Career Planning

Here's what you can do with a major in NELC

Some NELC majors will want to pursue the types of careers that are directly associated with Near Eastern Languages and Civilization. Others may want to pursue routes not typically associated with NELC as well. Both routes benefit from a degree in Near Eastern Languages and Civilization.

### Industry and Commerce

- Overseas sales representative
- Overseas manager
- Overseas researcher
- U.S.-based import/export officer
- Investment specialist
- Interpreter
- **Translator**
- Technical writer/translator
- Computer systems designer
- Finance director
- Overseas plant manager
- Pharmacist, pharmaceutical representative
- Salesperson
- International trade specialist

### Academic and Professional

- International lawyer
- Medical researcher
- Health care professional
- **Academic researcher**
- Librarian
- International researcher
- UNESCO project worker
- Translator – academic, scientific [link]
- Interpreter – academic, scientific
- Foreign language/Bilingual teacher
- Professor
- Teacher
- Linguist

### Service

- **Non-governmental organization**
- United Nations project employee
- UN translator/interpreter
- Overseas medical or agricultural worker
- Peace Corps volunteer
- Missionary
- Social worker
- Consultant
- Event planning
- Public health administrator
### U.S. Government

*more than 80 federal government agencies depend on individuals with at least intermediate proficiencies in foreign languages*

- Immigration/Customs official
- Staff /Faculty at overseas U.S. school
- Foreign Embassy staff
- Overseas broadcast staff
- State Department staff/ Armed forces staff
- Translator
- Court interpreter
- Intelligence agent
- Civil Service employee
- FBI agent
- Politician

### Arts, Media, Entertainment

- Journalist
- Foreign/overseas correspondent
- Film producer
- Art dealer
- Overseas manager
- Translator/interpreter
- Advertising manager, copywriter
- Editor, proofreader
- Media specialist
- Museum curator
- Musician
- Radio/TV announcer
- Publishing specialist

### Travel and Tourism

- U.S. based travel agent
- U.S. hotel staff
- U.S. tour guide for foreign visitors
- Travel writer
- International airline employee
- International hotel staff
- International tour guide
- Cultural attaché

Other resources to find typical careers and the steps to pursue such careers can be found at:

- UW Career Center: What Can I Do with a Major In...
- University of North Carolina Wilmington: Majors and Careers

### NELC Career-Related Skills and Strengths

Employers are often more interested in your skills and strengths than in your particular college major. Because you will be qualified for many career paths, your biggest challenge might be narrowing down your options.
As an NELC major at the University of Washington, you have developed many skills that employers view as essential. You use some of these skills so often that they have become “second nature,” so you might not even realize that you have them.

Here are some examples:

- Broad cultural understanding and insight
- Interacting well with diverse cultures/group
- Knowledge of social structures and social change processes
- Reporting and editing
- Acknowledging value systems
- Interviewing non-judgmentally
- Writing clearly
- Presentation skills, speaking to groups
- Communication across languages/cultures
- Interpersonal communication skills (oral and written)
- Explaining complex concepts
- Collaborating as part of a team
- Cognitive and critical thinking abilities
- Problem-solving
- Comparing translation interpretations
- Reading for content and structure
- Understanding historical language changes
- Forming hypotheses, evaluating evidence

Additional examples can be found at University of North Carolina Career Center.

Why value a liberal arts degree?

Critical Edge: While liberal-arts majors may struggle a bit more than other majors when launching their careers, evidence shows that they tend to advance farther and be more sought out by CEOs for high-level jobs requiring critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Critical-thinking allows an employee to change with innovations and advancements and to be flexible to see from new perspectives.

Universal Skills: Experts say that most people will change careers five to seven times in a lifetime; thus, specialized skills may be of limited value in the long run, while the well-rounded depth and breadth of liberal-arts skills are limitless. Surveys also show that employers place more weight on the right skills than on the right major.

Passion: Students choose liberal-arts degrees because they are passionate about the subject rather than the pragmatic occupational reasons. Chances are that a student who enjoyed what he/she studied will have a better academic record than if he/she had chosen a major he/she loathed. The academic success becomes a selling point.

Communication: Research shows that communication skills are at the top of most employers’ list of qualifications for candidates. Liberal-arts students have focused on communicating orally, in writing, expressing individual opinions, and reporting unbiased
Cultured Perspective: Every sphere of society is growing more global. Liberal-arts degrees specialize in cultural awareness, diversity, and team-oriented experiences.

Learn more about the value of a Liberal Arts education here.

Career-Related Resources at the University of Washington:
University of Washington Career Center
The UW Career Center in Mary Gates Hall assists with all aspects of your career development:

- Discovering what career(s) you're interested in
- Refining your resume and interviewing skills
- Finding internships
- Identifying activities you can pursue while in college that will enhance your resume
- Learning salary negotiation skills
- Applying to graduate or professional schools

The Center for Career Services provides a workshop free of charge to students considering graduate or professional school as their next step after graduation. For more information on the workshop please see the Workshops and Classes page. To see when the workshop is offered, please see the Center for Career Services events calendar.

Visit them in person at MGH, or online at: http://careers.washington.edu/

University of Washington Counseling Center
The UW Counseling Center in Schmitz Hall offers two career inventories that help identify how you make decisions and what you value:

- Strong Interest Inventory
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

Visit them in person at Schmitz Hall, or online at the UW Counseling Center site.

Washington Occupational Information Service
Visit the Washington Occupational Information Service for lots of information about various careers including:

- What people in various occupations actually do for a living
- Salary information
- Expected demand for certain occupations in the future
- Networking resources
Act Now to Enhance Your Resume

Get experience through internships and/or volunteer work. There are many ways to find internships including through the UW Career Center and the UW.

Get involved with a student organization. Student organizations are an excellent venue for developing and demonstrating skills that you'll want to include on your resume and job interviews such as leadership, planning and implementing, teamwork, and organizational skills.

http://depts.washington.edu/sao/

Engage in research: Assist a professor or initiate your own project! Check out the UW Undergraduate Research Program at:

http://www.washington.edu/research/urp/

Meet with a UW Career Counselor to work on your resume and design a plan to fill any "gaps."

http://careers.washington.edu/

Start Networking Now to Create Professional Relationships

Networking can help you explore career options and make connections that will likely help with your future job (and internship) searches.

The Husky Career Network is a great place to start your networking. Sponsored by the UW Alumni Association, this network includes over 5000 UW alums who want to help you with your career path.

The Seattle Networking Guide is a website that was designed specifically for the purpose of helping people who want to work in the Seattle metropolitan area to network.

Join a professional association to meet other people in your field(s) of interest.

Consider doing some Informational Interviews with people who are already working in occupations that you are considering.

Government Organizations

- State Department
- Defense Department
- National Security Agency (NSA)
- CIA
- FBI
Non-Governmental Organizations

- United Nations
  - Employment
  - Economic and Social Dev.
  - Humanitarian Affairs
  - Human Rights
  - Peace and Security
  - International Law
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Bank
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- International Red Cross
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- Amnesty International USA
- Human Rights Watch
- Doctors Without Borders
- NATO
- Peace Corps
- Institute of International Education
- International Research and Exchanges Board
- Soros Foundation
- Eurasia Foundation

Translator/Interpreter Resources

- Information on careers for Translators/Interpreters
- National Virtual Translation Center

Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilization  
University of Washington  
Denny Hall 220-D  
Box 353120  
Seattle, WA 98195-3120  

Phone: (206) 543-6033  
Fax: (206) 685-7936  
neareast@uw.edu