



THINKING ABOUT YOUR MAJOR AND YOUR CAREER

by the student editors of ***FISHING FOR A MAJOR***,
a Students Helping Students™ book

Unless you go to a vocational college—in which case you’re clearly there to learn specific skills for a certain career—you shouldn’t think of your major as a way to prepare for a certain job after you graduate. Think about it as a way to explore a particular field in depth, to learn something, and to gain skills you can use in any career.

"Don't think that because you want to go into business that you have to study business. If you want to be an artist, you don't necessarily have to study art. When I look at a resume, I don't look for a particular degree. I ask myself, what can this person bring to the job that no one else can? I can teach you to use business software; I can't duplicate the kind of growth you get from four years of college."

**Branch Manager, Ford Motors, Inc.,
Music major,
Alabama State University '71**

Just because you take and love every psychology class offered in the curriculum doesn’t mean that you’ll love being a psychologist. And not doing well in your econ class doesn’t mean that your dream to become an entrepreneur is any less real. (In fact, many people working in business today don’t have business or economics degrees. Music and history majors often end up as branch managers or entrepreneurs, and they thrive in their positions.)

Try not to worry about knowing what you want to do after college, at least for a few years. You’ll have all the time in the world—including the last few years of college—to think about and figure out what your post-college job might be. But you won’t have another opportunity like this to really explore different academic fields, learn the different skills that they offer, and train your mind to think about things as different as art history and statistics. An English class won’t completely prepare you for a career in publishing, but it will teach you how to write well, and that’s a skill that you definitely want to acquire.

If you choose a major that truly interests you and pushes you to learn, you’ll gain a huge set of skills that you can then use in any career. It sounds so idealistic, but it’s true. Employers don’t expect you to start your first job knowing exactly how to do it—on-the-job training is a core learning component that almost all careers offer. But employers do expect you to be a well-rounded person, have solid writing and communication skills, and the ability and training to learn new things and excel at them.

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For more helpful suggestions from students and recent grads on how to evaluate your options, choose your major, find the best classes, use the advising system, and much more, visit www.StudentsHelpingStudents.com and check out the Students Helping Students™ guide titled ***FISHING FOR A MAJOR***, available at bookstores and online stores, such as Amazon.com.