

## Arts majors have less support from society

Written by Chris Chipman, Columnist  
Thursday, 17 January 2013 12:57

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When I first meet people around campus, I start with small talk, as do most others. What shocks me when I meet new people, and we begin to talk about their major, is the number of students who are unhappy with what they are currently studying.

Most of the time, these students do know where their passions are, but they are too afraid to pursue them. Often it is because they are afraid that they will not be able to find a job after they graduate, or they do not want to “waste” money on an education their parents do not support.

How can a parent make such a ridiculous claim about their child’s education? If a child is studying what he or she is passionate about, how could that parent deny the child’s opportunity to pursue his or her dreams? I just don’t get it. And most of the time, the education the parents refuse to support will be a liberal arts degree.

I have noticed that corporate majors definitely outweigh the artistic majors on this campus. One can argue that ISU predominately offers majors that support corporate America. It feels like 80 percent of the people I meet here are business majors, but that is beside the point. If the arts were appreciated in American society, students would not be afraid to pursue them.

I admit, when I was a freshman, I was terrified that I would not find a job after I graduated. Everybody kept telling me how terrible the economy was and that I should major in a field with a higher percentage of jobs available. So I caved and declared for the international business major.

Then I had a conversation with my dad during winter break of freshman year that completely changed my perspective.

I have always enjoyed reading a great book since I was a kid, and English was always my

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favorite subject growing up. The only thing that I have always enjoyed more than reading a good book is watching a good movie.

Majoring in English and film always seemed unrealistic to me, until my dad explained to me how much he regretted dropping two of his favorite courses: photography and film. I was immediately inspired to change my major that day. I am now majoring in English with a minor in cinema studies.

The conversation with my dad raised numerous questions that I had to ask myself: What was the point in studying something I do not want to study? If I hate my job, but I earn more money, would that make me happier than loving my job and just being well-off?

I realized that personal happiness was entirely too important to me, and the last thing I wanted was a career that made me miserable. Life is too short to spend most of it unhappy.

I would be lying if I knew exactly where English and film are going to take me. But frankly, I'll worry about that later. I am studying what I want, and I could not be happier. This is the reason why I am so confused when I see the arts depreciated in this country.

Other countries, especially in Europe, thrive on the arts. European cultures embrace dance, food and music. I personally have not been to Europe, but when I speak to people who have, they describe it like a breath of fresh air. This is why I plan on studying abroad.

Sometimes, I just wish Americans would stop worrying so much and do what makes them happy. Do not get me wrong, I love this country for many more reasons than the reasons I question it, but I really do wish the arts had more impact on American society.

*Questions or comments regarding Chris' column can be sent to:*

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