

Neuroscience & Behavior Career Chat



Office of Career Development

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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

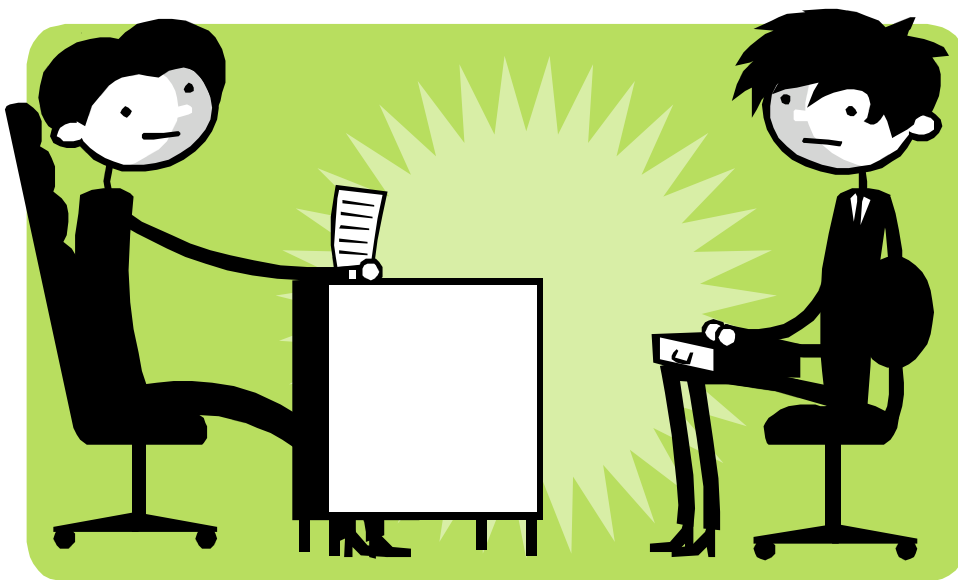
Next Step: Job Search

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/>

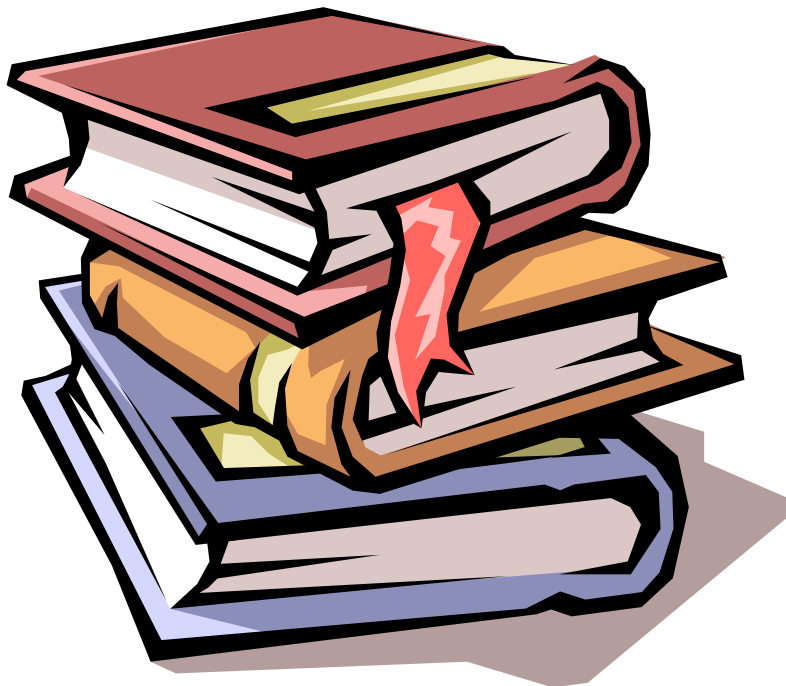
The reasons for continuing one's education in graduate school can be as varied and unique as the individual. Many continue their studies at an advanced level because they simply find it difficult to end the educational process. They love what they are learning; they want to learn more and continue their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



Neuroscience Alumni Career Choices

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

- Accounting/Auditing**, Auditor at Ernst & Young, LLP, Class of 1995
- Banking (Commercial/Retail)**, Director of Internet & ebusiness at Suntrust Bank, Class of 1986
- Community Service**, Development Consultant at Suppor, Class of 1986
- Computer Science/Information Systems**, Consultant at ISA Consulting, Class of 1985
- Counseling/Therapy/Mental Health Services**, Self-employed psychologist, Class of 1974
- Criminology/Penology**, Policy Analyst at the Office of Criminal Justice Coordinator, Class of 2000
- Education – College/University**, Postdoctoral Fellow in Neuroscience at Yale University, Class of 1998
- Education – College/University**, Professor at Dartmouth College (Dept. of Psychological & Brain Services), Class of 1991
- Education – Secondary**, Science Teacher at Averill Park High School, Class of 1986
- Education – Special Education**, Occupational Therapist at Warwick Public Schools, Class of 1978
- Health Association/Foundation/Policy/Research Org**, Programs Manager of the Medical & Health Research Association of New York, Class of 1989
- Health Association/Foundation/Policy/Research Org**, Research Fellow at the Institute of Child Health, Class of 2000
- Health Care Facility/Program**, Genetic Counselor at Beth Israel Medical Center, Class of 1995.
- Health Care Facility/Program**, Physician at the Neurology Group at Bergen County, Class of 1991
- Journalism**, Reporter for the International Medical News Group, Class of 1975
- Manufacturing/Distribution Industry**, VP Sales & Marketing at Lee Matthews Equipment, Class of 1982
- Science Assoc/Foundation/Policy/Research Org**, Research Associate at the National Academy of Sciences, Class of 1996

CDO Library Resources for Neuroscience Majors

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

- Alternative Careers in Science – Leaving the Ivory Tower* by Cynthia Robbins-Roth, 1998.
- Career Paths in Psychology – Where Your Degree Can Take You* by Robert Sternberg, 1997.
- Career Renewal: Tools for Scientists & Technical Professionals* by Stephen Rosen & Celia Paul, 1998.
- Careers in Psychology: Opportunities in a Changing World* by Tara L. Kuther & Robert D. Morgan, 2004.
- Careers in Science* by Thomas A. Easton, 1990.
- Guide to Careers in the Health Professions (The Princeton Review)* by Lynn Borders Caldwell, 2000.
- Insider's Guide to Graduate Programs in Clinical and Counseling Psychology* by Michael A. Sayette, Tracy J. Mayne, & John C. Norcross, 2004.
- Money for Graduate Students in the Sciences* by Gail Ann Schlachter & R. David Weber, 1996.
- Neuroscience Training Programs in North America* by the Association of Neuroscience Departments and Programs, 1994.
- Opportunities in Clinical Laboratory Science Careers* by Karen Karni, 2002.
- Peterson's Job Opportunities Health and Science* by Peterson's Guides, 1999.
- Planning a Life in Medicine (The Princeton Review)* by John Smart, Stephen Nelson, & Julie Doherty, 2005.
- The Portable Mentor – Expert Guide to a Successful Career in Psychology* by Mitchell J. Prinstein & Marcus D. Patterson, 2003.
- Therapists & Allied Health Professionals Career Directory* by Bradley J. Morgan & Joseph M. Palmisano, 1993.
- Yale Guide to Careers in Medicine & the Health Professions, The* by Robert M. Donaldson, Kathleen S. Lundgren, & Howard Spiro, 2003.

Neuroscience Related Websites

Vassar College Department of Neuroscience and Behavior:

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

General

American Association for the Advancement of Science: www.aaas.org

Careers in Neuroscience: <http://www.jhu.edu/~careers/majors/neurosci.html>

HireHealth.com: www.hirehealth.com

HireMedical.com: www.hiremedical.com

HireRx.com: www.hireRx.com

Jobs posted through the Society for Neuroscience:

<http://www.dickinson.edu/career/student/neuroscience.html>

Links to Neuroscience societies, research opportunities, and online journals:

<http://www.amherst.edu/~neuro/links.html>

Neuroscience Jobs: <http://apu.sfn.org/Template.cfm?Section=ClassifiedAds>

NewScientist Jobs: <http://www.newscientistjobs.com/splash.action>

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

Science Career Forum: <http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/>

Science Careers: <http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org>

SciJobs.org: <http://scijobs.org>

SciWeb Career Center: <http://www.scijobs.com/index.cfm>

Women in Science: <http://womeninscience.org/pages/resources/resources.asp>

Psychology

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy: www.aamft.org

American Counseling Association: www.counseling.org

American Mental Health Counselors Association: www.amhca.org

American Occupational Therapy Association: www.aota.org

American Psychological Association: www.apa.org

Association for Behavior Analysis: <http://www.abainternational.org>

Association for Women in Psychology: <http://awpsych.org/>

Career Opportunities in Psychology:

<http://www.uta.edu/psychology/Dept/careers.htm>

Encyclopedia of Psychology: www.psychology.org/links/Career/

Jobs in Human Services: www.opportunityNOCS.org

Inside Psychology:

<http://www.students.vcu.edu/ExploreCareers/CC/CCHSpsych.html>

International Association of Counselors and Therapists: <http://www.iact.org>

MentalHealth.Net: www.mentalhelp.net

Psychology Links:

http://www.uta.edu/psychology/Dept/websites_with_career_related_inf.htm

Psychology Major Advice:

<http://www.cas.muohio.edu/~advising/majors/psychology.html>

Neuroscience Related Websites cont.

Psych Web: www.psychwww.com/

Social Psychology Network: <http://www.socialpsychology.org/career.htm>

SocialService.com: www.socialservice.com/

Biology

American Institute of Biological Sciences: www.aibs.org

Bio View: www.BioView.com

Bio Online Career Center: www.bio.com/

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

HireBio.com: www.hireBio.com

Inside Biology: <http://www.students.vcu.edu/ExploreCareers/CC/CCHSbiol.html>

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://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 Science Foundation: http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.cfm

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

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

Undergraduate Summer Research Institute (URSI): <http://www.vassar.edu/ursi/>

University-Based Research Positions: <http://www.rit.edu/~gtfsbi/Symp/grad.htm>

*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.