

# ARTIST/DESIGNER CAREER EXPLORATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

UM Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Career Interests \_\_\_\_\_

It is a good idea to begin career exploration in your first year at the University. Your first step after graduation may lead to a long, rewarding, and direct career path, or it may be the first exploration of many opportunities in a long, wonderfully circuitous life journey. Perhaps your first job will utilize your art-design skills; perhaps it will support you while you pursue your own art-design ventures. In either case, planning and developing a strategy for that first step is important.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know exactly what you want to do in the future. The best way to begin planning is to remove “job” from the equation and focus first on what general interests you have:

## Top Five Interests:

**Examples:** drawing, fishing, computers, old movies, sci fi, etc.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

At any given time in our lives we have a variety of skills. Again, don't think in terms of a job, only in terms of what skills you have:

## Top Five Skills:

**Examples:** Adobe Illustrator, painting, good organizer, leadership, Web Design, etc.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

When considering ways in which you can support art-design pursuits, don't forget about interests and skills. You may find that going to work every day will be much more fulfilling if it reflects your interests. You may not know what careers best suit your personality (yet!) but you do know your own personality:

## Five words that describe your personality:

**Examples:** Friendly, shy, outgoing, moody, passionate, etc.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

Values may help shape decision making more than any other factor. Sometimes artist-designers are looking for a job in a chosen field, sometimes for a job that sustains art-design pursuits. Either way, your values will play a significant role in how you plan your first step after graduation.

**From the following list, choose 5 that are most important to you:**

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>An Exciting Life</b>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>An Ideal Setting</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Respect for the Individual</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Financial Security</b>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Political Power</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Intelligence</b>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Personal Freedom</b>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Social Justice</b>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Creativity</b>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>A Balanced Life</b>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>An Authentic World</b>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Wisdom</b>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Spirituality</b>                | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Social Recognition</b>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Self-Esteem</b>                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>A World of Beauty</b>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Universal Brotherhood</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Deep Friendships</b>           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Job Satisfaction</b>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>An Ideal Family Life</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mature Love</b>                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>A Long Life and Good Health</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Inner Peace</b>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Community</b>                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Choose Your Own</b> _____       |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Choose Your Own</b> _____       |   |  |

Location, Location, Location. When exploring careers and your long-range goals, think about where you would like to live to make sure there are career options in that geographic area. Another consideration for art-design pursuits is the relative support for the arts in a geographic area. While it is not imperative that you live in such a location, many artist-designers are drawn to such places.

**Check off the environment(s) that suit you best:**

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>An Exciting Life</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suburban</b>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quiet</b>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Large City</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hot Climate</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Damp or Wet</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Smaller City</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Temperate Climate</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Dry or Arid</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rural</b>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cool Climate</b>      |   |

**Check off the work environments and that suit you best:**

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indoors</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Regular Hours</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Overtime necessary</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outdoors</b>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Variable Hours</b> |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Travel involved</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Weekend Hours</b>  |  |

How much further education or training are you willing to invest in your career? Remember, this is very changeable as new opportunities are open to you. Additional skills, knowledge and experience may be necessary. A graduate degree may be a future goal after you have developed further as an artist-designer.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Undergraduate Degree</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Certification or Post-Baccalaureate</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Graduate Degree</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Sure</b>                            |

### How much money would you like to make?

Remember that most entry-level positions pay less than the median salary for any career.

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$30,000 - \$40,000**      \_\_\_\_\_ **\$40,000 - \$50,000**      \_\_\_\_\_ **\$50,000 - \$60,000**      \_\_\_\_\_ **More than \$60,000**

### Now that you have considered

all of these variables, it is time to start exploring and to find out what careers suit your interests, values, location, ultimate education level, desired income, and can help you attain your goals. A good place to start is a large resource like the Occupational Outlook Handbook. The Handbook is created by the US Department of Labor and can be found on line [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh). Over 30,000 occupations are listed and you can easily search the database to find basic information about almost any interest.

After you have identified careers and goals that are of interest, do more research. A good place to start is Career Links [www.stamps.umich.edu/career/resources](http://www.stamps.umich.edu/career/resources). One of the best things you can do is contact people in your areas of interest. The Stamps School of Art and Design is fortunate to have an alumni population willing to speak with you about career exploration. Make an appointment with John Luther, the Career Development Coordinator, to find out how you can connect with someone in your areas of interest.

Once you have explored enough and established that a career goal seems right for you, try it on for size. Pursue an internship, volunteer, or get a part time job in the field. You will not only figure out if the career is right for you, but you will make valuable connections that may help later in your job search.

**For more information about Career Exploration**, or to discuss other issues related to career development, contact John Luther, Career Development Coordinator via [www.stamps.genbook.com](http://www.stamps.genbook.com)

*Portions of this document have been adapted from material created by The University Career Center, University of Michigan, Division of Student Affairs.*

# CAREER PLANNING TIMELINE

## Freshman Year

- Meet with the Career Development Coordinator
- Check out Stamps' online Career Resources
- Attend the Penny Stamps Speaker Series  
to learn about others' careers
- Learn about professional associations related to your interests
- Conduct Informational Interviews
- EXPLORE! EXPLORE! EXPLORE!
- Start working on your portfolio and web site

## Sophomore Year

- Research companies and organizations for internships
- Conduct Informational Interviews (see "What Can I Do With My Stamps Degree?")
- Attend the Career Center's Career Expo
- Attend the Penny Stamps Lecture Series  
to learn about others' careers
- Attend Stamps Portfolio Expo and other Career Events
- Create a resume, cover letter and continue  
work on your portfolio/web site
- NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK!
- Use the Sophomore Review to work on:
  - Resume
  - Interviewing/Portfolio preparation and presentation
  - Articulation of future plans

## Junior Year

- Focus studio and academic courses toward your interests
- Use your time abroad to develop transferable skills like:
  - Communication
  - Cultural competence
  - Adaptability
- Focus in the fall term on researching  
and applying for internships
- Attend the Penny Stamps Speaker Series  
to learn about others' careers
- Continue to research and apply for internships in the winter term
- Attend the Career Center's Career Expo and other Career Events
- Attend the Stamps Portfolio Expo
- NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK!
- Refine your resume, cover letter, portfolio, web site

## Senior Year

- Consider how the Integrative Project /Senior Work can  
relate to your plans after Stamps
- Focus in the fall term on researching the companies/  
organizations with whom you wish to work
- Focus in the winter term on applying for  
positions (your NETWORK can help!!!)
- Attend the Penny Stamps Lecture Series  
to learn about others' careers
- Attend the Career Center's Career Expo and other Career  
Events
- Attend the Stamps Portfolio Expo
- NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK!
- Refine your resume and portfolio for each position
- Keep your website clean, readable and updated
- Follow up with contacts and potential employers