

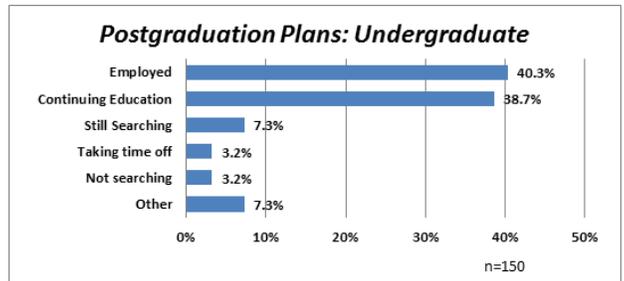
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR
Career Education

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

Where do Biology majors go?

According to the Graduating Student Surveys for 2012–2014 (with a 64.4% response rate for undergraduates in the Biology major), in the last few years:

- 79.0% of graduates were employed or going to graduate school.
 - 40.3% were employed
 - 38.7% had secure plans to attend grad school



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



What jobs do Biology majors do?

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

- **Research and Development:** Basic, Applied, Quality Control, Administration, Grant Writing
- **Healthcare:** Medicine, Dentistry, Optometry, Podiatry, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine, Allied Health (Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy), Medical Technology, Nuclear Medicine
- **Biomedical Sciences:** Biophysics, Biochemistry, Cellular and Molecular Biology, Genetics, Immunology, Pathology, Pharmacology, Physiology, Virology
- **Organismal/Ecological Biology:** Botany, Ecology, Conservation Biology, Entomology, Marine Biology, Genetics, Microbiology, Taxonomy, Zoology
- **Biotechnology:** Medicine, Agriculture, Food Science, Biological Engineering, Bioremediation, Environmental Protection/Regulation

- **Bioinformatics:** Algorithm and Statistical Techniques, Data Analysis and Interpretation, Information Management, Organization and Retrieval
- **Education:** Teaching (Elementary, Secondary, Post-Secondary), Non-classroom Education
- **Communication:** Technical Writing, Editing, Illustrating, Photography, Public Relations
- **Legislation/Law:** Lobbying, Regulatory Affairs, Science Policy, Patent Law, Environmental Law, Nonprofit or Public Interest, Mediation
- **Business/Industry:** Technical and Pharmaceutical Sales, Management, Consulting, Marketing

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 Biology majors bring?

The Biology curriculum helps you to develop the following skills:

- Ability to conduct research
- Ability to access and assess appropriate scientific literature
- Ability to develop hypotheses and propose appropriate experiments to test them
- Critical reasoning, analytical, and evaluation skills
- Ability to handle and analyze complex data
- Written and oral communication skills
- Time management and organization
- Ability to work safely in an effective team

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.