Dear Students,

Major Declaration week is almost here! Remember that, if you are still undecided, you have a few more opportunities to explore the Major Open Houses of several academic departments and programs.

As you consider your options, ask yourself the following questions:

- What sort of questions do I want to ask and try to answer?
- What sort of problems do I want to try to solve?
- What information about myself, my community, the world or the universe do I want to know — and why do I think it's important to know it?
- What is the major that will allow me to do all of that?

Allow these questions to guide your decision, so you can reflect about the ways you think and work. By the time you graduate, you'll be able to explain to all sorts of people why your major — and your experience of it — has prepared you to be a valuable participant in your communities, organizations and professions.

Your major is going to provide you with an intellectual community of professors and classmates, while also giving you a way to make sense of the world through a particular way of thinking. So don't think of the major as a part of a formula that equals a specific job or career; instead, think about it as your intellectual home while you're at Columbia. When you understand more about why that subject is so meaningful to you, you'll also know more about the kind of work that you want to do when you graduate and move beyond the gates.

And if you're still not feeling certain about whether you've found the right home or not, try not to worry too much as you take your first steps into the major. If you find yourself inspired in a different direction next semester, you can always talk with your adviser in the Berick Center for Student Advising about your options for switching majors or concentrations.

Best wishes for this next step of your Columbia College journey!

Sincerely,

Lisa Hollibaugh
Dean of Academic Affairs
Columbia College