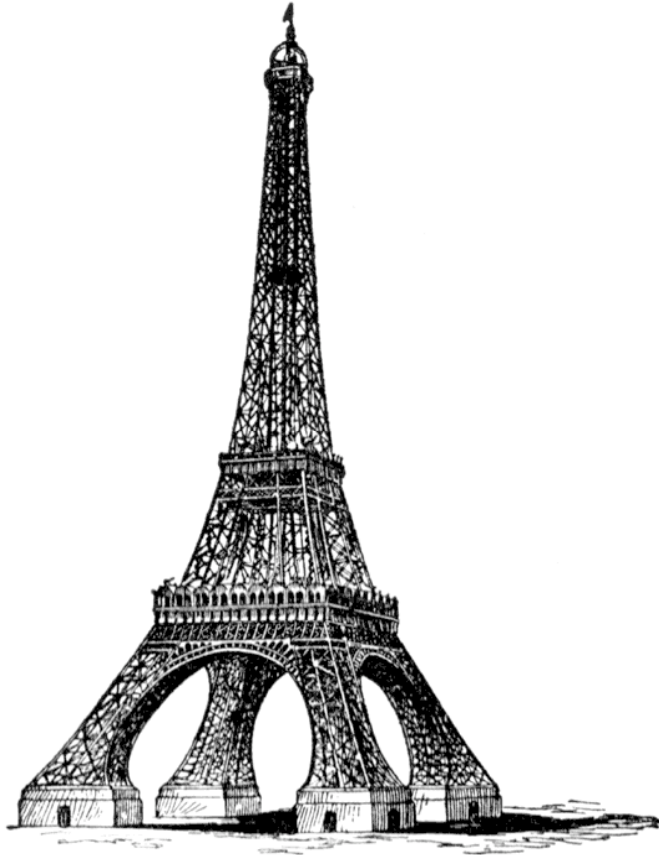


French Career Chat



Office of Career Development

Vassar College

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Steps In Choosing A Career

First Step: Self Assessment: “Know Thyself”

1. Understand and relate your personality traits to career choices
2. Define your personal values
3. Determine your economic needs
4. Explore longer-term goals
5. Understand your skill base
6. Identify your preferred skill base
7. Express a willingness to improve

Strategies for self-assessment may include meeting with a Career Counselor, taking interest inventories such as the Strong Interest Inventory or the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, or working through the exercises in any one of a number of books in the CDO library, including *What Color Is Your Parachute*.

Second Step: Research Career Options

Once you have established a base of self-knowledge, the next step is to create a knowledge base of opportunities available and begin the your interests to a career.

Strategies for researching career options include:

- Informational interviewing and networking with professionals in areas that may be of interest to you
- Talking with Vassar alumnae/i and utilizing V-NET
- Utilizing job listings through eRecruiting and in the CDO
- Surfing the Internet for career options and information—including Spotlight on Careers, CareerSearch, and Vault.com
- Participating in internships or job-shadowing experiences
- Scanning job listings for positions that sound interesting
- Joining and attending professional organizations or association meetings, conferences, and networking opportunities
- Reading trade journals

Next Step: Job Search

A job search involves:

- Creating a strong resume and cover letter
- Developing lists of contacts and target organizations
- Applying for positions
- Interviewing
- Doing follow-up

Career Counselors here at the CDO are ready and available to assist you through the entire process. The Career Development Office library and website also contain various handouts, books, articles, journals, etc. that could aid you in this process.

Job-hunting takes time and energy! This varies, of course, depending on the field, preparation, and dedication of the job seeker. Geographic flexibility also significantly impacts one's job search. Many occupations today require a college-educated individual who can write and speak well, solve problems, learn new information quickly and work well with others on a team. This means that college graduates use their education in a wide variety of fields, and your future career may relate more to your personal career interests, work values, and transferable skills than any specific academic major.



What About Graduate School?

<http://careers.vassar.edu/advice-graduate-school/>

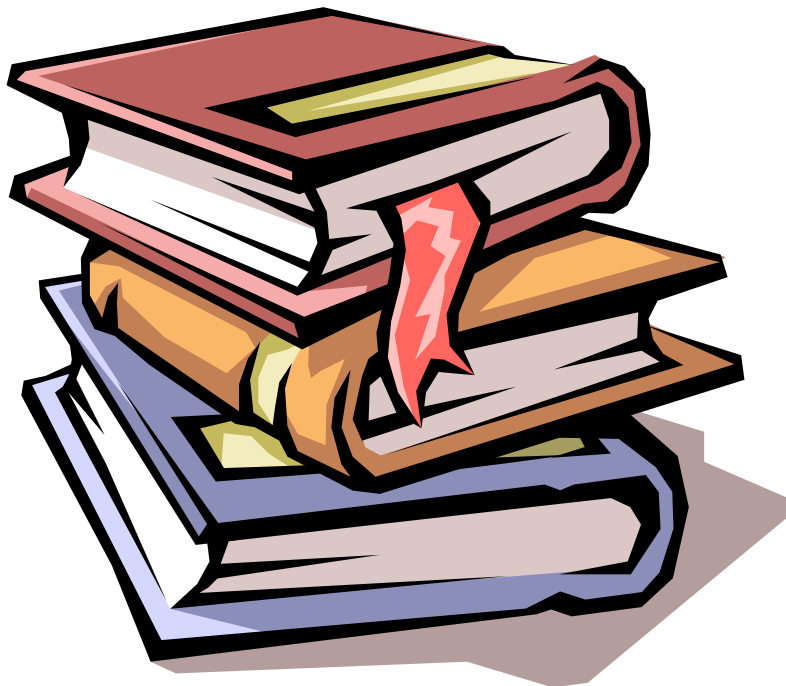
The reasons for continuing one's education in graduate school can be as varied and unique as the individual. Many continue their studies at an advanced level because they simply find it difficult to end the educational process. They love what they are learning; they want to learn more and continue their academic preparation. Others go on to graduate school for purely a practical reason: their area of interest requires an advanced degree.

It is important to carefully consider your reasons for going to graduate school. Graduate school involves additional time away from the employment market, a high degree of critical evaluation, significant autonomy as you pursue your studies, and a considerable financial expenditure. For some students in doctoral programs, there may be additional life choice issues, such as relationships, marriage, and parenthood that may present real challenges while in a program of study.

Think about the following questions when making this decision:

- Are you postponing tough decisions by going to school?
- Have you done some “hands-on” reality testing?
- Do you need an advanced degree to work in your field?
- Have you compared your expectations of what graduate school will do for you with what it has done for alumni of the program you are considering?
- Have you talked with people in your field to explore what you might be doing after graduate school?
- Are you excited by the idea of studying in the field you have in mind?

Graduate school is NOT a career choice—it is a tool to reach or advance your career goals. Be sure to ask yourself why you are going to graduate school and what you want to do with the degree.



French Alumni Career Choices

Here is a sampling of the many career paths Vassar alumnae/i have pursued with their undergraduate degree in French (may have pursued further education). Some of these career choices are closely related to their major, while others are not. If you would like to talk to alumnae/i and ask them questions about their careers, feel free to use the V-NET database through the AAVC website at <http://www.aavc.vassar.edu>.

- Education – College/University**, Professor of French at University of New York – Albany, Class of 1968
- Education – Secondary**, Chair of the Modern Language Department at Belmont Hill School, Class of 1988
- Education – Secondary**, ESL Teacher at Fairfax County Public Schools, Class of 1972
- Federal Administrative Government**, Associate General Counsel at the Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Class of 1977
- Health Care Facility/Program**, Multicultural Education Program Coordinator at Planned Parenthood of Nassau County, Class of 2000
- International Relations/Development**, Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. Department of State, Class of 1982
- International Relations/Development**, Program Officer at the United Nations World Food Programme, Class of 2000
- Investment/Financial Service**, Director of Global Fixed Income Research at Standard & Poor's, Class of 1991
- Social Change/Human Rights/Animal Rights**, Special Advisor at the International Rehabilitation Council, Class of 1992
- Travel/Tourism**, Director at Travel Industry Associates, Ltd. – London, Class of 1989

CDO Library Resources for French Majors

The following books and many more can be found in the CDO Library:

- American Foreign Service Officer Exam* by ARCO, 2001.
- Careers for Foreign Language Aficionados and Other Multi-lingual Types* by Ned Seelye & Laurence Day, 2001.
- Careers in International Affairs* by Maria Pinto Carland & Lisa A. Gihring, 2003.
- Careers in International Business* by Edward J. Halloran, 2003.
- Career Planning Guide for International Students* by the International Careers Consortium, 2004.
- Directory of International Organizations* by Hans-Albrecht Schraepler, 1996.
- Educators' Passport to International Jobs* by Rebecca Anthony & Gerald Roe, 1984.
- Great Jobs for Foreign Language Majors* by Julie DeGalan & Stephen Lamberts, 2001.
- Harvard Guide to International Experience, The* by William Kingelhofer, 1989.

CDO Library Resources cont.

How to Find an Overseas Job with the U.S. Government by Will Cantrell & Francine Moddero, 1993.
Inside a U.S. Embassy by the American Foreign Service Association, 2005.
International Job Finder by Daniel Lauber, 2002.
International Jobs Directory by Ron Krannich
International Jobs – Where They Are, How to Get Them by Eric Kocher & Nina Segal, 2003.
International Voluntary Work by Victoria Pybus, 2005.
Internships in International Affairs by Career Education Institutes, 2004.
Jobs & Careers Abroad by Deborah Penrith, 2005.
Living and Working in France by David Hampshire, 1999.
Realities of Foreign Service Life by Patricia Linderman & Melissa Brayer Hess, 2002.
Working or Change – Making a Career in International Public Service by Derick W. Brinkerhoff & Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff, 2005.

French Related Websites

Vassar College Department of French: <http://french.vassar.edu/>
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages:
<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1>
American Institute for Foreign Study: <http://www.aifs.org/>
American Translators Association: <http://www.atanet.org/>
Bilingual Jobs: <http://www.bilingual-jobs.com/>
Careers in Foreign Languages:
<http://www.oswego.edu/student/career/careersin/foreign.html>
Careers Using Foreign Language Skills:
<http://www.cudenver.edu/Student+Life/Career+Center/Online+Career+Library/default.htm>
CDS International: <http://www.cdsintl.org/>
Foreign Policy Association Student Corner:
http://www.fpa.org/info-url_nocat2405/info-url_nocat.htm
*The International Educator (TIE): <http://www.TieOnline.com>
Modern Language Association: <http://www.mla.org/>
National Association for Bilingual Education: www.nabe.org
One Small Planet: www.onesmallplanet.com
Overseas Employment Opportunities: <http://www.escapeartist.com/jobs/overseas1.htm>
Overseas Jobs: www.overseasjobs.com
Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages: www.tesol.org
The Riley Guide – International Resources: <http://www.rileyguide.com/internat.html>
U.S. State Department: www.state.gov/employment/

CDO Resources: <http://careers.vassar.edu/resources/>

Graduate School Information

CDO Graduate School Career Briefs: <http://careers.vassar.edu/downloadable-handouts/>

CDO Website for Graduate Schools: <http://careers.vassar.edu/advice-graduate-school/>

GradProfiles: <http://www.gradprofiles.com/>

Gradschools.com: <http://gradschools.com/>

Language School Guide: <http://www.languageschoolsguide.com/search.cfm>

Peterson Guides to Graduate and Professional Schools: <http://www.petersons.com/>

PhD Info.org: <http://www.phdinfofind.org/>

Romance Languages & Literatures Program: <http://rll.buffalo.edu/rll/>

*Foundation Center Grants To Individuals: <http://gtonline.fdncenter.org/>

Internships

eRecruiting: <http://vassar.erecruiting.com/er/security/login.jsp>

You must attend an eRecruiting orientation with the CDO before you can access the site.

*National Internships.com: <http://internships.com/accessPremium.cfm>

*Internships USA: <http://www.internships-usa.com>

General Career Websites

*Career Search: <http://www.careersearch.net/vassar/>

eRecruiting: <http://vassar.erecruiting.com/er/security/login.jsp>

You must attend an eRecruiting orientation with the CDO before you can access the site.

*Going Global: <http://online.goinglobal.com>

*LACN (Liberal Arts Career NetWORK) Job/Internship Database:

<http://www.lacn-group.org/>

*MonsterTrak: <http://www.monstertrak.monster.com/>

Occupational Outlook Handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

Princeton Review's Guide To Your Career: <http://www.princetonreview.com/cte/>

Riley Guide: <http://www.rileyguide.com/>

*Spotlight On Careers: <http://www.spotlightoncareers.org/>

Vassar College Career Development Office: <http://careers.vassar.edu/>

*Vault.com: http://www.vault.com/cb/careerlib/careerlib_main.jsp?parrefer=397

Venture: http://www.theventureconsortium.org/public_interest/exploring.php

Wetfeet: <http://www.wetfeet.com/>

*Please refer to the updated CDO password sheet to access the site.