

“What Can I do With a Major in...Political Science?”



Skills Possessed by Political Science Majors

- Think analytically
- Evaluate problems and make appropriate decisions
- Analyze concepts, definitions, arguments, and complex problems
- Organize ideas, deal with questions of value, and extract essential information
- Distinguish fine differences between views and discover common ground
- Construct clear formulations, good arguments, and examples
- Build and defend views and appreciate competing positions
- Persuade people and adapt to change
- Speak articulately
- Present ideas through well-constructed, systematic arguments
- Leadership skills
- Write interpretively, argumentatively, and descriptively
- Read comprehensively

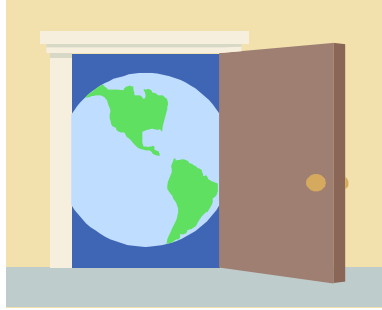
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Possible Job Titles for Political Science Majors



Legislative Attorney

Lawyers with a background in political science can specialize in reviewing potential laws for their enforceability or their Constitutionality. These specialists attorneys work in Washington, D.C., or in state capitols, where they help legislators write effective laws. By anticipating loopholes and eliminating vague clauses, legislative attorneys help speed new initiatives on their way to becoming new laws.

District Attorney

Though many prosecutors learn about their specialty in law school, attorneys who invest in a political science degree enjoy an edge when campaigning for top political offices in cities and states. To win elections, district attorneys must balance their expertise in the law with their ability to understand the needs and wants of the voters in their districts.

Lobbyist

A variety of professionals, especially attorneys and former politicians, use their connections and influence to persuade public officials to consider the political agendas of their clients. Traditionally, lobbyists have worked for large industries link banking, manufacturing, and agriculture. Their work paves the way for tax subsidies, grants, or other programs that benefit private business. Recently, private political action committees have hired lobbyists to help influence politicians' position on moral and cultural issues.

Consultant

In businesses like banking, insurance, and agriculture that rely heavily on forecasting to anticipate return on investment, professionals need to anticipate return on investment, professionals need to anticipate government moves that can impact their sales. Consultants analyze government bodies and report on potential laws and campaigns that can sway future profits.

News Analysts, Reporters, and Correspondents

Gather information, prepare stories, and make broadcasts that inform us about local, State, national, and international events; present points of view on current issues; and report on the actions of public officials, corporate executives, interest groups, and others who exercise power.

Public Relations Specialist

An organization's reputation, profitability, and even its continued existence can depend on the degree to which its targeted "publics" support its goals and policies. Public relations specialists—also referred to as communications specialists and media specialists, among other titles—serve as advocates for businesses, nonprofit associations, universities, hospitals, and other organizations, and build and maintain positive relationships with the public. As managers recognize the importance of good public relations to the success of their organizations, they increasingly rely on public relations specialists for advice on the strategy and policy of such programs.

Intelligence Officer

Researches and analyzes a diversity of geopolitical issues on behalf of the government. Employed by the Central Intelligence Agency or the National Security Agency. Requires testing and security clearance.

Press Secretary

Professionals with backgrounds in both journalism and political science can help elected officials manage their public personas by handling press appearances and fielding questions. Press secretaries vet all requests for interviews, and often work with teams of specialist to polish an official's public remarks.

Legislative Aide

Many recent political science graduates get their first paid jobs as aids to state or federal legislators. Aids research topics of specific interest for their elected officials, and they communicate directly with constituents to understand challenges facing families in a legislator's home district. The most skilled legislative aids play major roles in shaping political discourse by leveraging their significant expertise in a specialized field.

Campaign Manager

Experienced organizers and activists marshal the significant donations of time and money to help their candidates win elections. While politicians take center stage at debates and other public appearances, campaign managers toil behind the scenes to work out platform compromises and to lobby influential local officials to support their causes. In the past, campaign managers often used their roles as stepping stones to positions in government. Recently, a new group of career campaign managers has emerged. These experts work as freelancers and consultants for campaigns of all sizes. They work with potential mayors, senators, and presidents that seek their specific expertise in the hard battles of modern political campaigns.

Agency Specialist

Federal or state agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Social Security Administration, or Federal Emergency Management Administration hire recent political science graduates to keep the wheels of government moving. These civil servants research new policies and enforce existing regulations at the pleasure of Congress and the President. Top ranking specialists often testify before Congress to report on trends in government agencies or challenges facing government institutions.

Urban and Regional Planners

Urban and regional planners develop long- and short-term plans for the use of land and the growth and revitalization of urban, suburban, and rural communities and the region in which they are located. They help local officials alleviate social, economic, and environmental problems by recommending locations for roads, schools, and other infrastructure and suggesting zoning regulations for private property. This work includes forecasting the future needs of the population. Because local governments employ the majority of urban and regional planners, they often are referred to as community or city planners.

Education Administrators

Successful operation of an educational institution requires competent administrators. Education administrators provide instructional leadership and manage the day-to-day activities in schools, preschools, day care centers, and colleges and universities. They also direct the educational programs of businesses, correctional institutions, museums, and job training and community service organizations. Education administrators set educational standards and goals and establish the policies and procedures to achieve them. They also supervise managers, support staff, teachers, counselors, librarians, coaches, and other employees. They develop academic programs, monitor students' educational progress, train and motivate teachers and other staff, manage career counseling and other student services, administer recordkeeping, prepare budgets, and perform many other duties. They also handle relations with parents, prospective and current students, employers, and the community. In an organization such as a small day care center, one administrator may handle all these functions. In universities or large school systems, responsibilities are divided among many administrators, each with a specific function.

Operations Research Analysts

Operations research analysts are often involved in top-level strategizing, planning, and forecasting. They help to allocate resources, measure performance, schedule, design production facilities and systems, manage the supply chain, set prices, coordinate transportation and distribution, or analyze large databases. The duties of the operations research analyst vary according to the structure and management of the organization they are assisting. Some firms centralize operations research in one department; others use operations research in each division. Operations research analysts also may work closely with senior managers to identify and solve a variety of problems. Analysts often have one area of specialization, such as working in the transportation or the financial services industry.

Market and Survey Researchers

Market and survey researchers gather information about what people think. *Market, or marketing, research analysts* help companies understand what types of products people want and at what price. They also help companies market their products to the people most likely to buy them. Gathering statistical data on competitors and examining prices, sales, and methods of marketing and distribution, they analyze data on past sales to predict future sales. Market research analysts devise methods and procedures for obtaining the data they need. Often, they design surveys to assess consumer preferences through Internet, telephone, or mail responses. They conduct some surveys as personal interviews, going door-to-door, leading focus group discussions, or setting up booths in public places such as shopping malls. Trained interviewers usually conduct the surveys under the market research analyst's direction.

*The content was adopted from the following websites: <http://www.alldc.org/publicresources/lobbying.cfm>, and www.bls.gov/oco.

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Career Resources for Political Science Majors



Specific Resources

American Association of Political Consultants: <http://www.theaapc.org/>
American Foreign Service Association: <http://www.afsa.org/>
American Political Science Association: <http://www.apsanet.org/>
American Society for Public Administration: <http://www.aspanet.org/scriptcontent/index.cfm>
Federal Government Jobs and Internships: <http://www.makingthedifference.org/index.shtml>
International Political Science Association: <http://www.ipsa.ca/>
National Political Index: <http://www.politicalindex.com/index.htm>
Political Job Listings in DC: <http://www.rollcall.com>, <http://www.hillnews.com/>
Washington, DC Area Jobs: <http://www.brubach.com/>

General Resources

***CareerSearch:** <http://www.careersearch.net/Hofstra>
(username-hofstra, password-career)

Occupational Outlook Handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/oco>

Riley Guide: <http://www.rileyguide.com>

***Spotlight On Careers:** <http://www.spotlightoncareers.org>
(username-lacn, password-holland)

***Vault:** http://www.vault.com/cb/careerlib/careerlib_main.jsp?parrefer=6123
(You will be prompted for your Novell username and password)

*These websites require you sign in using a username and password.

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