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Majors With The Most Pre-Graduation Job Offers



According to a recent study, students in these degrees receive more job offers before graduation.

By Terri Williams

Earning a college degree takes time, effort, and money, so you want to be sure you choose the right major. If your goal behind earning a degree is pursuing a promising career, it might help to know which majors are more likely to generate job offers before you even complete your course of study.

Fortunately, there's actually data available to assist you in the decision-making process. "The College Class of 2013," published by the National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE), surveyed close to 10,000 college seniors who were scheduled to graduate, and discovered that for five majors in particular, over half of the students had at least one job offer by the time they graduated.

Before you decide which degree path is for you, see which majors are the ones employers love and learn why.

Major #1: Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science

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According to the NACE, an impressive 68.7 percent of computer science majors had at least one job offer by the time they graduated.

Why Employers Like It: It's hard to imagine life without computers, and our reliance on them is only growing. "As individual consumers, we're increasing our use of technology (the 'app economy') and businesses are tackling initiatives in areas including cloud computing, big data, and cyber security," says Robin Schooling, managing director at Silver Zebras, a human resources strategy company in Baton Rouge, La. And to meet this demand, Schooling says, "organizations must increasingly hire technology professionals."

"The whole economy operates on computer technology, and computer science majors know how to make that vast IT economy work - everything from programming to integration to security," explains Anthony Skjellum, a computer science professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. "As a result, companies like Google are offering \$150,000 bonuses to programmers; Apple has a voracious demand for developers; and even mid-size and small companies are searching for people with computer technology skills."

NEXT STEP: [Click to Find the Right Computer Science Program.](#)

What You'll Study: Computer science majors learn programming languages such as C++ and Java, according to the College Board, a non-profit organization that links students to college success and opportunity. Computer science students may also take courses in data structures and algorithms, digital system design, and mathematics for computer science.

Potential Careers:*

- Software Developer
- Computer Systems Analyst
- Computer Support Specialist
- Computer and Information Systems Manager
- Web Developer

Major #2: Bachelor's Degree in Economics



Computers aren't your thing? You could still find plenty of job opportunities to pursue with an economics major. Economics clocked in at number two in job offers, with 61.5 percent of surveyed students reporting they had at least one job offer by graduation.

Why Employers Like It: According to Schooling, economics is one of the most versatile of degrees. "Economics graduates learn to apply reasoning and analysis to a variety of societal, organizational, and business issues," says Schooling. "In a competitive environment, companies are looking for people who can provide economic analyses and forecast business trends."

What You'll Study: Students who study economics learn about economic theories and learn to dissect economic systems, says the College Board. It also reports that they may take such classes as econometrics, micro and macroeconomics, statistics, and international trade.

Potential Careers:*

- Personal Financial Advisor
- Financial Analyst
- Market Research Analyst

Major #3: Bachelor's Degree in Accounting

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The honor of third highest job offer rate goes to accounting majors, with 61.2 percent of seniors majoring in accounting reporting that they received at least one job offer by graduation.

Why Employers Like It: There are three primary reasons why accounting firms are hiring so many students, according to Ed Ketz, associate professor of accounting at Penn State University: "Accounting and audits are necessary in good times and bad, forensic accountants are needed to combat white collar crime and, given the Financial Accounting Standards Board's** requirements for fair value measurements, valuation services are expanding."

NEXT STEP: Click to Find the Right Accounting Program.

What You'll Study: Accounting students learn the skills necessary to record, analyze, and interpret financial information, reports the College Board. Typical coursework includes classes in auditing, cost accounting, tax accounting, and business law.

Potential Careers:*

- Accountant
- Auditor
- Tax Collector

Major #4: Bachelor's Degree in Engineering

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Engineering had the fourth highest job rate, with 59 percent of students in engineering reporting receiving at least one offer of employment by graduation.



Why Employers Like It: "Engineering is one of the STEM degrees (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) experiencing a shortage of workers, so we'll continue to see a need for graduates in engineering disciplines," explains Schooling. "In particular, there's a demand for biomedical engineers, petroleum engineers, civil engineers, and environmental engineers," she says.

NEXT STEP: Click to Find the Right Engineering Program.

What You'll Study: Engineering students learn to use math and science to solve problems, according to the College Board. Common courses include physics, engineering law, and numerical methods for scientists and engineers.

Various fields of engineering include chemical engineering, which involves learning how to put chemicals to work; mechanical engineering, which relates to the science behind machines; petroleum engineering, relating to methods of extracting oil and gas from the earth; and civil engineering, where students learn to use math and science to design construction projects, explains the College Board.

Potential Careers:*

- Biomedical Engineer
- Petroleum Engineer
- Civil Engineer
- Environmental Engineer
- Electrical Engineer

Major #5: Bachelor's in Business Administration

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A bachelor's degree in business administration rounds out the top five majors with the highest rate of offers, with 54.3 percent of seniors reporting at least one offer of employment by graduation.

Why Employers Like It: "Students who major in business administration have an opportunity to not only learn about the what and the how of commerce, but also the why, says Carolyn D. Davis, assistant professor of management in the department of business administration at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga. "And companies are looking for students who can discern the 'whys' of situations, because they can develop better solutions to problems in rapidly-changing environments."

Schooling agrees and adds that students with a solid business education have usually acquired knowledge they can bring to almost any industry, and as a result, they are in high demand and can choose from a variety of career options.

NEXT STEP: Click to Find the Right Business Administration Program.

What You'll Study: Business administration and management students learn how to direct an organization's activities, the College Board reports. This program includes coursework in operations and financial management, human resources management, and business ethics and law.

Potential Careers:*

- Top Executive
- Market Research Analyst
- Financial Manager

* All potential careers listed come from the 2014-15 U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook. The Department of Labor cites the associated degrees as common, required, preferred, or one of a number of degrees acceptable as preparation for the potential career. In some instances, candidates might require further schooling, professional certifications, or experience, before being qualified to pursue the career. Potential engineering careers require a specific engineering specialty.

** The Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) establishes standards of financial accounting and reporting for nongovernment organizations.

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Select an Area of Study to Find a Degree Program that's Right for You!