

# **Projected Lifetime Earnings by Major**

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The estimates in the following table are based on the 2012-2016 American Community Surveys and the baseline lifetime earnings model in [Webber \(2014\)](#) and [Webber \(2016\)](#). The estimates only apply to wage and salary earnings, and do not include other forms of compensation. Individuals who that they are out of the labor force are excluded from the sample. All numbers are presented in constant 2016 dollars. The figures in this table are based on all individuals with at least a college degree, and therefore include some students who hold advanced degrees (Master's, PhD, JD, MD, etc.). All majors for which there was sufficient sample size across age groups to reliably estimate conditional means and variances were included.

**Expected Lifetime Earnings by Field of Bachelor's Degree (All Students)**

Field of Bachelor's Degree	Median Earnings	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Earnings	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Earnings
Chemical Engineering	3,780,453	3,196,903	4,592,097
Aerospace Engineering	3,538,654	3,037,240	4,142,717
Chemistry	3,518,648	2,871,478	4,221,580
Economics	3,422,811	2,745,113	4,270,621
Biological Sciences	3,422,777	2,816,997	4,208,001
Computer Engineering	3,409,588	2,922,968	4,078,270
Electrical Engineering	3,402,351	2,881,441	4,045,989
Mechanical Engineering	3,337,896	2,822,543	3,924,152
Finance	3,309,942	2,694,458	4,038,488
Industrial Engineering	3,290,524	2,756,122	3,908,698
Physics	3,221,610	2,695,424	3,904,843
Computer Science	3,182,019	2,672,923	3,784,026
Political Science	3,151,836	2,581,307	3,948,764
Nursing	3,114,998	2,675,857	3,714,772
Engineering (Other)	3,108,982	2,645,580	3,661,815
Civil Engineering	3,098,934	2,637,125	3,623,573
Mathematics and Statistics	3,096,235	2,571,145	3,761,291
Management and Information Science	3,005,649	2,581,330	3,517,715
Accounting	2,992,542	2,431,480	3,682,767
Information Science	2,932,920	2,484,040	3,489,110
Health Services (General)	2,790,057	2,243,612	3,386,462
International Business	2,770,080	2,281,957	3,414,790
Public Administration	2,765,554	2,265,803	3,416,430
Physical Sciences (not chem/physics)	2,726,765	2,296,717	3,350,425
Area/Ethnic Studies	2,723,416	2,161,998	3,396,860
Marketing	2,713,076	2,202,854	3,342,872
Medical Technologies	2,700,002	2,288,624	3,160,960
General Business	2,699,446	2,204,489	3,286,730
Construction	2,680,315	2,304,331	3,127,163
Transportation Science	2,670,173	2,277,682	3,207,920
Treatment Therapy (All)	2,658,779	2,213,077	3,158,295
Computer and Information Systems	2,647,340	2,217,370	3,125,193
Human Resources	2,623,880	2,165,852	3,150,634
Management	2,589,657	2,115,239	3,150,775
Agricultural Economics	2,552,757	2,127,750	3,150,805
Engineering Technologies	2,535,424	2,167,058	2,968,082
History	2,527,231	2,067,419	3,212,121

Journalism	2,498,449	2,018,065	3,015,890
Advertising/Public Relations	2,452,609	2,030,904	3,008,300
Architecture	2,440,401	2,006,712	2,962,057
Psychology	2,431,679	1,902,739	3,022,583
Foreign Languages	2,413,176	1,980,822	3,093,741
Computer Administration Management	2,398,833	1,983,678	2,924,319
English Language/Literature	2,394,413	1,966,203	2,966,166
Interdisciplinary Studies	2,388,407	1,910,783	3,020,988
Communications	2,377,990	1,974,827	2,836,760
Computer Programming	2,361,149	1,939,480	2,935,124
Environmental Science	2,342,942	1,936,916	2,837,132
Linguistics/Comparative Language and Literature	2,335,306	1,860,752	2,923,962
Art History	2,326,474	1,883,396	2,952,025
Sociology	2,309,754	1,867,687	2,844,286
Computer Networking and Telecommunications	2,281,413	1,916,637	2,845,946
Animal Science	2,280,769	1,940,136	2,711,254
Anthropology/Archeology	2,275,673	1,843,019	2,882,878
Criminology	2,242,362	1,884,478	2,691,585
Philosophy/Religious Studies	2,224,869	1,818,377	2,767,987
Criminal Justice	2,191,022	1,842,586	2,590,088
Social Sciences (Other)	2,185,392	1,810,148	2,736,551
Geography	2,169,629	1,795,399	2,666,269
Hospitality	2,165,789	1,783,761	2,648,789
Liberal Arts	2,131,579	1,758,789	2,690,743
Mass Media	2,131,301	1,733,786	2,637,361
Natural Resources Management	2,095,039	1,755,490	2,541,393
Humanities	2,083,537	1,682,360	2,677,855
Social Work	2,074,944	1,742,542	2,500,817
Agriculture	2,066,650	1,738,049	2,474,706
Forestry	2,044,816	1,742,496	2,455,656
Composition and Rhetoric	2,026,364	1,657,223	2,527,407
Physical Fitness/Parks and Recreation	2,005,427	1,671,800	2,488,216
Graphic Design	2,004,818	1,632,168	2,482,157
Consumer Science	2,003,892	1,645,791	2,416,109
Education (All)	1,996,773	1,688,878	2,461,657
Communication Technology	1,990,683	1,619,192	2,449,003
Plant Science	1,963,141	1,634,086	2,400,452
Human/Community Services	1,935,410	1,590,410	2,343,636
Film/Video/Photography	1,882,341	1,546,446	2,369,155

Fine Arts	1,849,603	1,508,437	2,302,755
Music	1,830,363	1,479,675	2,283,798
Drama	1,787,016	1,433,326	2,245,830
Studio Arts	1,698,548	1,369,615	2,178,253
Cosmetology	1,685,644	1,421,325	2,059,479
Some College but no degree	1,524,331	1,272,877	1,856,508
Theology	1,468,241	1,219,126	1,758,101
High School	1,192,047	989,479	1,455,195

## References

Webber, Douglas A. "The lifetime earnings premia of different majors: Correcting for selection based on cognitive, noncognitive, and unobserved factors." *Labour Economics* 28 (2014): 14-23.

Webber, Douglas A. "Are college costs worth it? How ability, major, and debt affect the returns to schooling." *Economics of Education Review* 53 (2016): 296-310.