

Environmental Studies Career Chat



Office of Career Development

Vassar College

Phone: 845-437-5285

Fax: 845-437-7257

Email: cdo@vassar.edu

<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

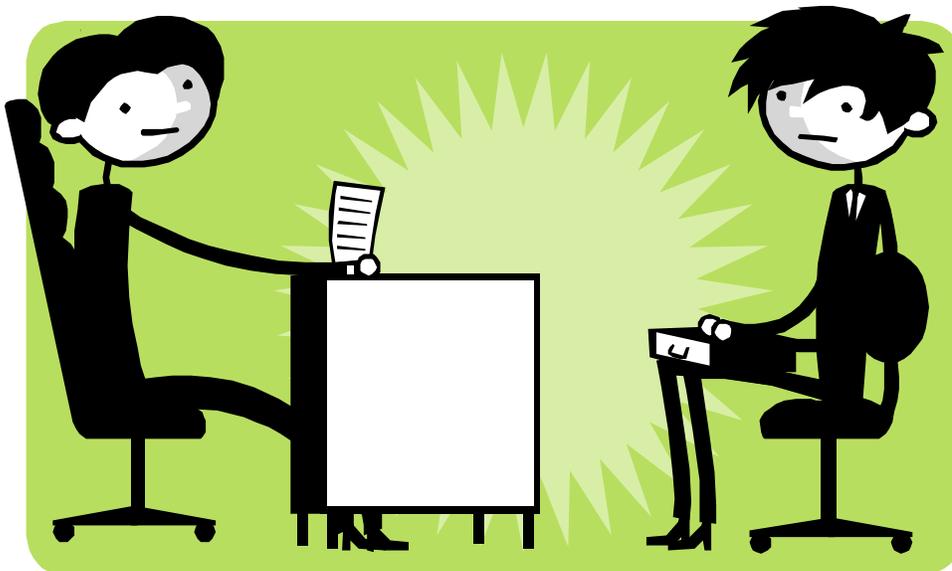
Next Step: Job Search

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/>

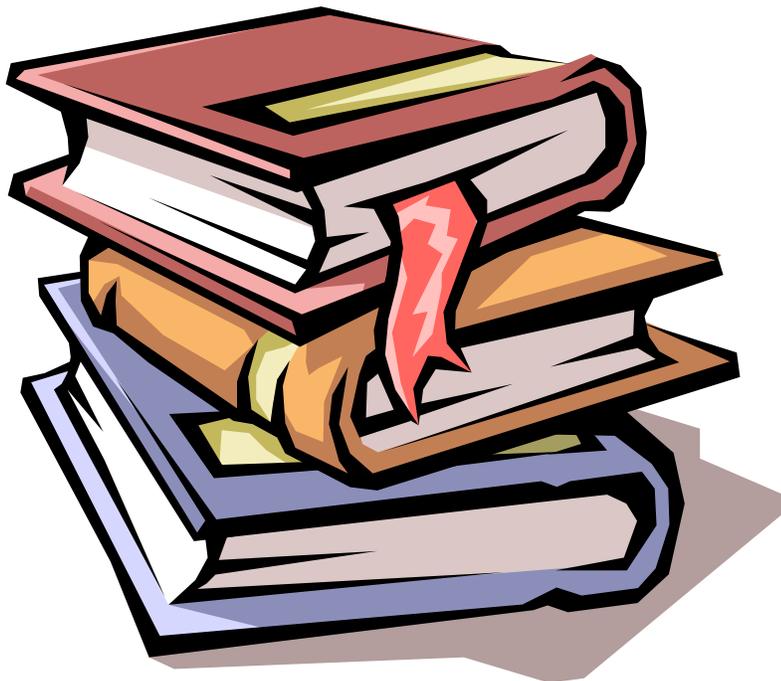
The reasons for continuing one's education in graduate school can be as varied and unique as the individual. Many continue their studies at an advanced level because they simply find it difficult to end the educational process. They love what they are learning; they want to learn more and continue their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



Environmental Studies Alumni Career Choices

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

Architecture, Junior Designer at Hart Howerton, Class of 2003

Broadcasting, Production Secretary for NATURE at Thirteen/WNET New York, Class of 2003

Community Service, Director of Operations at Animal Haven, Class of 2003

Environmental, Environmental Consultant at Great Forest, Inc., Class of 2004

Public Service Assoc/Foundation/Research Org, Campaign Organizer at Clean Water Action, Class of 2001

Social Change/Human Rights/Animal Rights, Director of NJ Community Water Watch at NJ Public Interest Research Group, Class of 2003

Writing, Grant Writer for Iraq Memory Foundation, Class of 2002

CDO Library Resources for Environmental Studies Majors

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

100 Jobs in the Environment by Debra Quintana, 1996.

Big Green Internship Book, The – Internships and Summer Jobs for the Environment by Career Education Institutes, 2003.

Careers for Environmental Types and Others Who Respect the Earth by Mike Fasulo & Jane Kinney, 2002.

Complete Guide to Environmental Careers in the 21st Century, The by the Environmental Careers Organization, 1999.

Conservation Directory by the National Wildlife Federation, 2005.

Directory of National Environmental Organizations, The by John C. Brainard, 1994.

Earth Work by the Student Conservation Association, 1994.

Eco Guide to Careers that Make a Difference, The by the Environmental Careers Organization, 2004.

Environmental Career Directory by Bradley J. Morgan & Joseph M. Palmisano, 1993.

Environmental Careers in the 21st Century by The Environmental Careers Organization, 1999.

Environmental Engineering Selection Guide by the American Academy of Environmental Engineers, 2001.

Great Jobs for Environmental Studies Majors by Julie DeGalan & Bryon Middlekauff, 2002.

Green At Work – Finding a Business Career That Works for the Environment by Susan Cohn, 1992.

CDO Library Resources cont.

- Guide to Graduate Environmental Programs, The* by The Student Conservation Association, 1997.
Northeast Field Guide to Environmental Education, The by Antioch New England Graduate, 1991.
Opportunities in Environmental Careers by Odom Fanning, 2002.
Resumes for Environmental Careers by VGM Career Horizons, 1994.
Working with the Environment by Tim Ryder & Deborah Penrith, 2004
World Directory of Environmental Organizations by the International Center for the Environment and Public Policy, 2001.

Environmental Studies Related Websites

Vassar College Department of Environmental Studies:

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

Careers That Care: <http://www.panda.org/index.cfm>

Center for Energy and Environmental Studies:

http://www.bu.edu/cees/resources/career_develop.html

EcoEmploy: <http://www.ecoemploy.com/jobs/>

Ecological Society of America: <http://www.esa.org/>

EnviroDirectory: <http://www.EnviroDirectory.com/>

Environmental Assessment Association: <http://www.iami.org/ea.cfm>

Environmental Career Bulletin: <http://www.eceajobs.com/>

Environmental Career Organization:

http://www.eco.org/site/c.dnJLKPNnFkG/b.795025/k.AA86/The_Environmental_Careers_Organization.htm

*Environmental Career Opportunities:

<http://www.ecojobs.com/colleges/collegecontents.asp>

Environmental Education Directory: <http://www.enviroeducation.com/careers-jobs/>

Environmental Jobs and Careers: <http://www.ejobs.org/>

Environmental Professional's Homepage List of Job Openings:

<http://www.clay.net/conf.html#jobopenings>

EnvironmentalCareer.com: <http://www.environmentalcareer.com/>

National Association for Environmental Management: <http://www.naem.org>

National Council for Science and the Environment: <http://www.cnie.org/jobs/>

*National Environmental Employment Report:

<http://www.environmentalcareer.com/neer.htm>

National Recreation and Park Association: <http://www.nrpa.org/>

National Registry of Environmental Professions: <http://www.nrep.org/>

Outdoor Action Guide: <http://www.princeton.edu/~oa/jobs/careeroe.shtml>

Student Conservation Society: <http://www.thesca.org/>

The Ecological Society of America: <http://www.esa.org/>

Weed Science Society of America: www.wssa.net

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

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

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 Internships.com: <http://internships.com/accessPremium.cfm>
*Internships USA: <http://www.internships-usa.com>
National Science Foundation: http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.cfm

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/>

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