

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR  
**Career Education**

## WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A DEGREE IN **NATURAL SCIENCES?**

### Natural Sciences at Columbia University encompass:

- Astronomy
- Biological Sciences
- Chemistry
- Earth and Environmental Sciences
- Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Psychology
- Statistics
- Sustainable Development

### Where do Natural Sciences majors go?

Here are some examples of organizations that hired Columbia natural sciences majors in recent years:



NIH National Institutes of Health  
*Turning Discovery Into Health*



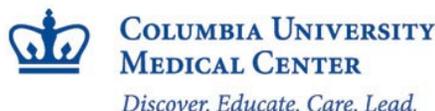
Syntactx  
*managing innovation*



TUDOR PICKERING  
HOLT & CO | ENERGY INVESTMENT &  
MERCHANT BANKING



2Seeds  
2SEEDS NETWORK



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER  
*Discover. Educate. Care. Lead.*



IWMI  
International  
Water Management  
Institute

### What fields do Natural Sciences majors enter?

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

- **Research and Development:** Pharmaceuticals, Healthcare, Agriculture, Food Processing and Safety, Environment, Medical Devices, National Observatories, Hospitals, Consumer Product Labs
- **Education:** Science Teaching (K-12, museums, zoos, planetariums, universities)
- **Healthcare:** Public Health, Counseling, Rehabilitation Services, Clinical Research, Health Care Delivery and Administration, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Allied Health
- **Communication:** Science Writing, Technical Writing, Community Relations, Marketing

- **Law:** Patent Law, Public Policy, Regulatory Affairs, Science Policy
- **Business:** Life Science/Environmental Consulting, Aerospace, Market Research, Operations, Finance, Business Analysis, Entrepreneurship, Quality Control/Assurance, Pharmaceutical Sales
- **Technical:** Computer Programming

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 Natural Sciences majors bring?

---

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

- Think critically and creatively
- Address and solve challenging problems
- Use research methods, design studies, and make discoveries
- Understand and communicate science, and the consequences of human interaction with it, from a multi-disciplinary perspective
- Write clearly and effectively
- Communicate verbally
- Use quantitative and technological literacy in gathering and analyzing data

## 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](http://careereducation.columbia.edu/students/International-Students).