

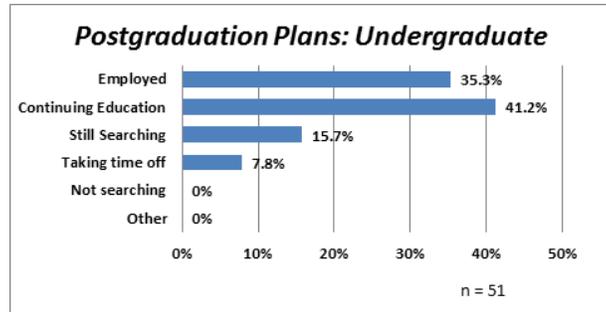
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR
Career Education

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A DEGREE IN **BIOCHEMISTRY?**

Where do Biochemistry majors go?

According to the Graduating Student Surveys for 2012–2014 (with a 63.0% response rate for undergraduates in the Biochemistry major), in the last few years:

- 76.5% of graduates were employed or going to graduate school.
 - 35.3% were employed
 - 41.2% had secure plans to attend grad school



Here are some examples of organizations that have hired Columbia Biochemistry majors in recent years:



What jobs do Biochemistry majors do?

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

- **Research:** Basic Research, Applied Research, Grant Writing, Administration
 - Some areas of specialization: Healthcare, Pharmacology, Environmental, Agricultural, Food science, Cosmeceutical, Forensic
- **Healthcare:** Medicine, Dentistry, Optometry, Podiatry, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Public Health
- **Teaching:** Elementary, Secondary, Post-secondary, Non-classroom settings
- **Other Professional Opportunities:** Sales/Marketing, Technical Writing, Scientific Journalism, Scientific Illustration, Regulatory Affairs, Administration/Management, Scientific/Technical Recruiting, Intellectual Property/Patent Law, Bioinformatics

Use CCE's [Industry Exploration](#) webpages to learn more about these, and other fields.

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 Biochemistry majors bring?

The Biochemistry curriculum helps you to develop the ability to:

- Access and assess appropriate scientific literature
- Develop hypotheses and propose appropriate experiments to test them
- Use databases and bioinformatics tools
- Design and conduct experiments and record/archive the data appropriately
- Use appropriate data analysis and interpret the results of experiments
- Present overall goals and detailed results of experiments verbally and in writing
- Work safely, both alone and in an effective team
- Recognize and understand the ethical issues involved in both the conduct of research and in the dimensions of research

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.