



Choosing a Major and Job

Facing the present gloomy economy, college students have to seriously consider their majors based on the job market. Choosing the right major means half of the success of the career. There are a number of factors that the college students should consider, such as the job market demand, the major in college, and the salary of the job. It's important to educate college students on the career fields that are the most in demand.

According to some surveys and the related forecast, some jobs are most in demand in the future. With the rapid growing of the elderly population and the development of technological information, the jobs about health, data and computers are most in demand. These jobs include physician assistant, medical scientists, and computer software engineer. Furthermore, while living standards rise, people will pursue better lifestyles. Education is just the key to

by Enping Huang (ESL 33B)

a better life. Education is always indispensable in a person's life. Therefore, a college instructor is also a hot career in the future.

While the demand in job market is one aspect, the benefits from the job can't be ignored. Petroleum engineering is the highest-paying college major while chemical engineering goes next. Electrical engineering and computer engineering are also on the best-paying majors' list. Through these examples, we can see that engineers of many different areas earn the most money in their careers.

While we are pleased about the high pay of these majors, we should also think about the unemployment rates. From the national 2009-10 data of the survey, the researchers found out that majors in agriculture,

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architecture, arts and humanities have the lowest unemployment rates. If the students want to prepare for a specific career, there are the career-focused majors, such as engineering, business, education and nursing. These majors offer challenge and develop skills which can be used in various careers. For example, the jobs in nursing are not only plentiful but also various and available in fields such as neurology, oncology and obstetrics.

By realizing the demand in the job market, knowing the pay and the employment rate of the job, and thinking about the career-focused majors, college students are able to get some help when they choose majors. After all, most college students hope to pave their career paths by choosing the right majors. Thus, majors and jobs are the problems that college students should consider.

Announcement for the Book Club

PCC will be hosting its third semester of the ESL Book Club in Fall 2012. There will be groups for Levels 1-3 and for Levels 3-5. By participating in the ESL Center Book Club, you can practice your English skills. Reading is the key to success in English, helping ESL students improve vocabulary, collocations, idioms, spelling, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, sentence structure, and style. Close analysis of symbols and themes from the text will be performed, which helps you read and understand more deeply in your ESL and future English classes. Not only is the Club useful, but it's also enjoyable! You may even be able to satisfy a course requirement or earn extra credit in your ESL class!

Keep an eye open at the beginning of the term for information about the novel and the meeting day and time. If you have any questions or are interested in joining the Book Club, you can contact Professor Pilgreen at lapilgreen@pasadena.edu

By Yu Shen Fan

Motivation, the Key to Success



Most people say, "turn your sadness into strength and conquer the dilemma you are facing." I believe in order to achieve a goal, it is dispensable to have some sort of motivation. That is how we become successful eventually. According to the article, "They're Earning; They're Learning" by Scott Feldman, schools should give cash prizes to middle school and high school students who earn high scores, and I can't agree more with him.

In my opinion, the cash prizes could be a gigantic motivation for the students, which is significant for students to achieve better grades in school. Above all, in order to be on top in school, students have to have a goal. That is how we know our weakness and improve to prepare ourselves. In the article, Scott Feldman mentioned "Later, when it was time for the state's standardized algebra test, the number of our eighth-graders who scored 'advanced' or 'proficient' increased from 13 the previous year to 31." As we can see, based on the cash prize as the motivation for those students, they actually improved more than before. Furthermore, through the reality and experiment of awarding cash prizes, the article also tells the students a very important principle which might influence their entire lifetime; how much effort they put in affects the results they will harvest later on.

From another perspective, I would like to call this event "little incentive, infinite effects." People might be curious about why I would say that.

Personally, the little incentive is the cash rewards and the effects would be a lot more valuable than the small amount of cash. Based on the little rewards, students will be more active and passionate to absorb knowledge or anything helpful in order to reach their goal. When I was still in middle school, my parents rewarded me with 200RMB (Chinese dollars) to encourage me to get good grades. As a youngster, 200 RMB was a big amount of money in my eyes. For this, I tried my best to get the money; somehow I was full of energy for studying, which I've never felt. As a splendid circle, the tremendous efforts I had put in exchanged to be good grades. Moreover, those grades also related to my manner and sentiments towards studying. Finally, with all the positives, I become more capable of learning things.

This experiment could also be a good opportunity for the students to experience their college life earlier. In college, there are many scholarships they can fight for. There's always a price to pay in order to gain. In spite of all the reasons I've talked about, things always have the dark side; giving cash prizes to students who are still in the stage of absorbing new things might affect them to become a person who does everything for a purpose. It is not encouraged in various fields.

To conclude, the advantages of schools giving cash prizes to middle and high school students who earn high scores far outweigh the disadvantages. I trust that the students who have been working harder deserve more incentives than other students that behave ordinarily. It also keeps them in good shape to pursue more and more.



*By Nicole Thon
ESL 33B*

A College Degree: the Pros and Cons

You want to graduate. It is possible with little or no money. Your future depends on getting one. Those students with four years of college or university can earn several times more income than those who have only a high school diploma. Interviewers like to talk to those who have completed their college study.

Graduates enjoy big advantages. They are preferred in job interviews. This is because they possess more knowledge of their field of study. These graduates already have a much higher status than other applicants. In addition, they have the skill and sophistication to discuss what they want to do. Companies like to employ them for good reasons. They can do things to help the firm make more money. Moreover, they are prepared to earn higher incomes.

This educational process has its disadvantages. It requires four years of your life. It includes many sacrifices and obstacles. There will be a lot of heart-breaking experiences. Furthermore, many things are required by the school. Instead of enjoying an evening, you find yourself preparing for an exam. It seems your road has no end. As a result, you sit alone at a desk with your book.

Your success brings good fortune. Those at the party are years behind you. You feel like a winner, because you are one. Moving farther ahead is just one more step. In the end, you get some satisfaction from all your good decisions.



*By Shirlyne X. Shangguan
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Who Takes Responsibility for US?

-- In memory of USC students, Ying Wu and Ming Qu

Every young adult has a dream to excel in his/her field of interest some day. This same desire held true for USC students, Ying Wu and Ming Qu. However, the dreams of these two Chinese engineering students were tragically cut short on April 11, 2012, when they were shot by an unknown assailant. The reason has not yet been determined, though the authorities suspect that it may have been a robbery or car-jacking.

This incident has put fear in the minds of international students studying in the U.S., as well as their parents, who have sent them abroad. It has also raised the question of how safe international students are in the U.S.

USC, a world-renowned university, has almost 7,000 foreign students, the largest group in the United States. The fatal shooting has stirred worry among the international students on campus. Life as an international student is not easy to begin with, since they have to support themselves while they are abroad. This requires that they work to be able to survive; however, few jobs are available to them because of their visa status. At times, they live in groups off campus in order to reduce housing and food costs. Personal safety may be an issue since they may not know what situations are potentially dangerous. And they may not know how to defend themselves in a dangerous situation.

The tragic deaths of Wu and Qu raise the question of what universities can do to protect their students—especially international students. USC provides police patrols to boost security for students, though safety is not guaranteed outside the school premises. The killing of Wu and Qu will definitely affect the number of foreign students who come to the U.S. to study. No parent wants to send their child to a place from where he or she may not return. The tragedy has also created panic among all the students on campus, but they have been assured that the University is doing all it can to keep students safe. However, with regard to the special situation of international students, what will USC and other universities do to prevent similar tragic cases from occurring?

By Jieqing Liu

ESL 33B

Stereotypes of Career Direction

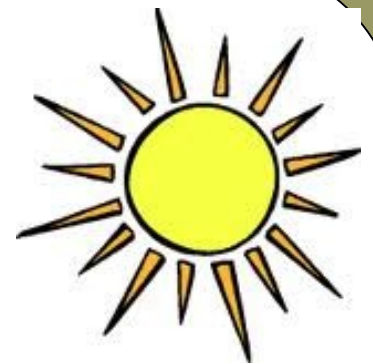
People have been affected by stereotypes for a long time in the world. Our social net is just a circle of our colleagues, friends and families, which may make us to take a view that the world is just like what we face to in our daily life. While people slide their screen of iPhone to update Facebook, the information is similar since their circles of friends are similar. Then they will consider that their world should be that simple, but in fact they just continue confirming the same information.

A student who studies in a great private high school may be accepted by those famous Universities such as Harvard or Stanford, and after they graduate, they enter those famous investment companies like Goldman Sachs, work on Wall Street, enjoy the high working speed and pressure and earn plenty of wealth to satisfy their appetite and vanity. However, if one of them works really hard and becomes the best one in his/her area, it just means that he or she is the best one among the kind of people like him/her and that's the limit. Is there a rule that successful people should be an entrepreneur or financier, work for banks or set up a company?

It is significant for a person to become a special one. In modern society, most people look similar since they strictly follow the steps of others. For getting more money, promoting their standard in society or just expecting parents to be proud of them, sometimes they give up their dreams to do those jobs they are not that proper to do. Be an interesting person, try to be curious and go out of your own circle. Consider many kinds of choices before graduate and you'll find the answer.

By Loida G. Lever (ESL 33B)

The True Benefits of Solar Power



The City of Pasadena is now promoting renewable solar power through a program called Pasadena Solar Initiative. The purpose of the program is to aid homeowners to install solar power on their homes by offering rebates for the installation cost of the system. Considering the cost of installation and the rebates, the solar electric power for the home, in the form of a rooftop photovoltaic cells, still does not make financial sense for the homeowner, in the short term. Even long term financial arguments are not very strong at current system costs. However, when considering the overall energy consumption for a state or country or even the whole planet, solar electric systems make sense for reasons other than financial.

Currently, solar electric power from photovoltaic cells is more expensive to produce than the typical methods being used by power companies today. Electric power from burning coal, to boil water and then drive steam turbine generators, costs much less, in the short term, for a consumer than building a typical residential photovoltaic system. The typical and most basic solar electric home system will cost at least \$10,000, after rebates, to install. The solar power system cost will vary greatly, depending on who you ask. Also, the per watt-hour costs only start tipping in the favor of the consumer when one uses a 25 year estimated life of a rooftop photovoltaic system combined with a power inverter connected to the general electric grid. Other factors in the cost assume that a homeowner does not have cash to purchase such a system, and that the system must be either leased or purchased with a loan. Another scenario assumes that the homeowner is using a low interest second mortgage to get the lowest money cost for the overall system.

A homeowner may choose to add a system for other than simply financial reasons. Most power companies use methods that burn something that forms airborne carbon as a byproduct. However, as people all over the Earth strive to reduce their respective carbon footprints, individuals are moving toward less financially efficient, lower carbon alternatives. Another benefit of solar power is that consumers can reduce the need for building new power plants, especially if large percentages of homeowners, businesses, and municipalities jump on the solar bandwagon. (see source list on page 8)

By Lam Que Luu
ESL 33B, Prof. Rosenchein-Bars

DIFFERENCES AMONG EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Most international students know that studying in the U.S is much different than studying in some Asian countries, especially my country – Vietnam. Therefore, studying in the U.S is not quite easy for international students.

First of all, one difference between my country and the U.S.'s education system is the way students achieve their goals and do their progress. In Vietnam, students always try their best to achieve their goals. The most important for Vietnamese students is studying as hard as they can. They make a lot of effort to get good grades and the final result. Students in my country read books and do homework a lot. In contrast, students in the U.S work hard but they also attend extra and co-curricular activities. That is the reason why it is quite difficult for a student who is new to the U.S. to study in classes and participate in outside activities.

Secondly, one more difference is the way students interact with teachers. Vietnamese students are taught to be quiet in class and just say their opinions when they are allowed to. Some teachers in my country are easy-going but most teachers are quite strict. They have boundaries with their students. Students in my country are not allowed to express their opinions or feelings whenever they want. They have to behave in a respectful way to their teachers. On the contrary, students in the U.S are allowed to show their ideas, thoughts and even the argument. Most of the teachers in the U.S always want to hear their students' opinions. Some teachers are sad because most new Asian students just keep quiet. They may think that their students are not interested in them.

Finally, the last but not least difference is the way students interact and work with classmates. In my country, there is barely teamwork. Vietnamese students do not usually work in pairs or in groups unless they have a significant presentation. Students in my country work individually. In addition, most of us believe that each student's abilities and skills are reflected by the grades and final result. That is why Vietnamese students work by themselves to show their abilities. Nevertheless, if any student needs help or gets stuck with something, the other students are willing to help to solve it. Contrastingly, teamwork is one of the most important ways of studying of students in the U.S. They usually work in pairs or groups to exchange ideas, do the project or presentation. However, American students absolutely value the individualism. They would like to study by themselves and barely ask other classmates for help too much. They totally separate teamwork from individual work.

It is really hard to get into a very different culture from ours and it does not take a short time to be familiar with everything.



By Fangyi (Sandy) Liao
ESL 33B, Prof. Ribeiro

Pronunciation Class

Two years ago, when I participated in the English program in California State University of Los Angeles, my classmates and I all just came to the United States. None of us were fluent in English, so we all took many classes to improve our English skills. One day, we had a presentation about what embarrassing experiences we have had after we came to America. One of my classmates, Mary, said once she was chatting with her friends, and her friends asked her where she usually celebrates her birthday. And then, she replied, "I usually have birthday party in the restroom...." After she said that, all of her friends stopped doing whatever they were doing and stared at her, and then burst out laughing. Another classmate, John, said that one day he went to McDonalds to buy an apple pie. Instead of ordering an apple pie, he said he wanted to get a pineapple. He could never distinguish between "apple pie" and "pineapple," so he always mistaken them. The other classmate, Vivian, really likes perfume. One day, she went to Sephora looking for a perfume that is suitable for her. Vivian asked the sales person, "Which permit do you think is suit me better?" Then the sales person replied her, "permit? What do you mean?" Vivian did not realize she had made a mistake and continued saying, "The permit for my body." After a long period of confusion, they finally figured out what Vivian actually wanted. Eventually, Vivian got the perfume that she wanted. After hearing about a lot of funny experiences, I would always remember my speech class in CUSLA.

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*By Qiwen Huang
ESL 33A, Prof. Lia Lerner*



The Gift

I received a special gift last Valentine's Day. I felt so surprised because I had not ever thought of a gift like this. On that day, when I got up in the morning, I said, "Happy Valentine's Day" to my husband. After that, we were going to celebrate in the restaurant. During that time, I thought my husband would give me a Valentine's gift, but he didn't. I felt so sad and said, "Why don't you give me a gift? Today is Valentine's Day." My husband laughed at me. He told me to close my eyes and stretch out my hand. And then, he used a finger to draw a heart in my palm and put it in my heart. Later, he asked, "Did you receive my gift?" I said, "Yes!" He said, "This heart only belongs to you. I gave my whole heart to you." Even though this was a non-material gift, I felt so happy and surprised because my whole heart also belongs to my husband.

*By Garam Lee
ESL 33B, Dr. Carlisi*

Dear ESL students who are struggling with English.

Hello, friends. Now, spring is passing into summer, and we are half-way through this semester. Are your plans for English proficiency shaping up nicely? Even if you are still having difficult time with English, stop being so depressed. You can improve your language abilities.

My name is Garam. Fortunately, I am taking ESL 33B right now. Last semester, I took a diagnostic test in English writing skills for my ESL class, and I almost failed. I was so much below the college-level English that I could not exactly understand lectures and textbooks, and voice my opinion either in written or spoken words. I felt hemmed in by my language issues, and there was no way to tail out. The only thing I could do was to try anything to survive. For instance, I reviewed lessons prior to class. When I came up with some questions, I did research in the library to find some reference. Also, I did not hesitate to get help from friends, tutors, or professors. I suffered throughout the whole sixteen weeks, but I ended up with getting a good grade in every class. It was a difficult, but a rewarding experience.



While you are learning English, you might have to face one tiny problem that is followed by a bunch of problems, but please do not feel overwhelmed. We all have the potential to overcome those difficulties. All we need are time and efforts. It also takes over ten years before native students reach the college level of English, so need more than that. Although we cannot make noticeable progress in a short period of time, our English skills will be improved gradually. Just keep seizing opportunities that are given by this fabulous school. Visit the Learning Assistance Center, use library books, and talk to your professors to enhance your language ability. It sounds simple, but helpful.

I know all of us will become proficient in English someday, so that we can enjoy the life in America a little bit more. We can do it! So, let's not give up so early!



By Zhuyu Tao

ESL 33B. Prof. Ribeiro

A Bowl of Cold Noodles

It's been 2 years and 7 months since I moved to the United States of America. I think every international student here misses the nagging sounds which are always behind us from our parent. We study hard for our classes and are willing to accept future challenges, but when we are used to the cold metal key to open our apartment's door, no one can understand the feeling but students of our kind.

After I left my first residence in El Monte, I moved to Monterey Park. Fortunately, I am living with 4 wonderful roommates now. My roommates were my friend, sister, and the others were a married couple. I do not remember when I began to call the husband and wife "uncle and auntie". They were originally from Guangdong province in China like me. They ask me to have dinner with them all the time when I am at home. At the beginning I thought they just wanted to be polite, so I said no most of the time, and bought some fast food before I got home. Nevertheless, after a few weeks, instead of eating the Junk foods alone most of the time, chatting with these two funny adults became part of my life. Of course, I am not taking advantage of them; I often wash the dishes, and sometimes buy the daily necessities for them. They are always caring and frank to me, and sometimes nagging a little bit that reminds me of my parents who are thousands of miles away.

Tonight, when I got home at 7, auntie just asks how the day was and whether I had dinner. I said no. After half an hour someone knocked at my door. When I opened it, I saw a bowl of cold noodles. Auntie said: "tonight, I want to try something new, so I make cold noodles." She then handed it over to me. At that moment, there were some warm feelings flowing through my veins. It's hard to find a word to describe my feeling. I felt home again.

By Changjae Lee

ESL 33B

Crash (2004)

: 8 different stories tell the Racial Stereotypes in America

- Genre: Drama

- Director: Paul Haggis

- Starring: Don Cheadle, Matt Dillon, Jennifer Esposito, Michael Peña, Brendan Fraser, Chris "Ludacris" Bridges, Sandra Bullock, Terrence Howard,

Ryan Phillippe, Larenz Tate, Thandie Newton

- Awards: Best Picture, Best Original Screenplay and Best Editing in 2005 at the 78th Academy Awards.

Amazingly, the budget of this movie, which had major stars and won three academy awards, was only \$6.5 million. This is a very small amount compared to many other Hollywood films; for example, the budget of Titanic (1997) was approximately \$200 million and that of Avatar (2009) was about \$200~300 million. But there was a secret: before making this movie, some of the actors decided to perform without a guarantee because they really loved the script and the story of "Crash."

The story takes place in LA with its various racial population groups: Caucasians, Asians, African- Americans, Latino- Americans, and Arabs. Often times, the stereotypes that races hold about one another cause problems. This movie mainly talks about troubles between different races in the city.

Each story tells us unchangeable truths and shows possibilities. Despite the fact that every story ends up differently, still all of the characters in all the stories realize something that they didn't know before.

This film does not have a single message but many. Experiencing the stories in "Crash" may cause viewers to think differently about the issue of racism and may change their feelings as well. I highly recommend this movie.





*By Lydia Wang
ESL 33A, Prof. Lightfoot*

THE RAIN

I always like rain. It was about 2:30 am this morning, and it was raining. When I leaned myself out of the window, I saw the wet road. It was just like a black mirror or like a dark lake. I saw the yellow light from the lamps shining upon the lake. It was so warm like a dream when people do not want to wake up. The light from the opposite church was melting on the mirror and made the beautiful reflection look like a sleeping rainbow. When I closed my eyes, I could smell the sweet scent come from the plants in the garden and the trees on the road side. I saw them smiling at me. A special smell from the moist dirt mixed with some unnamed flowers' fragrance was carried by the wind blowing into my room constantly. I saw the sky, which was as clear as day time. It was high and it was so close to me that I could feel it touch my cheek. The clouds were floating above my head. They were pure and innocent as angels. I felt the rain drop on my face so gently as a touch from a lover. I started to sense this moment without my eyes. It was so quiet that even my breath was a noise to pollute them. But I really wanted to hug the rain and sing aloud. I felt completely free in the rain.

Sources for Solar Power article:

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Pasadena's increased prices for "green" power

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<http://www.eia.gov/coal>

Pictures : online sources

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Thank you for your contributions. There were many wonderful articles, but we didn't have enough room to print everything.