



I Chose the Wrong Major in College - Here's What I Did About It

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I've always had an interest in clothing and fashion. Using my old Barbie dolls as fashion models, I began designing clothing when I was a tween. I cut fabrics, colored them with markers or paint, and taped them together - creating miniature designs. I took photographs of the dolls in their outfits, standing against my bedroom wall as a "studio background". With these pictures, I created my own magazines featuring my designs - complete with a clothing company name and logo. I wanted to be a fashion designer and have my own clothing line when I grew up.

I had big plans.

So, it was only fitting that I grew up to major in fashion in college.

I entered college as a fashion design major, intent on becoming a fashion designer. However, the major wasn't anything like I thought it would be. For one thing, a big part of fashion design is sewing, which might seem obvious enough - but I didn't realize that fact at the time. I had no experience with sewing. Before then, I had only *drawn* designs in my sketchpad - not physically *sewn* designs.

As the semester wore on, I realized that I couldn't sew, and that I also hated it. I didn't care what a "dart" or "lapped seam" was, and I didn't like having to rethread the sewing machine over and over again. After freshman year ended, I knew that I needed to do something different. However, I still didn't want to come out of fashion completely. My academic advisor suggested fashion merchandising as a major instead. It was the business side of fashion - the people who work with designers to get their clothing to the public. It was still fashion, only I didn't have to take sewing classes. I was content with this idea, so, at the beginning of sophomore year, I changed my major from fashion design to fashion merchandising.

I was relieved that I didn't have to take any more sewing classes. I didn't particularly enjoy the coursework - I was indifferent to it. I didn't really think about if I liked my classes, or if fashion merchandising was seriously the career path I wanted to take in life.

However, as I progressed in my coursework, I found that I didn't truly enjoy my classes. I was just there because I had to be. I didn't care what kind of fabrics were used to produce a shirt. Creating digital designs on a computer wasn't fun to me. Looking for an internship (required for degree credit) was boring because they were mostly related to buying, planning, or product development - typical merchandising career paths. I didn't want to do any of it. I was just going through the motions. Unfortunately, by the time I figured this out, I was in the first semester of senior year - a little late to be changing majors. So, of course, at this point I felt it best to just continue my coursework and graduate with the degree that I was already on track to receive.

It was also at this point that I realized how much I loved writing. I had always enjoyed writing, but I had only done it as a hobby in my spare time. I had never even considered it as a career path before now. I began to regret my major, and I wished that I had majored in journalism or something related to writing.

So, I switched course.

I decided I would focus on a writing career after I graduated college. I knew that I definitely didn't want to have a career in anything related to my major. I also knew that it would be hard to get a writing job with my degree, so I knew I needed to do extra work to get the ball rolling. I decided to do a writing internship rather than a writing job to start off. This would allow me to build my writing portfolio before I applied to an actual writing job.

So, during my Christmas break, I looked for writing internships for the upcoming summer, and was able to secure a position. At the same time, I knew that I probably needed some steady income while I built my writing portfolio. I also knew it would be easiest for me to get a job related to fashion merchandising since that's what I (almost) had a degree in. So, I accepted a position at a local retail store as a sales associate for the upcoming summer as well. I planned to start working a few weeks after I graduated college.

Over my spring break, I attended a training session for the sales associate position before I was due to officially start in the summer. However, as I was watching the training videos, I knew I didn't want to do this for even a few months. By the time I graduated college, I had decided to scrap the sales associate position, and just focus solely on my writing full-time.

Currently, I'm pursuing a career in writing. I've decided to keep fashion as a hobby, rather than as a career. In the past, I tried to envision myself as a buyer, planner, or retail store manager, but when I thought about it, I just couldn't see myself doing it. When figuring out what to do with my life, I had to ask myself: was I passionate enough about fashion and clothes to make it a career? For me, the answer was no. Think about it like this: you might like to cook different types of food, but do you want to be a chef? Or, you might enjoy working out at the gym, but do you want to be a fitness trainer? You might like these activities as hobbies, but you don't necessarily want to make a career out of them. It was like that for me. I still like fashion - I enjoy shopping, I love styling cute outfits, and I like reading fashion magazines. However, I don't want to work in fashion as a *career*.

Though I chose the wrong college major, I'm glad I didn't let it box me into a career path that I didn't want.

References

The Voice. (2019). Irvington's Outdated Textbooks (Stack of Books Picture). Retrieved from <https://ihsvoice.com/news/irvington-news/2019/05/25/irvingtons-outdated-textbooks/>