

What Can I Do With A Major In... Economics?

This is a list of job titles and job descriptions of entry-level positions for which graduates with a B.A. in economics might be hired.

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For more information on these careers, use the Career Exploration Center library. See the University of Texas Department of Economics for more information about majoring in economics.

DIRECT Career Options

The skills required for the jobs listed here are so similar to the skills acquired in studying economics that a degree in the field will usually serve as a credential for getting the job.

ACTUARY

Assembles and analyzes statistics, calculates risk probabilities, and determines premium rates for policies and pension plans within the three basic areas of insurance: life, health, and property and casualty. Works for insurance companies and their regulators.

BANK RESEARCH ANALYST

Researches, analyzes, and assesses prospective banking projects. Typically works for the bank involved.

COMPENSATION/BENEFITS COORDINATOR

Assists Compensation/Benefits Analyst in examining compensation packages, including wages, salaries, and benefits, and in comparing them with those in the same field to determine competitiveness and fairness. Employers in many diverse fields, including compensation consulting firms.

FINANCIAL ANALYST

Assesses the feasibility and profitability of specific financial operations, programs, and transactions. Works for corporations, government agencies, investment banks, and brokerage firms. Usually requires relevant coursework.

FINANCIAL RESEARCHER

Compiles statistical reviews and forecasts. Maintains and reviews financial literature and records regarding departments, industries, and possible transactions. Works for corporations, financial institutions. Usually requires relevant coursework.

INVESTMENT BANKING ANALYST TRAINEE

Completes basic research required for investment banking transactions between institutions with long-term capital needs and major investors. Researches both broad industries and the specific financial status of particular institutions, prepares documents and reports for staff and clients.

LABOR RELATIONS RESEARCHER

Assists labor relations specialists with detailed research required for contract negotiations. Prepares advisory reports on union-management agreements. Works for unions, unionized employers, and government arbitrators.

LOBBYING RESEARCHER

Identifies information that can be used to support the positions and the efforts of lobbyists. Involves library research, attendance at conferences and committee meetings, and writing of reports. Employers include a diversity of special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT RESEARCHER

Explores the real estate needs of particular communities, gathers information about available parcels of land, and explores the market feasibility of proposed projects. Works for real estate developers.

UNDERWRITER TRAINEE

Assists in determining whether an insurance company will take on a particular risk. Analyzes actuarial studies and other pertinent information, prices policies in an attempt to balance risk and the need for profit, and answers inquiries from agents and clients. Works for insurance companies and reinsurance companies (which underwrite other insurance companies in cases of very high risk).

URBAN PLANNING RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Under the supervision of a city or regional planner, conducts research into the economic, environmental, and social consequences of development in order to support strategies for appropriate growth and renovation of rural, suburban, or urban areas. Typically works for a government agency. May work for a consulting or architectural firm.

LESS DIRECT Career Options

The fit between the academic training in economics and the job skills is still very close. However, knowledge of economics may be less pertinent to these positions, and a degree in economics itself may or may not serve as a credential for employment.

ACCOUNTANT

Much more than a bookkeeper. Financial analysis, financial consultation, and financial management for individuals, small businesses, corporations, and government. Three areas of specialization: tax, audit, and management consulting. Domestic and foreign opportunities. Requires prior accounting coursework or experience.

ADVERTISING MEDIA PLANNER

Determines the most cost-effective means of reaching a target market via print and broadcast media. Researches demographics of different media outlets, and analyzes demographic and budgetary aspects of advertising proposals.

BANK EXAMINER

Reviews records and procedures to determine whether banks are in compliance with federal and state regulations as well as internal bank policy. Works for federal reserve banks or as internal auditor for commercial banks.

BANK TRUST OFFICER

Administers private, corporate, and probate trusts, and advises individual and corporate customers regarding investment risks and opportunities.

BANKING OPERATIONS MANAGER

Coordinates working of staff and systems, operates internal control procedures, and meets customer needs on a daily basis.

ENERGY RESEARCHER

Researches a variety of issues involved in working with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and "alternatives" such as wind, tide, and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCHER

Researches, develops, and presents information regarding environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Works in foreign service posts to represent and administer United States embassies and various foreign service programs. Requires testing and security clearance.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Does historical analysis; studies policy issues; prepares analytical reports; coordinates interdisciplinary studies. Works for "think tanks", universities, public research agencies.

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.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

Researches and analyzes a diversity of geopolitical issues on behalf of the government. Employed by intelligence services such as the F.B.I., the C.I.A., the National Security Agency, and military intelligence agencies. Work requires testing and security clearance.

INTERNAL BANK AUDITOR

Going from department to department, reviews banking transactions and procedures, analyzes them, and reports recommendations to department heads. Works for the same banks she/ he audits.

LEGISLATIVE AIDE

Performs research, writing, and liaison functions for a state or U.S. senator or congressional representative or for a municipal officeholder. Positions typically secured through direct contact with officeholder.

LOAN OFFICER

Acts as a liaison between a bank and its loan customers. Analyzes potential loan markets, evaluates credit-worthiness of prospective customers, recommends approval or denial of loans, administers active loan accounts.

MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Undertakes the preliminary research for a market study, gathering data concerning competitors' products, organizing existing sales records, etc. Also assists in writing final project reports. Works for market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Assists Account Executive in liaison with clients and helps to coordinate studies. Studies include analysis of sales records, surveying attitudes and opinions, and test marketing. Positions exist in market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturing, and retailing.

MARKET RESEARCH INTERVIEWER

Conduct interviews to acquire statistical data pertaining to potential buying behavior, consumer attitudes, and other marketing issues. Works for market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Under direction of an Account Executive, coordinates the efforts of interviewers, tabulators, and coders in conducting a market research study. Employers include market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

MARKET RESEARCH STATISTICIAN

Provides guidance in a market study, ensuring that the results obtained are valid and worthy of interpretation. Positions exist in market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

MONEY MARKET AND SECURITIES TRADER

Manages stock, bond, and other financial paper transactions for commercial banks, investment banks, and special trading firms in order to make a profit from bank operating funds.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN WORKER

Assists in planning, fundraising, 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.

SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Does sociological analysis; studies policy issues; prepares analytical reports; coordinates interdisciplinary studies. Works for "think tanks", universities, public research agencies.

STOCKBROKER

Deals with stock, bond, and commodities transactions. Analyzes the financial status of clients, sets investment goals with clients, proposes particular investments, buys and sells the investments that clients select. Training typically offered by the employing firm. Paid on commission.

SURVEY ASSISTANT

Assists in the design of survey interviews and questionnaires, the interviewing of subjects, the management of interviewers, collection and analysis of data, and documentation and presentation of findings. Works for government agencies and private surveying and market research organizations.

TRADER

Buys and sells commodities, bonds, money, or other "financial paper" on behalf of him/herself or his/her employer, rather than on behalf of clients. Works for commercial banks and brokerage firms.

INDIRECT Career Options

At first glance, the jobs listed may not appear to have much to do with the study of economics. Yet there is a connection. The primary skills required in these jobs overlap substantially with some of the skills an economics major normally acquires. For instance, purchasing agents are constantly involved in financial analysis, and product marketing specialists use a knowledge of economics in assessing and comparing prospective markets.

ACADEMIC ADVISOR/COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Advises students at all levels on selection of courses and majors. Sometimes involves career counseling. Sometimes requires certification.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REPRESENTATIVE

Researches, analyzes, and monitors staffing policies in order to achieve affirmative action goals. Conducts outreach activities in order to identify and attract qualified women and minority applicants for company openings. Employers in all fields.

ALUMNI AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

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

ASSISTANT BRAND MANAGER

Assists in the developing and marketing of a product, typically one with a brand name. Usually works for consumer-products manufacturers, which make and sell cosmetics, drugs, food, and other soft goods.

BIOMEDICAL/MEDICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Follows detailed instructions and prescribed procedures to assist in laboratory research. Keeps records, writes reports, often conducts library research. Works in hospitals, clinics, colleges and universities, research institutes, and private industry.

CARTOGRAPHER

Prepares and uses maps of all types, including topographic, geologic, hydrographic, aeronautic, recreational, oceanographic, and a variety of thematic maps. Employers include government agencies, map-making firms, corporations that mine and drill for natural resources, and universities.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Recruits and selects prospective students, creates promotional materials, makes presentations on and off campus, sets admissions criteria, reviews applications, and communicates with applicants.

COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Creates and implements programs to raise funds for a college or university through corporate and alumni contributions.

COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID OFFICER

Helps students secure financial aid by providing appropriate information and processing a wide variety of applications.

COMPUTER MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Writes brochures, data sheets, and other marketing materials to promote a computer product. May include video scripting. Works for manufacturers of computer hardware and software. Typically requires some technical knowledge.

CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATOR

Using building plans and specifications, estimates the cost of a project for bidding purposes. Typically works for a construction company or an architect.

CONSULTING OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR

Furnishes support services for consultants. Coordinates travel arrangements, proofreads and edits reports, develops charts and graphs to illustrate findings, maintains and operates audiovisual equipment for presentations, organizes resource libraries, etc. Works for consulting firms.

CORRESPONDENT/STRINGER

Writes freelance reports for one or more publications. Usually has special knowledge of the subject or geographic area covered. Works as an independent contractor.

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.

ENERGY ADMINISTRATOR

Manages and plans operations or oversight of work with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and "alternatives" such as wind, tide, and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENERGY COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Handles community relations and liaison re: work with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and "alternatives" such as wind, tide, and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADMINISTRATOR

Manages, plans, supports, or monitors work involving environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Conducts community relations and liaison regarding environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

FILM RESEARCHER/COPYWRITER

Reviews scripts, checks for factual and technical accuracy, rewrites copy, assists in creating storyboard representations of scenes. Relevant coursework or prior experience preferred. Works for entertainment, documentary, educational, and industrial film producers.

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.

HOUSING AND STUDENT LIFE COORDINATOR

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

LOBBYING ORGANIZER

Distributes materials and disseminates information about a particular issue or organization, recruits, volunteers, solicits funds, and organizes such efforts as rallies, letter-writing campaigns, and voter registration drives. Employers include special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

MANUFACTURER'S BUYER

Assesses the needs of manufacturing firms, locates suppliers of raw materials or parts, and, working with contract administrators, reaches agreement with suppliers concerning price and delivery. Employed by manufacturers.

MANUFACTURING MANAGER

Supervises and coordinates personnel, resources, and manufacturing procedures on behalf of producers ranging from high-tech and electronics industries to makers of automobiles, chemicals, clothing, and numerous other products.

MANUFACTURER'S SALESPERSON

Within a given geographic, product-specific, or customer-specific territory, visits potential customers, analyzes their needs, promotes products, and takes orders. Works for one manufacturer on commission. (Entry-level hires may work for base salary plus commission.)

PARALEGAL

Performs preparatory work required to research a case, and develops documentation required to write a brief. May interview prospective witnesses. Works for private law offices, law firms, prosecutors, and public defenders.

PRODUCT MARKETING SPECIALIST

Under direction of a product manager, carries out specific assignments such as marketing analysis, merchandising, or sales training in order to promote a new product. Works for marketing firms, and manufacturers.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Creates, implements, and coordinates a service to a community. May involve fundraising for a charity, overseeing a scholarship fund, operating a service-oriented program or facility, etc. Employers include nonprofit corporations, social service agencies, and the public affairs sections of commercial businesses.

PUBLICATIONS RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas; maintains research files on topics and people; checks stories for accuracy. Works for newspaper, magazine, or book publishers.

PURCHASING AGENT

Purchases goods and services for the use of an employer, not for resale to a consumer. Seeks to buy whatever is needed--furniture, business machines, raw materials--in desired quantities at the lowest prices possible. Arranges time and place of delivery. Works for manufacturers, government agencies, banks, hospitals, educational institutions, and other large organizations.

RADIO/TELEVISION RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas for broadcast media. Maintains research files on topics and people; checks stories for accuracy. Works for radio and television producers.

REPORTER/STAFF WRITER

Works and writes for a publication on a regular basis. Usually works under pressure of deadlines on general assignments before specializing in a particular area. In addition to newspapers and magazines, employers include corporations and agencies with in-house newsletters.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Assists researchers in collecting and analyzing data, observing and interviewing people, surveying appropriate literature, and writing reports in order to advise or inform a client. Works for research and consulting firms.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR

Develops and administers special education programs. Settings (e.g., churches, social service agencies, youth organizations) and topics (e.g., therapeutic arts-and-crafts, drug-abuse education, athletic programs) vary widely.

SPECIAL PROGRAM TEACHERS

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.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES ADVISOR

Administers various activities for college students, usually extracurricular. Positions include fraternity/sorority advisor, disciplinary advisor, foreign student advisor, student publications advisor, and so forth.

STUDENT UNION COORDINATOR

Operates facilities and furnishes services for students through a college union or student center. Includes bookstore management, conference and special classes coordination, food services, and recreational services.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ANALYST

Maintains existing telecommunications systems and researches, plans, and implements new ones. Acts as a liaison between the employer, systems vendors, and consultants. Assesses the employer's telecommunications needs, analyzes system use, supervises and trains users and maintenance staff. Works for organizations with complex telecommunications needs.

TRADE SHOW COORDINATOR

Directs the display of exhibits in trade shows, promoting specialized sales within an industry. Employers include tradeshow service companies and high-tech manufacturers.

TRAFFIC ADMINISTRATOR

Coordinates and administers shipping of raw materials, subassemblies, and completed products. Researches and negotiates shipping methods and rates, applies shipping regulations and customs laws, schedules shipments, handles related paperwork. Works for manufacturers in all fields, including high-tech industries.