



# Your College Navigator, LLC

Admissions by design, not chance!

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April 2018

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## Facts & Myths About Liberal Arts Education

Ask twenty people what they think about the term “liberal arts education” and you’ll likely get twenty different responses. And, their responses will also likely contain misconceptions as well as facts about the liberal arts. To clear things up, let’s take a look at some of the facts and myths about the liberal arts.

**All liberal arts students are politically liberal.** False. Students of all political beliefs graduate with liberal arts degrees. The word “liberal” in liberal arts doesn’t refer to politics at all. Rather, it is rooted in the Latin term “artes liberales” in which “artes” referred to the general skills that a “free person” (liberals) needed to master in order to contribute meaningfully to society.

**Math and science aren’t liberal arts subjects.** False. Academic disciplines such as biology, chemistry, physics, astrophysics, astronomy, statistics and mathematics, among others, are indeed liberal arts disciplines. Many people think they are not liberal arts subjects because they also fall under the STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) list of disciplines. But, from the middle ages until today, they have also always been included under the liberal arts umbrella. The liberal arts umbrella also encompasses disciplines in the humanities (i.e. English, theater, music) and the social sciences (i.e. economics, history, psychology). However, college majors that focus on preparing for a *specific* career, such as engineering, nursing, or business, are generally not considered liberal arts degrees.

**You can get a liberal arts degree at many different types and sizes of colleges.** True. Many people mistakenly believe that liberal arts study is confined to

smaller liberal arts colleges. Yet, every major American research university also has extensive undergraduate programs in a variety of liberal arts disciplines. By the way, some of the most prestigious research universities in the country, including Yale, Harvard and Brown, consider their undergraduate colleges to be liberal arts colleges.

**A liberal arts degree doesn’t prepare you for a specific career.** True. College majors such as accounting, architecture, engineering, and nursing focus on preparing students to work in specific careers. Although liberal arts students gain many skills during their education that can be applied in the workplace, the primary focus of a liberal arts education is not training for a particular job or career. Rather, the emphasis in liberal arts disciplines is on providing a broad education that prepares students for a wide variety of jobs and careers. That said, many liberal arts disciplines do have sets of career paths that students in that discipline tend to gravitate towards. For example, many psychology majors become therapists, counselors, and other social service workers. However, many liberal arts majors end up working in fields other than those traditionally associated with the specific discipline they majored in.

**Liberal arts majors all end up working at Starbucks.** False. Just ask the CEOs of Goldman Sachs, Whole Foods, HBO, Disney, Hewlett-Packard, Time Warner Cable, American Express, and Merck, among many other major corporations, who were liberal arts majors in college. (The CEO of Starbucks was also a liberal arts major). The Hamilton Project, an economic policy initiative of the Brookings Institute, recently analyzed data collected from the National Center of Education Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau to determine the most common (continued on p.3)

## Careers for Nutritional Sciences Majors

- *Dietician*
- *Food Service Manager*
- *Public Health Counselor*
- *Biological Technician*
- *Food Scientist*
- *Health Educator*
- *Fitness Trainer*
- *Nutrition Journalist*
- *Sports Nutritionist*
- *Cook*
- *Food Safety Manager*
- *Nutritional Counselor*

To learn more about careers in dietetics and nutrition, check out the website of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Dietitians and Nutritionists, on the Internet at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dietitians-and-nutritionists.htm>



## Majoring in Nutritional Sciences

Americans are obsessed by food. We spend vast amounts of time and money in a quest for the “perfect diet.” None of us ever seems happy with our current self—we constantly seek to lose or gain weight. By choosing to avoid meat or by not eating veal, we use our diets to make political and ethical statements. We look to nutrition to increase both the length and quality of life, and we search for supplements to enhance physical and mental performance. No wonder that a major in nutrition science, food science, or dietetics attracts so many college students. Completion of a bachelor’s degree in nutritional science is the first step towards becoming a registered dietician (RD).

The food industry is the fourth largest industry in the world. Nutritional science is a great major for people interested in a health-related career, for those who want to work in the fitness industry, for individuals who love to cook and create recipes, and for budding entrepreneurs. Through this major, you’ll learn about the scientific basis of good nutrition as well as the behavioral and social issues that affect the way people view food.

Nutritional Science focuses on the physiological and biological aspects of foods and nutrients. Graduates go on to research positions in laboratories, hospitals, and industry, often after completing graduate programs in their chosen specialty. Some nutritional science majors go on to medical or dental school since the major meets pre-medical educational requirements.

Food Science majors study the principles of both science and engineering as they apply to food and nutrients. Graduates find themselves in demand by the government and the global food industry. Job opportunities for food scientists are found in areas such as food safety, quality control, product development, production and ingredient management, technical sales and service, and in research. If you’re interested in a food science major, look for one approved by the Institute of Food Technologists.

Dietetics majors generally go on to become registered dietitians. As RDs, they

work in nutritional counseling and education, public health programs, in wellness centers and hospital settings, in community health organizations, and for governmental agencies. Money Magazine recently named the field of dietetics as one of the top 50 jobs in America today.

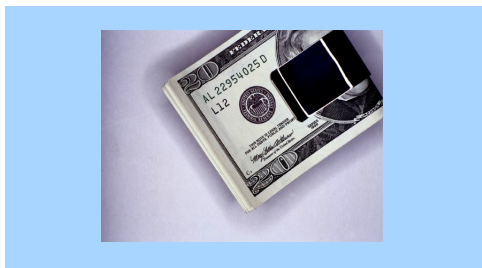
All dietetics programs must be approved by CADE, the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education. Programs are classified by CADE as either Coordinated Programs (CP) or Didactic Programs (DPD). Coordinated programs provide both classroom and at least 900 hours of supervised practical experience. CP graduates are eligible to take the licensing exam to become credentialed as RDs, registered dietitians. Didactic programs offer only accredited classroom experiences. After graduation, participants would have to complete a CADE-accredited Dietetic Internship Program including at least 900 hours of practical experience before being eligible to take the exam to become a registered dietician.

Dietetics programs differ in their emphasis, with some being more science-based than others. Typical programs include hard sciences such as organic chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology and anatomy. These are supplemented by courses in nutrition, food chemistry and food science, public health, medical nutrition, maternal and child nutrition, geriatric nutrition, and diet selection and management.

Nutritional science programs usually include more science classes such as cell biology and physiology, genetics, biometrics, mammalian physiology, physics, and food and nutrient analysis. Food science programs also may include some engineering classes.

You can differentiate among accredited programs by looking for those that emphasize the fields most interesting to you. Check out the college’s course catalog to see courses offered in each major. You’ll also want to ask about the success of graduates in obtaining internships and/or jobs after completing the program.

## Financial Matters: Appealing Your Financial Aid Award



If your first choice college offers everything you want but the price tag is making you waiver, don't give up hope; consider appealing the award. While colleges and universities won't encourage it, the financial aid officers are empowered to make adjustments, if deemed warranted.

To appeal, do the following:

Do not deposit until you've settled the financial aid discussion. Once they

have your money, colleges will be less motivated to offer a better deal.

Be realistic. Show the college that this is a partnership that you want to be part of, but need just a bit more assistance. Know exactly what you CAN afford. If your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is more than the cost of tuition, then make sure that your request makes sense. Do your homework and negotiate in good faith.

Be informed. Make sure you have researched the specific financial aid policies at each college before entering into a conversation with them. Don't contact a college, touting fabulous grades and awesome SAT scores, only to find out that the school offers only need-based financial aid but gives no merit aid awards.

See if the college offers "preferential packaging" – a practice in which they will meet a larger share of financial need based on the academic stats of the student, i.e., stronger grades and test scores will receive more money. Take a look to see if your test scores are in the "middle 50" or in the "top 25." There will be more money at schools where the student's scores raise the school's profile.

Be prepared. Colleges will generally reconsider awards for just two reasons: 1) the EFC from the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) was incorrect due to a change in the family's financial situation because of an illness, unemployment or 2) there is a competing offer from another college. If you plan to mention the competing offer, be prepared to fax a copy of the award letter to the financial aid office.

## Facts & Myths About Liberal Arts Education (continued from p.1)

jobs held by degree holders in specific college majors. They found that liberal arts majors work in all sorts of careers and in all sorts of industries, including in science and technology. In fact, a recent LinkedIn study found that there are more liberal arts majors working for technology firms than computer science majors.

**Liberal arts majors have skills employers want and need.** True. Research shows that employers value the types of skills that liberal arts studies foster. In one study conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), ninety-one percent of employers surveyed agreed that when hiring recent college graduates "a demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems" – all hallmarks of a liberal arts education – is more important than a specific college major. That said, liberal arts majors can also further enhance their marketability by including courses that teach more job-focused skills in their curriculum. The nice thing about a liberal arts

education is that there is usually plenty of room in a student's schedule to do so. Just like students in career oriented majors such as business and education, students studying the liberal arts should also seek out internships, work experience, and extracurriculars during college to help build their resumes.

**Liberal arts majors don't make as much money as students who major in engineering or business.** It depends. The amount an individual person makes throughout her career will be based on her choice of career, her experience level, her geographic location, her employers, and other factors. So, take any group of workers who had the same major in college – be it English or Engineering – and no two workers will make the exact same amount of money over their careers. In short, how much money you make is really up to you and your individual talents and efforts.

However, it is also true that the average starting salaries for recent gradu-

ates in certain majors tend to be higher than for those in other majors. For instance, engineering majors, on average, tend to land the highest starting salaries amongst students with all degrees, including other career-focused majors. Some liberal arts majors also start off with salaries below the median for all college graduates. However, research conducted by the AACU and other organizations shows that while liberal arts majors in some disciplines may start off slower, their income tends to have a faster rate of growth over time and they tend to quickly close much of the initial salary gap.

Want to find out more about typical career paths for various majors? The Hamilton Project has an interactive tool that shows the most common careers pursued by college graduates in over seventy undergraduate majors. The tool will let you also compare median salaries for graduates over the course of their careers. Access the tool at: [www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/median\\_earnings\\_for\\_largest\\_occupations](http://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/median_earnings_for_largest_occupations).



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upcoming seminars

## Handling Rejection—Advice for Parents

Everybody wants the euphoria of college acceptance and the sense of pride generated by the college sticker on the back windshield of their car. But what happens when you have to settle for Plan B, when there will be no euphoria, just resignation. How do you help your child deal with reality?

Advice in these kinds of situations always sounds so cliché, but the truth is that, as resistant as your child may be, it works:

**Don't take it personally.** Encourage your child to understand the big picture. If sharing stats of the number of students who applied to Stanford and were rejected helps, then use them. Not being accepted is not the equivalent of "failure." Colleges are consumed with fulfilling their institutional priorities—they may need anthro applicants and trombone players, or discus throwers and students from Hawaii. Perhaps your child is a classic "over-represented" student. There just isn't much you can do to change your demographics.

**It didn't happen only to you.** There are lots of other students whose dreams also weren't realized. You're not alone. Reach out to friends and commiserate together and then try to move on together. You will all appreciate the support.

**Don't get caught up with the prestige factor.** It's important to recognize that brand name doesn't equal success, and more importantly, doesn't equal happiness. Your performance during your undergraduate experience will be the biggest factor that determines your job placement, not the college's "name."

**Don't obsess about the rejections** and do your best to be positive about your other options. Don't spend a lot of time agonizing, but instead, use the time and your energy to identify another school that you will like as much or more. Often rejections can send a student to a different school or down a different path and unexpected opportunities can crop up. Some students think they want big schools and realize they'll have more opportunity to shine at a smaller school. Be positive about other institutions. Celebrate your acceptances!

The big picture here is that for many students the "rejection letter" may be the first time they have experienced serious disappointment. Their egos are bruised and the truth is, as all adults know, they'll grow and they'll get over it. Handling this rejection will make them better prepared for future obstacles. College rejection happens to most students, but it doesn't need to define the rest of their life.