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10 Jobs That Can Help College Students Survive and Thrive

[Marcus Varner](#) August 29, 2012 8:47 pm [Career Advice](#), [Careers](#), [Education](#), [FYI](#)
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College is full of firsts. For many, it may be the first time they experience a committed romantic relationship or their first real party. For some, it is their first time holding down a job to make ends meet. These jobs range from the career-building to theretch-inducing, but they all add a notch to otherwise unadulterated belts of fledgling students.

For most college students - with the cost of college rising by the minute - a part-time job is just the thing to get some breathing room in their budget and keep student debt under control. As determined by our staff here at ClassesAndCareers.com, here are the **top 10 jobs for students**:



1. Intern

Why is interning at the top of this list? Because internships tend to be more relevant to your future career than, say, mowing lawns. Keep in mind: internships don't always pay more. In fact, they may not pay at all; they may even require you to pay your own travel, room, and board just to participate. But internships can pay you back in other, more valuable ways.

First, internships are often treated as a months-long job interview during which companies can see how you perform on the job. This gives you several weeks to bond with people who will be making hiring decisions. Even if you don't get hired with that company, these people can become priceless members of your network, often opening the door of opportunity to your first real job.

2. Teaching Assistant

Few on-campus jobs are as fraught with opportunity as that of a teaching assistant. While you are handling much of a professor's dirty work (grading papers, entering grades into the computer, etc.), you also get to network with faculty in a way that goes far beyond rubbing elbows after lecture. For students considering a graduate degree, being a TA is an especially smart move. In addition, since you had to perform well in the subject to become a TA, just having that title on your resume speaks to your proficiency.

3. Entrepreneur

As they say, there's nothing like the real thing. More and more college students are bypassing the more menial jobs and even internships to try their hand at starting their own businesses. Facebook-founder Mark Zuckerberg and Microsoft founder Bill Gates spring readily to mind.

And why shouldn't college students investigate the self-employed path? There is no better, more sure way to learn the nuts and bolts of business than to start one from the ground up. You might not walk away a billionaire, but your hands-on experience will blow away any intern's.

4. Library Assistant

Unless you are going into Library Science, you might not get any career points for this position. But if you have to work, you can't beat the close proximity and indirect social benefits of working in the library. For one thing, the library is always going to be close to your classes, so you never have to worry about travel time. Second, working in the library, every student on campus will visit you at one time or another, which makes a great opportunity to make friendships and expand your social circle while you work.

5. Sporting Event Staff

Yes, you' ll probably have to pick up trash and deal with unruly fans, but you' ll also get free access to games. For sports fans, this is the ideal workplace - if you can deal with the sometimes long hours and late shifts.

6. Maintenance Worker

This starts to get into the unsavory territory of on-campus jobs. There is never a shortage of things to be fixed and polished on the vast grounds of any major college or university. Other than toughening your fledgling work ethic, it will teach you invaluable handy man skills. This may not amount to much on your resume, but it will make you very popular with your neighbors later in life.

7. Food Service

Being treated like a McDonalds server by your fellow students isn' t cool. Although on-campus food service jobs are closer to your classes, consider food service jobs off campus, where you can maintain some semblance of dignity. In the case of fast food, keep work separate from school and social life.

8. Custodian/Grounds

Cleaning dorms, especially bathrooms, can be a gut-wrenching experience - it amounts to playing Mom for a bunch of students away from their moms (or maids) for the first time. On the bright side, however, turnover is wicked for custodians, making it very easy to snag and hold onto one of these undesirable jobs. Another plus for wannabe singers: bathrooms usually have fantastic acoustics. And you spend a lot of time alone in bathrooms.

9. Call Center

Two things make these jobs worthwhile for students. One, most call center jobs ramp up in the evening, meaning you can take care of your school work in the morning and afternoon before heading off to the call center in the

evening. Second, most call centers will let you read while you wait for someone to pick up the phone.

Downsides include: angry people answering the phone, complete separation from your social scene, less-than-stimulating work, and angry people answering the phone. Yes, I know I wrote that twice.

10. Summer Sales

Like the mystical Shangri-la of ancient times, companies swoop down on college campuses every year to recruit hordes of salespeople to hawk their wares nationwide. They attract them with promises of huge commissions, so hefty they' ll never have work during college again. Needless to say, the vast majority of summer salespeople haven' t been so lucky. While some walk away with enough money to chill for the rest of the school year, most end up with some pocket change and a bad farmer' s tan. Many colleges have banned summer sales companies. You might consider doing so, too.

So what student jobs have you tried and lived to tell about? What' s your favorite student job ever? What' s the worst? Tell us in the comments section below!

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