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BEYOND ACADEMIA: CAREER OPTIONS FOR PHDS IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Graduate students are among the most well-educated members of society. However, since graduate students are always measuring their performance against that of their highly talented peers and mentors, they often underestimate their significant strengths and transferable skills. While the number of tenure-track faculty at colleges and universities continues to decrease, careers outside of academia are an increasingly exciting and rewarding option for PhD graduates. In numerous industries beyond academia, PhDs engage in, and are specifically sought for, research, writing, public service, consulting, advising, teaching, and publishing.

Below you will find information on careers and industries in which the transferable skills of PhDs in the humanities and social sciences are highly valued. There are, of course, many types of careers open to graduate students—we've included only some of the most common options here. To discuss careers outside of the academy in more detail, please feel free to schedule an appointment to speak with a CCE counselor, regardless of where you are in your career decision-making process. To make an appointment, call 212-854-5609.

For PhDs interested in alternative careers, there are two resources we almost always recommend. One is a book called "So What Are You Going to Do with That?": Finding Careers Outside Academia by Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius. The other is Versatile PhD [1], a website that provides graduate students with information about a broad range of careers, including a library of first-person narratives about careers outside of academia, career panels, discussion groups, and networking opportunities.

HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

For many PhDs looking for work outside of faculty placement, one source of satisfying employment is the institution they are most familiar with: the university. Many non-faculty jobs at colleges, community colleges, and universities draw on the interests and skills of PhDs in the humanities and social sciences. Several of these are described below. Remember that in most cases you can find similar kinds of administrative jobs at educational organizations.

Teaching/Writing/Learning Centers

Campus teaching, writing, and learning centers are growing areas of job opportunity for PhDs. If you enjoy direct contact with a variety of students, teaching, and working with faculty, a position in a teaching, learning, and/or writing center may be a perfect way to utilize your graduate school experience. A position at these types of centers might involve work with undergraduates, graduates, faculty members, or a combination of all three. Some specific duties include working with undergraduates to boost their writing and study skills and helping graduate students improve their teaching skills. Some positions require that you work with faculty, as well. You may find similar types of writing and tutoring centers at private and charter schools too.

Research and Public Affairs Offices

Institutional research offices look for PhDs to prepare and analyze data about the university and to apply that analysis to institutional problems and issues. Public affairs offices, internal and external newsletters and magazines, and the communications and foundations arms of development offices are all likely sources of opportunities for PhDs with strong research and writing skills.

Student and Academic Affairs

Many other student support offices on university campuses seek highly qualified candidates, who have experience working with undergraduates, to fill advising and support roles. Some of the major offices that value the skills of a PhD include: academic advising, career services, student activities, residence life, counseling, minority/multicultural affairs, and international student affairs.

Where to Look

The most reliable source of information about open positions will be the human resources page of universities of interest to you. The websites listed below are also useful in the search for administrative higher education positions. If you'd like to stay at your current institution, be sure to let colleagues know you're interested in these opportunities.

- The Chronicle of Higher Education [2]
- Academic Careers Online [3]
- HigherEdJobs [4]
- Herc Higher Education Recruitment Consortium [5]
- Academic 360 [6]

CONSULTING

Consultants work with clients to provide support around a range of strategic and/or operational issues. Corporations, governments, and nonprofit organizations all hire consultants. The tasks performed range from conducting detailed industry analyses, to benchmarking comparable organizations, to devising key strategic initiatives. Consulting firms can have a specific industry focus – such as education – or serve a variety of industries.

Consulting is often an exciting career option because it offers PhDs the opportunity to use and expand upon their knowledge base in varied positions, working with highly motivated colleagues. Consultants also have impact within the companies they work for and are able to see the results of change quickly. While rewarding, however, consulting is also a demanding field. Most consultants travel extensively—they may spend three weeks a month on the road—and often work 60 to 80 hours a week. It is important to weigh the costs and benefits of a demanding schedule with the opportunities before diving into a consulting job. Attending information sessions, networking with industry professionals, and performing company research will assist you in learning about the field and deciding whether it is a good fit.

One particular area of consulting that may be of interest to academics is educational consulting. Higher-education consulting is a relatively small industry, but it has been gaining prominence in recent years. Educational consultants might work in the nonprofit division of a large management consulting firm, in smaller companies dedicated entirely to educational consulting, or independently. This is a field in which higher education experience is valued, as well as the transferable skills in research, writing, and advising gained in a PhD program.

You might also keep in mind a type of educational consulting in which one works directly with students and/or parents, advising on secondary school and college applications. Most high schools, for example, employ at least one counselor who helps students navigate the college application process. As well, parents increasingly turn to private educational consultants for help navigating the secondary school and higher education system – both public and private. While often you will find that college counselors have degrees in counseling, this is by no means mandatory.

Where to Look

- Columbia Graduate Consulting Club [7]
- <u>CaseInterview.com</u> [8]
- Independent Educational Consultants Association [9]
- <u>Vault</u> [9]
- Wetfeet [10]

NONPROFITS

A nonprofit organization (NPO) is an organization that does not distribute its surplus funds to owners or shareholders, but instead uses them to help pursue its goals. NPOs cover a wide range of organizations, including health, educational, religious, arts, and charitable organizations, as well as advocacy groups, professional societies, and research institutes. Nonprofits derive their operating revenues from foundations, government grants, membership dues, and fees for services they provide (thus their continuing need for grant writing and fundraising).

Many PhD students seek out NPOs as their first step outside academia, in part because the culture of nonprofits can be particularly PhD friendly, and also because these organizations often need staff skilled in grant writing, research, fundraising, program evaluation, program development, and advising – all skills with which many PhDs are well-versed. NPOs also attract people who are passionate about particular social and civic issues; in fact, one benefit to working in the NPO sector is that you can make a positive impact on behalf of your organization's cause; one downside is that most jobs don't pay very well.

Where to Look

Below is a list of Web sites and job databases that are particularly useful for learning more about opportunities in the nonprofit world.

- <u>Idealist</u> [11]
- National Council of Nonprofits [12]
- Foundation Center [13]
- Non-Profit Career Network [14]
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy [15]
- Council on Foundations [16]

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Many PhDs, especially those in the social sciences, have found a strong fit for their high-level quantitative (in particular statistics, stochastic calculus, and related disciplines), research, and programming skills in financial services. Financial services companies – both large and small (and embracing everything from universal banks, to hedge funds, to private trading companies) - need PhDs to fill a wide variety of roles requiring these distinctive skills. These roles encompass sales and trading, product development, analytics, risk monitoring and assessment, and fixed income and equity research. But this is by no means an exhaustive list and many additional opportunities can be identified. These roles are frequently found under the heading of financial engineering and/or risk management. These terms often refer to the application of quantitative, analytical, and programming skills to the identification and exploitation of

anomalies in the price or value of securities, commodities, and markets. Other opportunities include the assessment and management of risk, portfolio value, and the analysis of investment opportunities. A broad range of opportunities exists within financial services for PhD graduates.

Where to Look

- <u>Vault</u> [9]
- Wetfeet [10]
- The American Finance Association [17]
- American Association of Finance & Accounting [18]
- New York Society of Security Analysts [19]
- Association for Financial Professionals [20]
- Financial Management Association International [21]
- 85 Broads [22]
- Careers in Business [23]

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHING

Many graduate students who love to teach have found secondary-school teaching to be a rewarding career. The opportunity to interact with students in a variety of arenas (classrooms, athletics, theater, student clubs, and class trips) and a sense of making a difference in students' lives are cited over and over again by teachers as reasons why they enjoy the profession.

Graduate students will often choose private schools as a first step in their teaching careers because, unlike public schools, they do not require teaching certification. Charter schools are another good option. A number of charter schools have classes aimed at college preparation, research, and writing.

For those graduate students interested in a public school environment, several organizations allow a-typical candidates and career-changers to become certified quickly. The New York City Teaching Fellows Programs recruits dedicated individuals to teach in public schools, allowing them to become certified within a few months of joining the program. Teach for America notes that 19 percent of their 2010 corps had full-time, post-college work experience or completed a graduate degree program prior to joining.

When considering a career in teaching, remember that experience with adolescents and teenagers is important. While your PhD states that you are clearly qualified to teach a particular subject, you need to emphasize your interest in younger students and your ability to work with a different kind of curriculum. There are several ways to gain experience in this area. You might contact schools for substitute or part-time openings, choose to volunteer, work with individual students as a tutor or providing after school support. You could also look for jobs teaching in a summer program run by independent schools.

Where to Look

- National Association of Independent Schools [24]
- Carney, Sandoe & Associates [25]
- New York City Charter School Center [26]
- NYC Teaching Fellows [27]
- Teach for America [28]
- New York City Department of Education [29]
- The Parents League of New York [30]

ACADEMIC PUBLISHING

Academic publishing companies print and distribute scholarship in journal, book or thesis form. Most established academic disciplines have their own journals and other outlets for publication, although many academic journals are interdisciplinary, and publish work from several distinct fields.

For some graduates, publishing provides an opportunity to stay intimately involved with scholarship; moreover, most academic presses believe that PhDs' long and prior commitment to scholarship makes them better editors. Nevertheless, those interested in a career in publishing should keep in mind that combined pressure of budget cuts at universities and increased costs for journals have brought about real changes to the industry. University budget cuts have reduced library budgets and reduced subsidies to university-affiliated publishers. The humanities have been particularly affected by the pressure on university publishers, which are less able to publish monographs when libraries can't afford to purchase them.

PhDs interested in publishing might also keep in mind the related field of educational publishing. Educational publishing companies specialize in materials for secondary schools, colleges and universities, training programs, etc. Such materials include textbooks, indexes and abstracts, study guides, etc. Nevertheless, educational publishing companies are a distinct market-based business sector, not to be confused with academic presses (university-based publishers).

Where to Look

- Professional Scholarly Publishing [31]
- Association of American University Presses [32]

NON-ACADEMIC PUBLISHING

"Trade books" and "consumer magazines" differ from scholarly (academic) publishing in that their products are intended to appeal to a more general readership. Many PhDs have skills that could result in successful careers in editorial, management, marketing, sales, production, design, information technology, and business positions. PhDs can also find writing positions – many freelance or part-time – with various newspapers and magazines, especially those that are relevant to a PhD's area of expertise.

Where to Look

- Publishers Market Place, Lunch Job Board [33]
- Association of American Publishers [34]
- Publishers Weekly [35]

CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Cultural and historical organizations such as museums, libraries, and performing arts centers may seem like a natural fit for those in history, musicology, the fine arts, or art history. However, graduate students in other fields have also moved on to productive careers in cultural organizations. In addition to curatorial and research work, these organizations offer opportunities in outreach and education, program development, grant writing, marketing and public relations. In fact, cultural organizations often seek to hire those with graduate degrees not only for their knowledge of a given subject, but also for their skills in research, writing, analysis, and presentation.

Where to Look

- American Association of Museums [36]
- American Cultural Resources Association [37]
- Global Museum [38]
- National Council on Public History [39]
- New York Foundation for the Arts [40]

U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Federal Government's broad mission and numerous branches provide a variety of choices for PhDs looking for careers beyond academia. From architects to social scientists, the federal government is looking for a wide variety of talented employees. Federal jobs are spread across more than 100 agencies and bureaus, each with its own mission and each overseeing its own hiring and recruitment. With over 1.7 million jobs, and over 400 occupational specialties, the Federal Government offers more choices than any other employer in the U.S.

The skills and content knowledge accumulated during a graduate career in the humanities and social sciences are useful to many governmental bureaus. PhDs with specialized knowledge of a language and/or culture, for example, can be valuable assets to the Department of State, and have received positions as analysts at the Central Intelligence Agency. A useful way to find these and other positions is to do a keyword search at the USA jobs site. Below you'll find a list of a few agencies known to hire PhDs – but remember there are far more. NOTE: *Most federal government jobs are limited to U.S. citizens*.

Where to Look

- USA Jobs, The Federal Government's Official Jobs Site [41]
- Partnership for Public Service [42]
- Making the Difference [43]
- <u>Department of Defense</u> [44]
- Department of Health and Human Services [45]
- Department of State [46]
- National Endowment for the Arts [47]
- National Endowment for the Humanities [48]
- Presidential Management Fellows Program [49]

PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH

There are innumerable professional contexts in which graduate students can apply the research skills gained during their programs. For example, think tanks and research centers conduct research in a broad array of areas. They often like to hire PhDs as the research, analytical, and writing skills developed in graduate school are directly applicable to the work of these institutions. In many other industries, everything from education, publishing, nonprofits, government agencies, banks, and start-ups, PhDs can put their research skills to work in areas such as program evaluation, fundraising research, market research, or public opinion research. Positions in professional research may require skills in quantitative research, qualitative research, or both, as well as strong written communication skills. It is often useful to look for research positions in a particular industry or field in which you are especially interested. You might also begin by looking at particular think tanks and research centers (just a few of which are listed below).

Where to Look

- National Institute for Research Advancement's World Directory of Think Tanks [50]
- Worldpress Index of International Think Tanks and Research Organizations [51]

- United States Department of State Index of Think Tanks [52]
- United States Institute of Peace Index of Research Centers in International Relations [53]

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

International Development focuses on improving the welfare of a community or communities at a global level, either through short-term relief or long-term social change through sustainable practices. International development projects may consist of a single, transformative project to address a specific problem or a series of projects targeted at several aspects of society. Many projects involve problem solving that reflects the unique culture, politics, geography, and economy of a region. More recently, the focus in this field has been projects that aim towards empowering women, building local economies, and caring for the environment. Areas of international development can include foreign aid, governance, disaster relief, microfinance, humanitarian aid, gender equality, healthcare, infrastructure, peace and conflict resolution, and alleviating poverty.

Graduate programs that provide a theoretical foundation in one or more areas for policy development and analysis (e.g., economic development, environmental conservation, gender studies, public health, education, political science, geography, urban/regional planning, sociology, anthropology, and public policy) are excellent preparation for a career in international development, as are programs in the humanities and social sciences that allow students to develop knowledge and understanding of different cultures and regions.

Those thinking about a career in international development should consider whether they want to work at an organization's headquarters in their home country or on-site in another location. Also keep in mind that most mid- and upper-level careers in ID require 5+ years of international experience.

Where To Look

- Uniworld [54]
- Going Global [55]
- United Nations Foundation [56]
- William J. Clinton Foundation [57]
- <u>United States Agency for International Development</u> [58]
- United States Institute of Peace Index of Research Centers in International Relations [53]

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Very simply, an entrepreneur is someone who sees an opportunity to fill a need and takes the initiative to fill it. Entrepreneurs are often associated with business or for-profit examples like that of Pierre Omidyar, founder of e-Bay, who recognized the need for people to buy and sell an infinite number of items in an online marketplace. Entrepreneurship, however, has a broader reach than for-profit ventures as entrepreneurs are also those who recognize and seek to fill a social need. One example is Steve Mariotti, a former business entrepreneur and public school teacher who started a foundation to teach entrepreneurial concepts to low-income youth. Regardless of the particular venture, the ability to innovate, to handle risk and uncertainty, and to work independently are key characteristics of successful entrepreneurs.

Many entrepreneurs start their first ventures as students, as a sideline to explore an interest or idea. Below are highlighted resources both at and outside Columbia to support entrepreneurial interests.

Columbia Resources

Below are a few resources at Columbia that offer opportunities for you to develop the skills and knowledge to get you started on pursuing your entrepreneurial endeavors:

- <u>Columbia Student Enterprises</u> [59]: For over 70 years, undergraduate and graduate students have learned about and developed entrepreneurship, enterprise leadership, and business skills through Columbia Student Enterprises. You can earn a salary through starting, managing, or working for student-run for-profit and social enterprises that provide valuable products and services to the campus and broader community.
- <u>Center for Technology, Innovation, and Community Engagement (CTICE), Engaged Entrepreneurship Program</u> [60]: The Engaged Entrepreneurship Program at CTICE provides education and support for The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science students and faculty, socially engaged entrepreneurs, and members of the Harlem community. The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science and CTICE have made major progress in developing and implementing a program that will allow students to participate in meaningful entrepreneurship activities across all four undergraduate years.
- Columbia Organization of Rising Entrepreneurs (CORE) [61]: CORE runs a series of educational workshops open to all Columbia
 undergraduate and graduate students and alumni to help them learn about important topics including business plan development,
 marketing, and entrepreneurial finance. CORE also sponsors an annual business plan competition to grant seed money to
 students with the strongest business plans.

Additional Resources

General Resources

- All Business [62]: Information, products, and services for entrepreneurs, small businesses and professionals to start, manage, finance and build a business
- Entrepreneur.com [63]: Information to help start, grow or manage a small business

- National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance [64]: Association of colleges and universities that support technology innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education to create experiential learning opportunities for students, and successful, socially beneficial businesses. Offers grants, competitions, courses, and networking opportunities
- Online Business Advisor [65]: Free business advice on various topics in the form of training segments, articles, manuals/workbooks.
- Inc.com [66]: Advice, tools, and services, to help business owners and CEOs start, run, and grow their businesses
- <u>Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)</u> [67]: SCORE is made up of prominent and retired business executives who volunteer their time to advise people on how to start for-profit and not-for-profit enterprises
- StartupJournal [68]: The Wall Street Journal Center for Entrepreneurs

Government Resources

- Business.gov [69]: The Official Business Link to the U.S. Government
- Internal Revenue Service: Starting a Business [70]: Information on federal tax responsibilities of small business owners
- <u>Small Business Administration</u> [71]: Independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns

Start-up Resources

- All Business Starting a Business [72]; [72] Articles on various topics related to starting a business
- Entrepreneur.com Starting a Business [73]: Articles on various topics related to starting a business
- My Own Business [74]: A Free Course on How to Start a Business

Resources for Social Entrepreneurs

- Ashoka [75]: A global organization that identifies and invests in leading social entrepreneurs
- <u>Social Edge</u> [76]: Global online community where social entrepreneurs and other practitioners of the social benefit sector connect to network, learn, inspire and share resources

Resources for Women

- Office of Women's Business Ownership [77]: Resources for women listed by OWBO, a program of the Small Business Administration
- <u>Ladies Who Launch</u> [78]: Provides online resources and connections for women entrepreneurs

Resources for Minorities

- <u>Minority Business Development Agency</u> [79]: Federal agency dedicated to advancing the establishment and growth of minority-owned firms in the United States
- National Minority Business Council [80]: Organization of business leaders dedicating to supporting and expanding opportunities for minority and women business owners

INDEPENDENT WORK

An independent worker is someone employed on a temporary or part-time basis, working under an agreement for a fixed period or a specific project on a non-permanent basis. Independent workers include freelancers, consultants, independent contractors, temps, contingent employees and the self-employed. If all these forms of work are taken into account in the current economy, the percentage of people engaged in independent work in the U.S. is between 30-35%. In fact, independent and freelance work is increasingly common across numerous industries. And while people often choose independent work for a variety of reasons (a few noted below), for many people, including recent graduates, independent work is not a choice but rather a necessity.

Nevertheless, before considering a form of independent work, one should carefully consider the downsides. With freelance and self-employment in particular, you are responsible for managing your business and figuring (and paying) your taxes on your own. Moreover, independent work in general rarely includes company benefits (e.g., paid time off, insurance) and does not provide the security of a constant source of income.

On the other hand, independent work offers numerous benefits. Independent workers may enjoy a variety of assignments, and often more control over assignments. Independent work can also provide a flexible work schedule and the ability to work from home. For PhDs considering careers outside academia, independent work is an excellent way to ease into job hunting, to gain skills, and to explore various areas of interest. It should also be noted that independent workers, including part-timers, are often in the best position to get full-time jobs in companies that they are currently working for.

Where to Look

- Guru Employer [81]
- Solo Gig [82]
- <u>Elance</u> [83]
- All Freelance Directory [84]
- Freelancer's Union [85]

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- [5] http://www.hercjobs.org/home/index.cfm?site_id=793
- [6] http://www.academic360.com/
- [7] http://www.columbia.edu/cu/consultingclub/Welcome.html
- [8] http://www.caseinterview.com/
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- [13] http://foundationcenter.org/
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- [16] http://www.cof.org/
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- [18] http://www.aafa.com/
- [19] http://www.nyssa.org/
- [20] http://www.afponline.org/
- [21] http://www.fma.org/
- [22] http://www.85broads.com/
- [23] http://www.careers-in-business.com/
- [24] http://www.nais.org/
- [25] http://www.carneysandoe.com/
- [26] http://www.nyccharterschools.org/
- [27] https://www.nycteachingfellows.org/becomeafellow/overview.asp
- [28] http://www.teachforamerica.org/
- [29] http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm
- [30] http://www.parentsleague.org/
- [31] http://www.pspcentral.org/index.cfm
- [32] http://www.aaupnet.org/index.php
- [33] http://www.publishersmarketplace.com/jobs/
- [34] http://www.publishers.org/
- [35] http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/home/index.html
- [36] http://www.aam-us.org/
- [37] http://acra-crm.org/
- [38] http://www.globalmuseum.org/
- [39] http://ncph.org/cms/
- [40] http://www.nyfa.org/
- [41] http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/
- [42] http://www.ourpublicservice.org/OPS/
- [43] http://www.makingthedifference.org/index.shtml
- [44] http://www.defense.gov/
- [45] http://www.hhs.gov/
- [46] http://www.state.gov/
- [47] http://www.nea.gov/
- [48] http://www.neh.gov/
- [49] http://www.pmf.gov/opportunity/index.aspx
- [50] http://www.nira.or.jp/past/ice/nwdtt/2005/
- [51] http://www.worldpress.org/library/ngo.cfm
- [52] http://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/79982.htm
- [53] http://www.usip.org/publications/research-centers
- [54] http://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/library/uniworld
- [55] http://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/going-global
- [56] http://www.unfoundation.org/
- [57] http://www.clintonfoundation.org/
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- [60] http://ctice.columbia.edu/content/engaged-entrepreneurship
- [61] http://www.columbia.edu/cu/core/
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- [73] http://www.entrepreneur.com/bizstartups
- [74] http://www.myownbusiness.org
- [75] http://www.ashoka.org
- [76] http://www.socialedge.org/
- [77] http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/onlinewbc/resources/WBC_RESOURCES_FOR_WOMEN.html
- [78] http://www.ladieswholaunch.com/
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