COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR
Career Education

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A DEGREE IN SOCIAL SCIENCES?

Social Sciences at Columbia University encompass:

- Anthropology
- Economics
- History
- Political Science
- Sociology

Affiliated interdisciplinary majors include:

- Human Rights
- Urban Studies
- Women and Gender Studies

Where do Social Science majors go?

Here are some examples of organizations that hired Columbia social sciences majors last year in recent years:

- Amazon
- City Year
- Google
- Goldman Sachs
- McKinsey & Company
- NBC News
- NERA Economic Consulting
- Pringle in Asia
- TGG Group
- United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
- Bloomingdale's
- Federal Reserve Bank of New York

What fields do Social Science majors enter?

A degree in the humanities provides knowledge and skills relevant to a wide variety of jobs across the career spectrum, including:

- **Local, State, Federal Government:** Public Policy, Regional Planning, City or Town Management, Social Statistics, Program Administration, Community Affairs, Labor Relations
- **International Affairs:** Governance, Diplomacy, Policy Making and Analysis, Intelligence, Foreign Service, Public Sector Reform, Microfinance and Poverty-Reduction Strategy, Ethics and Anti-Corruption, Human Rights, International Development
- **Research:** Policy or Program Analysis, Data Analysis, Demographics, Ethnographic Research, Program Assessment/Evaluation, Political Economy, Intersectional Identity (Race, Gender, Class, Sexual Orientation), Think Tanks
- **Politics:** Elected or Appointed Leadership, Campaign Management, Staff Administration, Special Interest Advocacy, Political Advising, Lobbying, Community Organizing
- **Education:** Teaching, Curriculum Development, Administration, Advising/Counseling, Fundraising and Development, Information/Library Services, Education Evaluation
- **The Arts:** Administration/Management, Archival Work, Education, Research, Translation, Documentary Film Production, Curatorship, Museum Conservation & Restoration, Appraisal, Development/Fundraising
- **Communications:** Public Relations, Copywriting, Advertising, Market Research, Journalism, Social Media
- **Nonprofit:** Administration, Program Coordination, Fundraising/Development, Grant Writing, Community Education
What do employers want?

Most of the skills/qualities sought by employers are transferrable and/or soft skills that students can gain through classes, extracurricular activities, internships, volunteer experiences, or part time jobs including:

1. Ability to work in a team structure
2. Ability to make decisions and solve problems
3. Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization
4. Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work
5. Ability to obtain and process information
6. Ability to analyze quantitative data
7. Technical knowledge related to the job
8. Proficiency with computer software programs
9. Ability to create and/or edit written reports
10. Ability to sell or influence others

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015 Job Outlook

Your major can definitely demonstrate relevant coursework and knowledge to a prospective employer, but your studies aren’t the only aspect of your experience that employers are evaluating. They select people who they believe can do the job (have the right skills), want the job (have demonstrated an interest in the field) and are a personality fit for the team and organization.

What value do Social Sciences majors bring?

A degree in the humanities can help to develop a number of skills and abilities that all employers seek, including the ability to:

• Think critically and creatively
• Write clearly and effectively
• Develop innovative solutions to unique situations
• Analyze policies for fairness and accuracy
• Develop strategies to address social issues related to power and authority, culture and communication, poverty and discrimination, and social change
• Use quantitative and technological literacy in gathering and analyzing data
• Apply an interdisciplinary, global perspective to understand interactions of people, communities, and organizations
• Present a case convincingly

What if I’m an international student?

For international students at Columbia under student visas, selecting your major can play a significant role if you plan to work in the US after completion of your degree. Optional Practical Training is a work authorization that allows an international student to work in a job directly related to the student’s major area of study either before or after degree completion. Employer sponsored H1B Visas also have similar strict requirements. Students with more questions about this should visit the International Student & Scholars Office (ISSO) and view CCE’s International Students webpage at careereducation.columbia.edu/students/International-Students.