

# College Insights

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## May 2018

**1<sup>st</sup>** – Common reply date for college enrollment

**5<sup>th</sup>** – **SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests**

**7<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>** **AP exams**

Juniors – work on resume

Seniors – notify the colleges that you will not attend and take some time to thank those who wrote your letters of recommendation

Evaluate financial aid packages and explore college funding options

## June 2018

**2<sup>nd</sup>** – **SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests**

(register by 5/3 - late registration 5/23)

**9<sup>th</sup>** – **ACT and ACT plus Writing**

(register by 5/4 - late registration 5/18)

Seniors – thank teachers and others who helped you

Seniors – thank scholarship providers for aid

Seniors – have your final transcript sent to your college

## Five Career Planning Ideas for High School Students

Many high school students are understandably more focused on getting *into* college than they are on finding a job *after* college. Yet, having at least a few ideas in mind for careers that might interest you is an important part of college planning. Here are five things you can do now – while you're still in high school – to start thinking about possible careers.

**Know thyself.** Begin with your current interests, talents, hobbies, and personal strengths and weaknesses. Chances are they all contain clues about the types of careers that might be a good match for you. Need more ideas? Try the College Board's Big Future Careers website (link below), which offers hundreds of suggested careers based on specific student interests. Or, take a career assessment test designed for high school students (such as Princeton Review's Career Quiz) and see which jobs/careers are suggested for you.

**Do some homework on jobs and careers.** There are many types of jobs and careers that most people have never heard of or know little about. How do you discover them? Start by talking to the adults you know about their jobs. How did they get interested in their career? What education and skills are required to perform their jobs? What do they like about their careers? Don't be shy; adults are usually happy to answer questions. You can also learn about various careers online. Two good starting points are the Occupational Outlook Handbook, published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the College Board's Big Future

site, mentioned above. If you think you may be interested in a science or technology related field, the Sloan Career Cornerstone website is also an excellent resource to explore.

**Connect the dots between college majors and careers.** Although your college major does not always determine what you'll end up doing for a career, understanding how various majors can connect to careers is part of career planning. As you explore the majors and programs offered at various colleges, take a moment to read through the relevant department's information on careers for students in that major. Another good resource is the University of Tennessee's What Can I Do With This Major site (link below), which explains the typical career paths for over 70 different college majors.

**Test the waters through extracurriculars and enrichment programs.** Believe it or not, your extracurricular activities during high school allow you to explore potential jobs and careers. Managing finances for a school club, writing for the school newspaper or yearbook, helping to design and build the robotics club's entry, volunteering for a non-profit, and even being on an athletic team, all offer opportunities to try out some of the skills you'll use in real life careers. Enrichment activities, such as summer programs on college campuses, can also help you learn about various jobs and careers.

**Keep career planning in mind when visiting colleges.** Every college campus has a (continued p. 3)

### Fast-Growing Careers for Art & Design Majors

**Animator**— typically works as part of a team to develop and produce a film, visual effect or video game.

**Art Director**—dictates the visual style of newspapers, magazines, movie and television productions and other media.

**Fashion Designer**—designs and creates original clothing and accessories.

**Film Director**—creates motion pictures, television shows and video productions from script to finished product.

**Graphic Designer**—uses computer software to create visual concepts, such as images, logos or brochures, that deliver a message chosen by their clients.

**Interior Designer**—designs and oversees the construction of interior spaces that are functional, safe and attractive.

**Landscape Architect**—plans and designs land areas for parks, highways, college campuses, airports, and other private, commercial or government properties.

**Photographer**—uses technical skills and knowledge to capture images of an event or tell a story visually.



## Majoring in Art & Design

Do you have a passion for painting, drawing or designing but feel unsure about how you can turn your love of art into a career? Bachelor's programs in fine or visual arts or in design can help you achieve your goal of a fulfilling career. Students interested in the visual arts may choose to pursue their passion either at a specialized art institute or as an art major at a more comprehensive college. Art schools generally award a Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) degree, while liberal arts college grads earn a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.). The art institute is most appropriate for those individuals who truly wish to immerse themselves in art. Most art schools are located in big cities where students can have easy access to the artistic community. B.F.A. programs train their constituents for art-based careers; students may prepare for a future in fashion, auto or interior design, videogame development, animation or the graphic arts. It's important to consider, however, that studio art classes require hours of hard work and students at art institutes have little time or opportunity to get the breadth of education that is possible at a liberal arts college.

At an art institute, you'll generally start with foundation courses such as basic design and history of art, and will have an opportunity to focus on your area of concentration during the later part of your studies. The emphasis of each art institute differs, even within the same medium, such as painting or sculpture. You'll want to check each program's philosophy before committing to attend. Art institutes do not offer the variety of extracurricular clubs, sports and activities that many college students seek and expect. Dorms also tend to be pretty basic, so try to go for an extended visit before making a final decision.

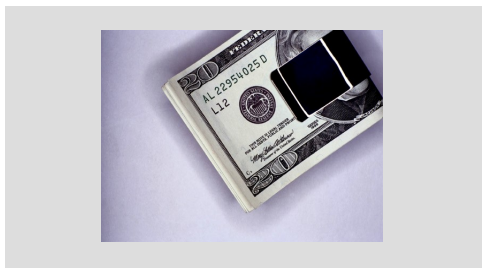
If you're interested in focusing on art but still want opportunities to explore other interests, consider pursuing an art major at a liberal arts college. Often, it is your other interests that serve as inspiration for

your art work. The exposure to a variety of issues and ideas will help you to grow and mature. Career preparation is not the primary focus of B.A. programs. Over half of your education will often be in areas other than art, with substantial study in the humanities, social sciences and physical sciences. Typical programs for studio art majors include foundation courses in the arts, including work in sculpture, painting, drawing, and photography, as well as classes in the history of art and in modern art. Since upper level students concentrate in a specific medium, you'll want to check the college catalogue for the breadth of classes offered in your preferred field. Although students in Bachelor of Arts programs do not get the intensity of experience that B.F.A. graduates have, they do benefit from the more rounded college-life experience available at a comprehensive institution. You might even find yourself developing a passion for another field outside of art.

### Careers for Art & Design Majors

All art majors should seek out internships in galleries or museums, apprenticeships with working artists or employment in architectural or design firms in order to gain real-world experience. Both the B.F.A. and B.A. programs prepare students for graduate programs in the arts. A master's degree is generally required for those hoping for employment in museums and galleries or for teaching at the high school level. Museum curators and directors, and college professors often have Ph.D.s. Art majors may go on to work in a variety of art-related fields. The major provides the initial preparation required for careers in commercial art and in professions such as art therapist, art editor, critic, museum curator, art educator, art restorer, architect or designer. You can learn more about careers in the visual arts by using the Occupational Outlook Handbook at [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov).

## Financial Matters: Does Attending College Make Financial Sense?



Media stories about the rising cost of a college education and student debt, combined with the lingering economic effects of the recession, have led many people to question whether it still makes financial sense to attend college.

The answer is a resounding yes, according to research from the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. The Fed's researchers analyzed U.S. labor data and found that, on average, people with a bachelor's degree earn over \$830,000 more than people with high school diplomas over the course of their working lives, even when the cost of attending college is taken into account.

The recession of 2007-2009 appears to

have had little effect on this "college earnings premium." Researchers grouped workers into cohorts by decade and compared the earnings premium of those graduating in the 1950s-1960s, the 1970s-80s, and the 1990s-2000s. Although the earnings premium fluctuated over time, its lowest point was actually in the 1980s, when college graduates earned about 43% more on average than those with only a high school diploma. In 2011, the latest year for which data is available, college graduates earned, on average, about 61% more than high school graduates. "There is little evidence to suggest that the value of a college degree has declined over time, and it has even risen somewhat for graduates five to ten years out of school," the researchers wrote.

But, what about rising college costs? Does the cost of a college degree today negate the value of the college graduate earnings premium? Again, the researchers found that this popular perception wasn't supported by the

hard data. Taking inflation and lost earnings while in college into account, the researchers compared the average earnings of a college graduate, which increase over time, to average college tuition costs in order to calculate break-even scenarios. They found that the average college graduate recoups the cost of attending college in their extra earnings in less than 20 years. The researchers noted that once the break-even point is reached, college graduates continue to enjoy the benefits of higher earnings for the rest of their working years.

"The value of a college degree remains high," the researchers noted in their report. "Although other individual factors might affect the net value of a college degree, earning a degree clearly remains a good investment for young people." When you add in the benefits of more interesting work, more chances for advancement, more stable personal lives and even longer life spans, the cost of getting a college degree seems even more of a bargain.

## Five Career Planning Ideas for High School Students (continued from p.1)

Career Center, staffed by professionals who are trained to assist college students with career-related concerns. They help students choose majors and careers, find internship and job opportunities, and gain important job-hunting skills. Make a point to ask about the services offered by each college's Career Center when you visit colleges. Or better yet, stop in to the Center and say hello. While on campus, you will also have opportunities to talk with professors and students. Use those occasions to ask faculty about what their departments do to help prepare students for jobs after graduation, and ask current students about internships

they've done, research opportunities, and what their majors and career plans are. If you can't visit campuses, you can find some of the same information through each college's website and social media. Planning will help you to find fulfillment in your choice of career.

### Online career planning resources mentioned in this article:

College Board Big Future Explore Careers <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/explore-careers>

Princeton Review's Career Quiz

<https://www.princetonreview.com/quiz/career-quiz>

BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

Sloan Career Cornerstone <http://www.careercornerstone.org/>

University of Tennessee What Can I Do With This Major website <https://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/majors/> - this is a subscription-based resource. Check with your school's media center to find out if they have access.



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## Summer Campus Visits

Is it worth visiting colleges over the summer when school is not in regular session? We believe that any visit is better than no visit at all. If schedules don't allow a campus visit during the spring of junior year or if the fall of senior year feels too late, then hit the road. While summer may not be the ideal time to visit, it frequently is the most practical time for busy families.

College campuses during the summer usually fall into one extreme to the other. Many colleges are crowded with kids, albeit members of a much younger demographic. Colleges may offer sports camps and enrichment programs to elementary, middle and high school students. So, taking a college tour and being surrounded by unruly 5<sup>th</sup> graders can be a little disconcerting. On the other hand, some college campuses are eerily empty when you tour the campus, making it hard to imagine what it would be like to have a cappella groups serenading you as you walk by or the hum of college students in surround-sound when classes let out.

It's hard to get a handle on the campus culture or the vibe of the student body when they're not there, but try anyway.

### Pros of summer campus visits

The pace of summer generally permits families to spend more time at each visit where they feel they can get to know the college, the campus and the community a little bit better.

The more you can do over the summer

the less anxiety you'll feel in the fall. Students can fine-tune their college lists over the summer and be both confident in their list and a step ahead of many students who wait until the fall of their senior year to begin the process.

It's also easier to find the time to meet with a professor and/or a coach or advisor of a club or extracurricular activity during the summer. Talk to a staff member from the Study Abroad Office or the Career Center to give you some perspective on the range of opportunities. Most importantly, sit down with some students and ask direct questions such as: "Where else did you apply?" "Why did you choose to come here?" "What's one thing you would change?"

### Cons of summer visits

Some colleges are ghost towns during the summer, with limited hours, closed buildings, etc. You're not going to get the feel of the activity on the quad and the campus "vibe" during the summer. Construction projects may project a negative sense of campus, but construction is a sign of a financially healthy college,

Compressing too many college visits in too short a time span can ruin everyone's experience. Most importantly, a rushed college visit doesn't let the student wander around a campus on his own, talk to random students and form his own opinions. So if summer is best for you, visit then.