-Year College Career Plan from the ELCDC

If you have questions about the Alpha Program, contact the Director of the Center for Experiential Learning and Career Development or the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

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What Does It Mean to Be “Undeclared”?  

Alpha, the first letter in the Greek alphabet, symbolizes a beginning. First-year college students experience one of the most exciting and, at the same time, potentially bewildering "beginnings" of their lives. The Alpha Program is meant to serve the needs of the many students who have yet to settle on a major, for whatever reason – perhaps you have a difficult time choosing among many interests; or you want to explore some options before deciding on a program; or maybe you feel pressured to choose a major but don’t feel ready.

Albright wants to emphasize that it’s fine for students to enter college without a clear idea of which academic program they wish to pursue and what their ultimate career will be. Even those who enter with certainties often find themselves in transition between majors more than once as their studies progress. Nationally, about 70% of students end up changing their major. Being undeclared and/or undecided isn’t a cause for panic, for you or your parents! The opportunity for academic exploration is a unique life opportunity, and it is central to the educational experience at a liberal arts college like Albright.

[Read More](#)

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What Can You Expect as an Alpha Student?  

The Albright Alpha Program is available to all first-year and sophomore students who have not declared a major. Each Alpha student is assigned a
faculty adviser specially chosen to counsel undeclared students and help them
learn about the programs of study the College offers, the careers these may
lead to, and their own interests and goals. Alpha’s goal is to help students
explore the world of knowledge and themselves in order to make better
informed choices among academic concentrations.

Gradually Alpha students define their academic interests more clearly and
select a major that will provide learning in depth to complement the learning in
breadth which comes with a liberal arts program’s general education courses.
The Alpha Program facilitates this process.

One tool is regular meetings with your Alpha adviser, who together with the
Registrar and others can work with you to select a program which provides
broad exposure to many different fields and keeps curricular options as open
as possible. Even more than for other students, Alphas should make regular
appointments with their adviser, whom they should fully use as a resource. The
adviser will assist in choosing courses in a wide variety of academic disciplines.
In doing so you will also meet a diverse group of faculty, who present new
knowledge and new perspectives, and have the opportunity for many contacts
with peers with whom you can share experiences and exchange ideas.

The Experiential Learning and Career Development Center (ELCDC) is a
key part of the Alpha “toolbox,” helping students identify their strengths and
interests, learn about potential careers, and even undertake internships that
help them define their goals. The Center offers career assessment/testing,
welcomes one-on-one appointments with students, and sponsors events like
those described below. The ELCDC also supports a course designed especially
for Alphas: the for-credit SPI 125, Career Decision Making.

Events for Alpha students sponsored by the ELCDC may include things like the
following:

• a panel of former students who relate their experiences in choosing a
  major or career
• What Can I Do With A Career In….events and other alumni networking
  events for students to engage with alumni to learn more about their college
  majors, careers, and the world of work
• a virtual or on-site “fair” that brings together faculty from many different
  academic departments for information about their discipline and the
  careers they often lead to
• a small panel of faculty might discuss particular academic programs at
  Albright
• sessions to take an interest-defining survey instrument and discuss the
  results
• other speakers or activities especially pertinent to the interests and needs
  of undecided students

The Alpha Program cultivates self-direction and responsibility in its students as
well providing assistance and opportunities. Another tool is the “Alpha Advising
Syllabus,” which sets some self-guided expectations for you to meet in order
to be more intentional about your academic progress and to maximize the
resources available to you as an Alpha student, such as adviser meetings and
ELCDC events. Another is an advisee “self-profile survey” that can give your
advisor useful information about your academic history and habits.

Individual counseling is always available from your adviser, the ELCDC, or
others in Academic Affairs such as the Academic Learning Center or Dean.

Once you have declared a major, you will be assigned an adviser from that
academic department. However, many Alpha students find that their Alpha
adviser remains a welcome resource for them throughout their career at
Albright.

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**Listen to our graduates**

“When I started at Albright, I was clueless. The Alpha Program really came
through for me. With my advisor’s help, I put together a diverse academic
program that gave me a broad background and a push in the right direction. I
gained a liberal arts foundation that I depend on every day in my business, and
in my life.”

*Steve Topp*

*Major: Business Management;*

*President, Marchon Eyewear - On Top Corp.*

“The Alpha Program helped me explore Albright’s academic possibilities and
let me try a little bit of everything before I picked my major. I ended up taking
courses I wouldn’t have tried otherwise. One in particular, an interdisciplinary
study in the Bahamas in biology and chemistry, shaped my decision to become
a biology major. Alpha is something that is unique to Albright, and it certainly
weighed in my decision to come here.”

*Andrew Coviello*

*Major: Biology/History*

“I owe a lot to Albright and its Alpha Program. I had a strong interest in political
science when I started there, but I also like psychology. The Alpha Program
enabled me to thoroughly explore the curriculum to decide which major best
suited me. Of course, there’s much more to Alpha. My advisor and I had a
lengthy discussion about the law and political science which inspired me to go
on to law school. Alpha really takes you where you want to go.”

*Alison Carrigan, J.D.*

*Major: Political Science, Summa Cum Laude*

*Judicial Clerk, State of NJ*

“I didn’t want to pick a major that I might later change, so Alpha was perfect
for me. I knew I was interested in art, but I wasn’t sure whether I wanted to be
only an art major or to add another major. Through Alpha, I hooked up with a
professor in communications who told me his field would work well with my art
focus. My advisor was fabulous and always there for me.”

*Andrea Verdone*

*Major: Art/Communications*
Alpha Events – Fall 2016

• **Come Chill with the ELCDC (Ice Cream) - September 7 from 2:30-4:30 pm at Geiser House (across the street from Smith Hall and next door to the Gable Health & Counseling Center)** This is your chance to speak to fellow students and the staff of the Experiential Learning and Career Development Center while enjoying a tasty treat.

• **Study Abroad 101 – Thursday, September 15 at 4 pm; Tuesday, September 27 at 4 pm; Wednesday, October 12 at 4 pm; Thursday, November 3 at 4 pm; Tuesday, November 15 at 4 pm. All Study Abroad 101 sessions will take place at Geiser House.** Have you ever thought about traveling abroad to take college classes or complete an internship? Learn about location options, financial aid and how to make your dream into a reality!

• **All About ACRE – Tuesday, September 20 @ 4 pm in Geiser House.** Ever wonder what this ACRE business is all about? Come find out! Maybe you can work on a project with a faculty mentor and get PAID for it!

• **Accounting Night – September 21 from 6 – 8 pm in Roessner Hall Lobby.** Have you ever thought about a major in Accounting? Come talk to students, faculty and employers to learn about what it means to be an accounting major and the career opportunities that exist.

• **Experiential Learning Panel Discussion & Expo – Wednesday, September 28 at 6 pm in the Campus Center South Lounge.** Talk to fellow students about their recent internship, study abroad or ACRE experiences. Learn how an internship, study abroad/off campus and/or undergraduate research/ACRE can help you fine tune your major and/or career direction.

• **The "Major/Career Test" (Interest Inventory) – Thursday, September 29 at 4 pm in the Library Media Classroom; Wednesday, October 26 @ 4 pm in the Library Media Classroom** The "Major/Career Test," a.k.a. Strong Interest Inventory, is used to assist students in discovering interests and the majors and careers that may be compatible with these interests. Students who are undecided or who are considering changing majors often take the assessment to assist in the process. Students will take the assessment at this time and will be required to schedule an individual appointment with a career counselor to go over the results.

• **How to Choose Your Major – Monday, October 24 at 3pm & 4 pm in Geiser House.** Explore what goes into making this decision.... interests, skills, values, and more. Learn about what resources can help you make your decision (including career assessments, career counseling, informational interviews, and internet and book resources).

• **All About ACRE – Fall 2016 TBD (across the street from Smith Hall and next door to the Gable Health & Counseling Center)** Ever wonder what this ACRE business is all about? Come find out! Maybe you can work on a project with a faculty mentor and get PAID for it!
• **Virtual Major Fair – Entire Month of October online** at www.albright.edu/elcdc/cd/ Research major options at Albright through online resources including links to “What Can I Do with a Major In . . .”, the academic department websites, course descriptions, and obtain contact information for faculty within each department for additional information and support.

• **Service After Albright – Tuesday, November 15 from 1 – 3:30 pm in the Campus Center South Lounge.** This is your chance to learn about different service opportunities that are available to you upon graduation from Albright. Representatives from Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, City Year and Teach for America will be available to speak to you.

• **Like Albright College Experiential Learning and Career Development Center on Facebook for days/times/locations of all of our events!**