

Meet Our Majors

A Guide to Adding “Meet Our Majors” Profiles to Your Department Website

A Meet Our Majors profile is a short interview with a student who graduated (or who is on course to graduate) with a major in your department. Any department can add Meet Our Majors profiles to their websites to highlight for prospective students the experience they can expect when they pursue a major in your discipline.

You can see an example of Meet Our Majors profiles at the education department’s website: <https://calvin.edu/academics/departments-programs/education/meet-our-majors/>

What’s the purpose of Meet Our Majors profiles?

Meet Our Majors profiles serve two useful purposes:

1. They let prospective students meet real students from your department, and get a sampling of the diverse personalities, interests, and stories they’ll encounter if they choose to pursue a major in your department.
2. They answer the question “What can I do with my major?” by showcasing actual graduates whose Calvin education prepared them well for life and a career after college.

What appears in a Meet Our Major profile?

Each profile consists of:

1. A photo of the major being featured
2. A short set of interview questions highlighting the major’s experience in your program

The profiles are all linked to from a central page that will be listed as Meet Our Majors in the navigation menu of your department website.

How do we add Meet Our Majors profiles to our department website?

Follow these steps to add this feature to your website.

1. Contact Andy Rau (jar42@calvin.edu) at Communications and Marketing to express your interest, and to ask any questions not answered by this document.
2. Conferring with your department, select candidates for your profiles. We recommend 3-5 profiles. For advice on choosing majors to profile, see **Who Makes a Great Meet Our Majors Profile?** below.
3. Prepare a short list of questions to ask each person you're profiling. For some suggested questions, see **What Questions Should We Ask?** below. You're welcome to modify our suggested questions or come up with new ones of your own as you see fit.
4. Contact each person you want to profile and send them your questions. You should also ask each person to provide a high-quality horizontal photo of themselves to appear on their profile page. See **How Should We Contact Our Majors?** below for an example email you could send to them.
5. When you receive answers and photos from each person, you're ready to add them to your website. See **How Do We Add Profiles To Our Website?** below for a step-by-step guide to doing so.

Who Makes a Great Meet Our Majors Profile?

Your department is best equipped to select the best current or former students to profile. However, the best profiles usually match one of these descriptions:

- A former student who graduated with a major in your department in the last 1-5 years
- A current student who is on track to graduate with a major in your department in the next 1-2 years

It's up to you who to feature—so if you want to feature a major who graduated many years ago and has a compelling story to tell, you can! But keep in mind that prospective students will be most interested in people and stories that related to the Calvin experience and career environment that they themselves will be facing in the near future. That's why we recommend either current students or recent graduates.

What Questions Should We Ask?

You can ask any questions you like, but they should highlight the major's experience in your department and, if applicable, the effect that experience has had on their post-college life and career. Here is a template that you could adapt:

Section 1 (Answer all that apply)

Preferred name:

Major(s):

Minor(s):

Hometown(s):

Grad year (or expected grad year):

Current job/graduate school and location (if graduated):

Section 2 (Choose three questions to answer)

1-3. *Department-specific questions. Consider question like: What was the best part of being in this department? What was a class in this department that particularly affected you? What was your interaction with professors like in this department? What was something unexpected you discovered about this discipline?*

4. What's one thing you would want to tell someone starting their journey at Calvin?

Section 3 (Choose two questions to answer)

1. *For graduates only:* What about Calvin specifically prepared you for where you're at now?

2. How has your faith grown at Calvin?

3. What part of Calvin's mission resonates with you, and why?

4. What's one thing that surprised you about Calvin?

Section 4 – current students only (Please answer as many as you'd like)

1. What is your favorite space on campus, and why?

2. Describe Calvin in three words or less (or in 140 characters).

3. Did you receive any scholarships or financial aid at Calvin?

How Should We Contact Our Majors?

Feel free to adapt the below email for your own use.

Hello <major name>,

I'm contacting you because professors from the <department name> department suggested you as a <graduate/student> with a story worth telling. Would you be willing to share your experience with us?

We're adding a new feature called "Meet Our Majors" to our <department> website. We're featuring short Q&A's with current students and recent graduates, to give prospective students a glimpse at the personalities and experiences they'll encounter as a <department name> major.

We would love to include you in this project. If you're interested, would you be willing to do the following:

1. Answer the attached questions about your experience at Calvin and in our department
2. Provide a high-quality horizontal photo of yourself to appear online alongside your answers

If you could send these to me by <date>, that would be very helpful. Thank you for joining with us to showcase your Calvin experience! We look forward to sharing your story.

<signoff>

How Do We Add Profiles To Our Website?

Once you've received answers and photos from your featured majors, it's time to add them to your department website. Follow the steps below to do so, and feel free to contact Andy Rau (jar42@calvin.edu) with any questions or problems you encounter along the way.

To begin, log into dotCMS (<https://www.calvin.edu/go/c>).

1. Create each profile in dotCMS.
 - a. Go to the **Content** tab in dotCMS.

- b. Click the **Add New Content** button in the top right.
- c. Select **CC – Article** from the list that pops up.
- d. Fill out the following fields:
 - i. **Title:** the name of the major you’re featuring.
 - ii. **Summary:** a compelling one-sentence summary that describes the major. Include their graduation year if possible. Example: *“Studying literature wasn’t the plan for Isabelle Selles '19, but excellent professors and compelling courses led her in a new direction.”*
 - iii. **Feature image:** upload the photo of this major.
 - iv. **Body:** this is where you’ll put the questions and answers with this major. Paste the Q&A’s for this major into this field.
 - v. **Source:** select Meet Our Majors from this dropdown.
 - vi. **Misc Data 1, 2, 3, and 4:** these fields should contain the following information respectively:
 1. **Misc data 1:** the major that this student studied
 2. **Misc data 2:** the minor that this student studied
 3. **Misc data 3:** the student’s graduation date
 4. **Misc data 4:** the student’s hometown
- e. Click the **Relationships** tab in the upper left.
 - i. Scroll down the page to the **CC – Department** section of this page.
 - ii. Click **Relate**.
 - iii. Search for your department using the search tool. Click the checkbox next to your department’s listing and click the **Relate** button.
- f. Click the **Content** tab in the upper left.
- g. Click **Save/Publish** in the **Actions** panel on the left side of the page.

Repeated this process for each of the majors you want to profile. Once you’ve done so, you’re ready to add them to a page on your department website.

To do so, first decide what page you want the profiles to appear on. You can list Meet Our Majors profiles on any page you want, but we strongly recommend creating a new page called Meet Our Majors to serve this purpose. Create the page following the instructions for creating pages in the dotCMS documentation, then follow these steps:

1. Once the page has been selected and is ready, lock it for editing in dotCMS and click the **Add Content** button in the top left.
2. Choose **Add Widget** from the dropdown options that appear.
3. Select **CC – Meet Our Majors** from the window that pops up, then press the **Create New CC – Meet Our Majors** button in the top right.
4. In the widget screen that appears next, there are just two pieces of information to supply:
 - a. **Widget Title:** type the name of your department (i.e. “English”) into this field.
 - b. **Department:** click the Click Here to Select Categories link, then find your department in the resulting list. Click the green arrow to the left of your department name, then click the **X** button in the top right to close the window.
5. Click **Save/Publish** in the **Actions** panel on the left side of the page.

Your Meet Our Majors profiles should now appear on your department website! If they don't, and you aren't sure why, contact Andy Rau for assistance.