This is the most regretted college major in America

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College may come with a side of regret.

A new survey of nearly 250,000 Americans with at least a bachelor’s degree by career and salary website PayScale found that two-thirds said that they had a major regret about their educational experience. The No. 1 regret: student loans, which about one in four grads say they regretted, according to PayScale. (A separate survey this year of more than 2,700 adults up to age 34 by Merrill Lynch and Age Wave came to a similar conclusion: More than one in three said the student loans they took on weren’t worth it.)

No wonder: Student loan debt now totals upwards of $1.5 trillion, up from $600 billion just 10 years ago. The average student who graduates with debt now owes about $30,000.

Your college major can be a big source of regret too, PayScale found. It was the second-most-regretted thing about the college experience, with more than one in 10 people saying their chosen area of study was their biggest educational regret.

And the area of study that comes with the biggest side of regret: humanities. Indeed, more than one in five people who majored in humanities — which includes specific majors like English and history — say they regret that choice. Other research bolsters this finding, revealing that English in particular is the most regretted major, as MarketWatch previously reported.
Why might those studying humanities wish they hadn’t? “This may have to do with the relatively low salaries seen by common professions of humanities majors,” the PayScale report revealed. Indeed, research from Georgetown University shows that people who study humanities and liberal arts tend to make significantly less than those who study other things like STEM or business.

Meanwhile, computer science and engineering majors had the lowest level of regret with just 4% and 8%, respectively, saying they regretted their major. “Fields that lead into high-earning or high-meaning jobs did see a larger portion of respondents that had no regrets about college,” according to the report.

Of course, plenty of those who majored in humanities go on to have well-paying jobs they like, and there are certainly some STEM majors who wish they hadn’t studied it. Plus the skills learned in humanities courses can be applicable to many jobs.

The fact that so many people now regret their student loans, or regret their major that resulted in a low-paying job, means it’s often no longer enough to just pick a major you love, experts say. “A person should really ask themselves, ‘why am I going to school?’ If the answer is to obtain a job, I would ask, ‘Is the job you are attempting to get worth the cost of the degree?’,” says certified financial planner Mitchell C. Hockenbury of 1440 Financial Partners in Kansas City, Mo. “You ought to think about how much you will make versus the cost of paying for the education.”