

# What Can I Do With a Degree In Humanities?

## THE STUDY OF HUMANITIES

By fostering critical thinking, examining cross-cultural issues and understandings, and insisting on an interdisciplinary academic discourse, Humanities aims to prepare students for life as citizens in a multicultural society, and encourage critical and innovative thinking by insisting on a consistent attention to multi and inter-disciplinary approaches to understanding the past and problem-solving in the present. Both of these intellectual and cultural attributes are widely acknowledged to be central to both citizenship and success in the new entrepreneurial and technological economy. As well, by addressing issues as diverse as environmentalism, the Holocaust, and religious studies, students in the Humanities will be well situated to meet the value challenges of the 21st century as well as the challenges posed by economics and politics.

## WHAT SKILLS HAVE YOU DEVELOPED WITH YOUR DEGREE?

While the academic knowledge you acquire through your BA may be directly applicable to some careers, the general skills you gain with an Arts degree are the most valuable to employers. These skills are not limited to course work, and may be gained through paid and/or volunteer work both on and off campus. The knowledge and skills gained through work experience, volunteering and extra-curricular activities are relevant to future work.

### Communication Skills

The ability to communicate ideas clearly and efficiently in a variety of mediums (written, oral, visually and electronically).

Ability to argue forcefully for one's own ideas without ceasing to listen to others.

Practice in respectful dialogue and learning to respect diversity of opinion.

### Information Management

Locate, gather, and organize information using appropriate technology and information systems.

Use research skills to access, analyze, and apply knowledge.

Recognizing the importance of asking questions that go beyond immediate practical priorities.

### Problem Solving

Use critical thinking skills to evaluate and solve problems.

Demonstrate the ability to be creative and innovative in identifying solutions.

### Teamwork Skills

Able to work effectively within a group. Demonstrates the ability to lead or support the group while monitoring the success of a project and identifying ways to improve it.

## WHERE CAN YOU GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Career Services is your one-stop shop for more information. Through our workshops, one on one career and work search advising, and groups, you'll have access to information, resources and career and peer educators to help you no matter what stage of planning you are in, from exploring your interests to practicing for an interview, we can help. For the self-directed, our on-line and print self-help resources covering topics from career exploration to researching careers to conducting a targeted work search are easily accessible. Check us out! Visit the CSI—our blog with articles, job postings, employers and events on campus, and tips from the Career Services staff!

### SFU CAREER SERVICES

Simon Fraser University  
Burnaby Campus, MBC 0300

Come to the Maggie Benston Centre and go down to the lowest level. You will find us there Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:30pm. Check out our blog for the latest articles, tips and news!

Phone: 778-782-3106  
E-mail: [career\\_services@sfu.ca](mailto:career_services@sfu.ca)  
Website: [www.sfu.ca/career.html](http://www.sfu.ca/career.html)  
Blog: [www.sfu.ca/career/csi.html](http://www.sfu.ca/career/csi.html)

# WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A HUMANITIES DEGREE?

What are some of your Career Options?

The following is a non-exhaustive list of career options. Some of them may require further education than a B.A. in Humanities.

**DIRECT Career Options:** Majoring in Humanities will serve as a credential for getting any of the following career choices as the skills required are similar to the skills acquired throughout your Humanities major.

## ART HISTORIAN/ART EDUCATOR

Researches and curates exhibitions, educates special populations and the general public regarding the history, values, and varieties of the visual arts. Works primarily in museums and in educational settings. Requires familiarity with art or art history.

## FREELANCE WRITER

Writes for publications on an assignment basis for a negotiated fee, usually after submittal of a query letter proposing ideas for articles or stories. Typically works as an independent contractor.

## INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER/HISTORIAN

Writes institutional and policy histories, researches and reports on current issues, long-range trends, edits public records, manages archives. Works for executive, legislative, and judicial agencies, international institutions, military services, cultural agencies, planning agencies, public archives and libraries, private industries and corporations.

## SPECIAL PROGRAM TEACHER

Instructs students enrolled in special education programs. Settings (e.g., churches, social service agencies) and topics (e.g., vocational training, preschool Head Start, drug-abuse prevention) vary widely.

## SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCHER

Social policy researchers develop social programs, social legislation, or proposals based on demographic, social and economic analysis and the evaluation of pilot projects.

## LESS DIRECT Career Options:

Knowledge of Humanities may be less pertinent to these positions and the degree alone in Humanities may not serve as a credential for employment.

## POLITICAL CAMPAIGN WORKER

Assists in planning, fund raising, research, writing issue statements, canvassing, and assessing voter

attitudes. Works for candidates or interest groups during political election campaigns. Frequently leads to permanent positions with political organizations or officeholders.

## FESTIVAL PROMOTER AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Coordinates and provides administrative support to festival coordinators, committees and juries. Updates and maintains festivals databases including volunteer, merchant, artist, display artist, craft market and donor lists. Researches community patterns for program and funding.

## EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Creates new educational methods and materials, assesses the effectiveness of existing methods and materials. Employers include school districts, private schools, manufacturers of educational equipment, educational publishers, and national testing organizations.

## GALLERY ASSISTANT

Researches and assists with development and installation of art exhibitions; assembles and distributes information for marketing and education purposes, exhibits installation, design and lighting, assists and coordinates workshops and special events related to gallery programmers.

**INDIRECT Career Options:** On the surface, the following career options may not appear to have much to do with the study of Humanities. Yet the primary skills required in these careers are significantly related with some of the skills a Humanities major acquires.

## ALUMNI AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Produces educational programs, social events, and special tours for alumni, writes alumni publications, coordinates fund-raising and reunion activities. Works for college and university alumni affairs offices.

## HOUSING AND STUDENT LIFE COORDINATOR

Administers housing services and produces special programs to promote positive interaction on campus. Works for universities and colleges.

## PROGRAM COORDINATOR

In an activist organization, program coordinators may supervise long-term public education and organize public events or demonstrations. Other responsibilities include administrative, research-oriented, organizational, and public-relations duties. Ability in public speaking is a valuable skill.