

A Note from Sam Kohler (Class of 2012)

My experience as a philosophy major ended as a very rewarding one for me. When I declared myself as a philosophy student it was because I was genuinely interested in it and enjoyed it. I had no foresight about career paths or how to plan the rest of my life around my degree, nor was I concerned with any of this. My degree was valuable because it was something I was engaged in and enjoyed, and not something I was simply there for. I'm not speaking for all, but I found this common in philosophy majors, as either something that developed or the type of personality that is drawn to the major.

After being asked "well what are you going to do with that" by almost every person who later knew what my area of study was in I started to question my choice. Job hunting is a sport now, and a difficult one. Trying to get that "ideal" job, be it good location, pay, or position is unheard of. I was wondering if even higher education was necessary or if I messed up by not getting a more specialized degree.

I had to think about what made me and my degree marketable. Why was philosophy the right choice for me and why it would be the right choice for my employer? I found through my questioning that philosophy was a mind-set not only a history of thought or even specific areas of thought. Sure I know much more about ethics, epistemology, the mind (maybe not), and ancient philosophy, but what I really gained was the philosophical mind-set.

My ability to think outside the box, to critically examine writing, and maybe most importantly to engage new ideas with an open mind are invaluable to me and I believe they may hold some value with any future employer of mine. This is what philosophy really taught me; how to be innovative, critical, and different.

As of now I'm inspired to work for Google, preferably something with advertising or marketing any of Google's products. I find marketing fascinating and I love Google's products, not to mention the countless accounts of how awesome it is to work there. I am also considering and slowly working on the possibility of starting a nonprofit organization continuing my work from my thesis. My progress as of now is simply research and writing to slowly build up the foundation of the organization. If this proves to be too much work I plan on using my efforts to spread information about organ transplantations (nephrectomy primarily) and organ waitlists. Probably through small papers published locally, infographics, and maybe a short viral video. I assume all of this will take a couple years of part-time work.

I wrote this little paper or whatever it is primarily because I forgot my book and I was bored on my work break, but also to once again thank you all for my philosophy experience. I truly enjoyed the time I spent in your classes or offices and was always excited to try to find that one solid "take-away" each day in class (even if the next day I completely abandoned it). So thank you; the fact that your enthusiasm matched those in your class (in a good way) made all philosophy classes stand out far above the others.

I am bummed I will not be returning to TCNJ again this fall, so Dr. Taylor make sure to pick on one kid in particular for me.

Thank you all again.
-Sam Kohler