I'm Studying Political Science. What's Next?

While preparing to finish a bachelor's degree in political science, students can decide to pursue two main courses of action—continuing their education or entering the job market.

Continuing Education

Many students study political science intending to continue their education. Some students decide to focus on a master's or law degree, or begin to develop an expertise by pursuing a PhD. These options all promise rigorous study and increased specialization, and students following this path should have a good idea where this education can take them before deciding to apply to graduate school.

Entering the Job Market

Political science is a broad field that develops valuable skills and useful knowledge. Students can choose from a wide variety of fields that apply these traits. Here are a few to consider:

Business

Public Administration

Nongovernmental Organizations & Nonprofits

Journalism

Academic Research







Learn More Online at apsanet.org

Dig deeper than the information in this brochure by browsing APSA's online career information. You can find it here: **www.apsanet.org/PScareers**, or you can scan the QR code below. Content and links will help you research the following:

- Majoring in Political Science
- Tips for High School Students
- Tips for Undergraduate Students
- Entering the Job Market
- Quicksheet of Careers and Resources

Read the APSA Careers Booklet

You can also read *Careers and the Study of Political Science* at **www.apsanet.org/careermaterials** to learn more about how to choose the career that's right for you. This free booklet presents a detailed look at 11 different career areas ranging from the federal government to campaigning and polling. The complete booklet is available for free online to download and read!

Become an APSA Member!

The American Political Science Association provides many resources for graduate and undergraduate political science students—from awards and research funding to ways for students to connect and programs for diversity and inclusion. Learn more at **www.apsanet.org/membershipbenefits**. Join today to take advantage of these opportunities!

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Exploring a Career in Political Science

Information for College Students & Graduates

American Political Science Association



Continuing Education

Law School

A considerable proportion of undergraduate political science majors go on to law school. Many political science departments and most colleges and universities have a pre-law advisor to assist students with considering and applying to law school. Further resources include the American Bar Association, Law School Admission Council, and the National Association for Law Placement.

Master's Degree

If you are interested in political science graduate study but do not wish to pursue a career in research or college teaching, consider a master's degree program. Professional programs include public administration, public policy analysis, international relations, and political campaign management.

To learn about these programs consult with your political science faculty, especially faculty who specialize in the field or policy area(s) that interest you. Then visit the websites of departments and institutions whose programs interest you for full details on graduate faculty, course descriptions, and application procedures.

PhD Degree

If you are considering a career as a political scientist, discuss your interest with your political science professors. Ask for guidance about graduate study and about the work of political scientists. Research departments and institutions whose programs interest you and learn more about graduate faculty, program descriptions, and application procedures.

Entering the Job Market

A bachelor's degree in political science can lead to employment in a variety of professions, including business, government, journalism, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), advocacy, and political campaigns, among others. These careers use the analytical skills, administrative competence, and communication abilities that come from studying political science. Even with these valuable skills, you must be proactive about building your career.

- **Consult your college career office.** Get advice on how to prepare a résumé and cover letter. You should have these documents reviewed and edited before you start sending them out to potential employers.
- **Pursue internship opportunities** before you graduate. Internships provide valuable work experience and professional references. Your careers office can help you with where to start researching, and websites like idealist.org and internships.com list many opportunities.
- **Make contacts for jobs by talking with people** in careers that interest you. Websites like LinkedIn can be valuable tools for researching potential career paths and contacts. Your wider circle of acquaintances may also provide a good place to start discussing potential careers.

Career Sectors for Political Science

Business

Undergraduate political science training offers a good preparation for jobs and graduate programs in business. Students who have focused on international relations or country/area studies may find opportunities in international business and trade.

Public Administration, Public Affairs, and International Affairs

Careers are available in a variety of organizations, including governmental agencies, professional and interest group organizations, think tanks, research organizations, governmental relations divisions of corporations, consulting, and marketing agencies. Many of these positions can be pursued with a bachelor's degree but there are also graduate programs that offer specialized professional training for careers in public affairs and public service.

Nongovernmental Organizations & Nonprofits

If you are thinking about a career in public service, consider nonprofits, NGOs, and associations. The missions of these organizations include local, national, and global policy issues, which can range from neighborhood housing to education policy to human rights. NGOs offer opportunities for political science graduates at all degree levels.

Journalism

If you are interested in a career in print or broadcast journalism, a political science degree can give you the writing and analytical training you need. Experience writing for a school newspaper or magazine is also helpful. You can enter the journalism field with a bachelor's degree or after completing a graduate program in journalism.

Academic Research and Teaching

By earning PhD in political science, you will gain key methodological skills that will prepare you for a career as a college or university professor conducting cutting-edge research in a variety of political science subfields. Political scientists who work at colleges and universities often split their time among research, teaching, and service-orientated duties such as committee or advising responsibilities.

Political science PhDs often use their skills in careers outside of academia. They work in government, research organizations, nonprofits, university administration, business and tech companies.

