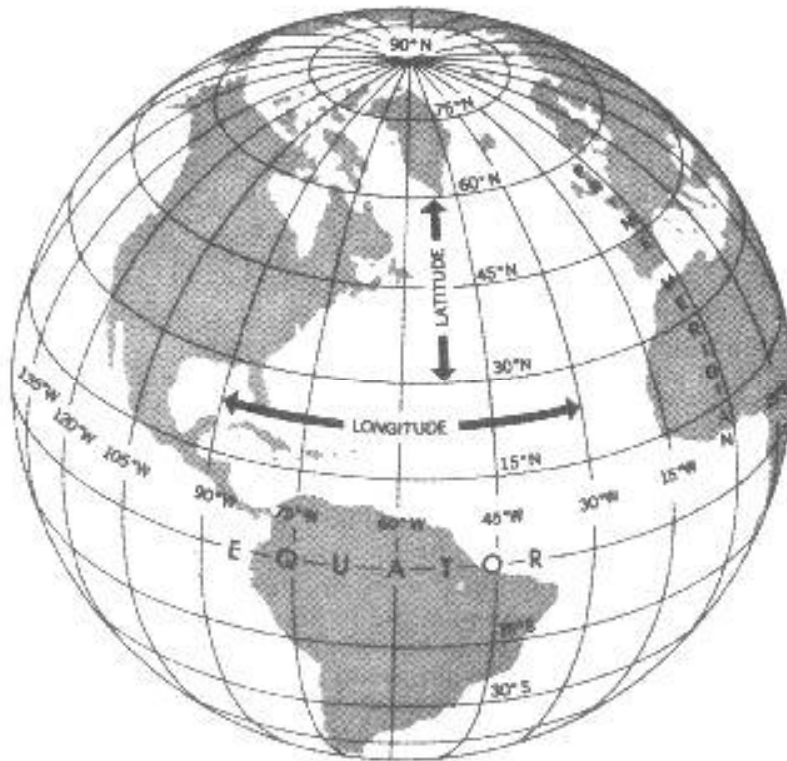


International Studies Career Chat



Office of Career Development

Vassar College

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<http://careers.vassar.edu>

Office Hours: Weekdays, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm and Wednesdays 7 – 9 pm

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/>

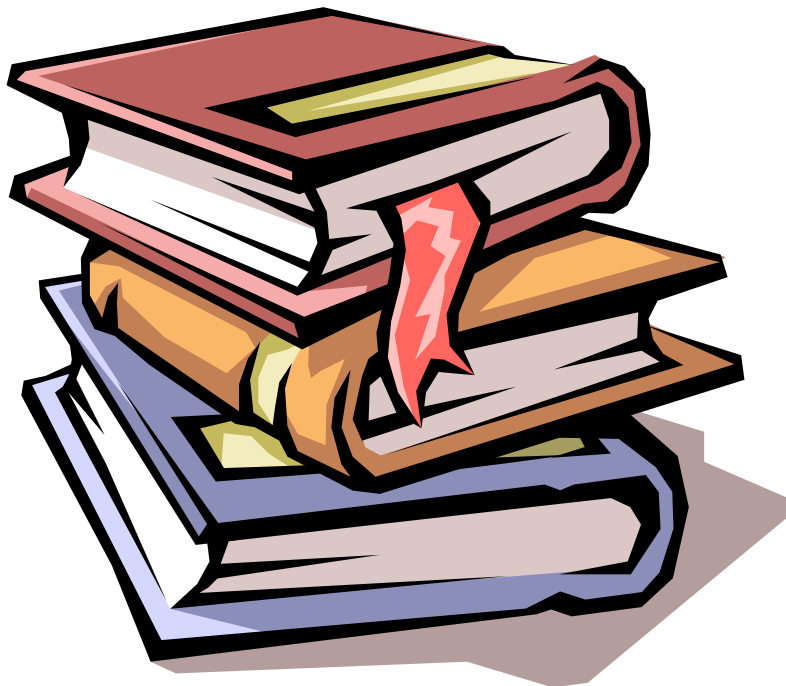
The reasons for continuing one's education in graduate school can be as varied and unique as the individual. Many continue their studies at an advanced level because they simply find it difficult to end the educational process. They love what they are learning; they want to learn more and continue their 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.



International Studies Alumni Career Choices

Here is a sampling of the many career paths Vassar alumnae/i have pursued with their undergraduate degree in International Studies (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>.

- Banking (Commercial/Retail)**, Manager of Bearbull International, Class of 1993
- Broadcasting**, Senior Paralegal at HBO, Class of 2003
- Community Service**, Project Associate at The Food Trust, Class of 2004
- Community Service**, Lead Facilitator of the Bronx Helpers Program at New Settlement Apartments, Class of 2004
- Education – College/University**, Program Assistant – International Studies & Scholars at Babson College, Class of 2002
- Education – Secondary**, ESL Teacher at Alexandra City Public Schools, Class of 1969
- Education Assoc/Foundation/Policy/Research Org**, Assistant Manager at the Institute for International Education, Class of 2003
- Federal Administrative Government**, Information Security Analyst at the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Class of 1995
- Federal Administrative Government**, International Attorney at the U.S. Department of Commerce, Class of 1995
- International Relations/Development**, Dougla Dillon Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, Class of 1990
- International Relations/Development**, Deputy Director of the Office of Economic Policy at the Bureau of East Asian & Pacific Affairs, Class of 1989
- International Relations/Development**, Program Manager of the Protection Department at the International Rescue Committee, Class of 1995
- Investment/Financial Service**, President and CEO of The Presidio Group, Inc., Class of 1993
- Judicial/Law Enforcement**, Investigator at the Civilian Complaint Review Board, Class of 1998
- Science Assoc/Foundation/Policy/Research**, Research Assistant at The National Academies, Class of 1999
- Social Change/Human Rights/Animal Rights**, Co-Founder/Executive Director of Journalists for Human Rights, Class of 2000
- Telecommunications**, Project Manager of Nextel International, Class of 1997

CDO Library Resources for International Studies Majors

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

- American Foreign Service Officer Exam* by ARCO, 2001.
Book of U.S. Government Jobs, The by Dennis V. Damp, 2002.
Careers for Foreign Language Aficionados and Other Multi-lingual Types by Ned Seelye & Laurence Day, 2001.
Career Opportunities in Politics, Government, & Activism by Joan Axelrod-Conrada, 2003.
Careers in International Affairs by Maria Pinto Carland & Lisa A. Gihring, 2003.
Careers in Law by Gary Munneke, 1997.
Choosing A Career in the Law by Dena O. Dekoff, 1991.
Guide to Homeland Security Careers Donald B. Hutton & Anna Mydlarz, 2003
Harvard Guide to International Experience, The by William Kingelhofer, 1989.
How to Find an Overseas Job with the U.S. Government by Will Cantrell & Francine Modderno, 1993.
Inside a U.S. Embassy by the American Foreign Service Association, 2005.
Inside The Law Schools – A Guide by Students for Students by S.F. Goldfard, 1993.
Internships in International Affairs by Career Education Institutes, 2004.
Law School Survival Guide, The by the Editors of JD Jungle, 2003.
Legal Career Guide: From Law Student to Lawyer by Gary A. Munneke, 2002.
Realities of Foreign Service Life by Patricia Linderman & Melissa Brayer Hess, 2002.
Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide by Stacy M. DeBroff, Esq., Jill P. Martyn, & Alexa Shabecoff, Esq., 2003
Working for Change: Making a Career in International Public Service by Derick and Jennifer Brinkerhoff, 2005.
Ultimate Guide to Law Schools – U.S. News & World Report by Anne McGrath and the staff of U.S. News, 2004.

International Studies Related Websites

Vassar College Department of International Studies:

<http://internationalstudies.vassar.edu/>

American Council for Voluntary International Action: <http://www.interaction.org/>

American Foreign Service Association: <http://www.afsa.org/>

American Translators Association: <http://www.atanet.org/>

Career Opportunities in International Studies:

http://www.cas.muohio.edu/%7Eadvising/Majors/intl_studies.html

Center for Strategic & International Studies: <http://www.csis.org/>

Council on Foreign Relations: <http://www.foreignrelations.org/>

Federation of International Trade Associations: <http://www.fita.org>

Foreign Policy Association: <http://www.fpa.org/>

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

International Studies Related Websites cont.

Graduate Fellowship for International Studies:

<http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/?p=132>

International Executives Association: <http://www.ieaweb.com/>

International Job Search: http://www.worktree.com/rm/rm_home.cfm

International Service Career Center: <http://www.pdx.edu/careers/>

International Studies: <http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/Depts/IGSD/IN/resources.html>

National Bureau of Economic Research: <http://www.nber.org/>

National Foreign Trade Council: <http://www.nflc.org/>

*The International Educator (TIE): <http://www.TieOnline.com>

Weatherhead Center for International Affairs:

<http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/prograd.asp>

WorkTree.com:

http://www.WorkTree.com/careerpages/mbr_j_intern.cfm?CFID=906432&CFTOKEN=61493604

World Policy Institute: <http://www.worldpolicy.org/>

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

Graduate School Information

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Foundation Center Grants To Individuals: <http://gtionline.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>

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

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.