

What Does it Cost to be You?

What Does it Cost to be You is most useful for:

- Understanding, in simple terms, what it costs to be you
- Research the cost of living in different cities you are interested in living in
- Compare the cost of living to your potential salary or expected income
- Gives you a tool to have a negotiation conversation

Directions:

1. First, figure out what your baseline cost would be for you to live here in Richmond after you graduate. At this moment, some of you may be living in dorms, and some of you may be getting help with bills from your parents, so you'll need to give them a call, or do some research as if you were responsible for all of your bills and school loans after graduation. Imagine yourself day to day as a graduate. Do you need a studio space, or a storage unit? Will you be paying to access any type of equipment or technology to do your work? It's important for you to be honest. Keep all of this in mind as you complete the spreadsheet which is found and downloaded as an excel doc [here](#).
2. Now that you know how much it would cost for you to live in Richmond, it's time to compare. Identify three cities that you may like to live in. Using the following resource, research the cost of living for those cities (or as close to them as you can get). <http://money.cnn.com/calculator/pf/cost-of-living/>. It's interesting to see that housing, health care, and utilities are significantly cheaper in Richmond, IN than they are here. That means I would require a smaller salary.
3. Reflect on what you found. Where else would you like to live, and what would your salary need to be in those places? Are there things from your life that you would be willing to cut? If you live in Brooklyn NY what can you do to reduce costs so that you may have access to all that New York has to offer?

Things to think about:

- How can you apply this to your job search process or career decisions?
- What do you **need** to cover daily costs of living? What would you **prefer**?
- Will your intended profession and city of interest provide you the lifestyle you want to have
- What are the common salaries for the job you want to pursue? Is this negotiable?

If you would like to talk to someone about this activity or need additional resources, **Career Services** is available to all students! Check out our website to make an appointment or to see upcoming events and workshops:

<http://www.careers.vcu.edu>

(adapted from: <http://thecampuscareercoach.com/ask-the-coach/what-does-it-cost-to-be-you-your-personal-budget#.VrS13javPdI>)