

What Kind of Work Can I Expect When I Finish the Career Training Program?

Summer Intensive (SI), Professional Studies and Advanced Intensive (AI) graduates work in every area of photography, including portraiture, wedding, photojournalism, commercial photography, studio assisting, fine art photography, digital labs and manufacturer/industry occupations.

Individual Students, Individual Paths

Each student has individual expectations and dreams for their photography. Many want to start a career as a professional photographer. Others are interested in developing as artists. Some simply want to take better photographs. Many find that their original ideas evolve as the summer and fall progress. They become inspired and gain a clearer picture of their desires and goals.

Most would-be professional photographers are choosing this field because they want to work for themselves and have control over their working life. This means that they consider their photographic education part of a long-term process of building a career, rather than a means to “getting a job” as one might in the corporate world.

Most attending for the experience of artistic immersion are looking at photography as an adjunct to a career already in progress, often in an area completely unrelated to photography. They consider their photographic education a nurturing of their creative selves.

Some of our graduates start their own wedding or portrait business immediately after graduation. Others start out as freelance photography assistants for established photographers in big cities. Still others secure salaried positions in portrait or commercial studios or at newspapers, magazines or advertising agencies. Some who consider themselves professional artists have alternative ways of supporting themselves financially, but save their heart and soul for their artwork. There are as many career paths as there are graduates. A good Web site for getting information about careers in photography is <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos264.htm>.

Questions to Consider in Guiding Your Path in Photography

While preparing for your career in photography (or any new career), it's a good idea to think about and start to research the questions below.

- What types of photography are you most interested in doing?
Stay open to this answer changing as you learn more about each field during your training.
- How much of your time do you want to spend photographing? Image editing? Printing? Running a business? *(Stay open to this changing, too!)*
- Where do you want to be located? Is there a market there for your kind of work?
The answer might be your hometown, a big city, on the road, etc.
- How much do you know about owning and running a business?
More than half of professional photographers are self-employed. Summer Intensive, Professional Studies and Advanced Intensive business and marketing classes are a great way to get started. Also check out your local bookstore's business and marketing sections, as well as local classes and photography magazines for more ideas. A good Web site for getting information about careers in photography is <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos264.htm>.