

Political Science Department
Political Science Department



Career Workshop

For Political Science and International Relations Majors

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Thinking about your future...

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Career Tips

According to a report from the College Placement Council Foundation, “employers place the highest value on skills not usually associated with specific training: generic cognitive skills and social skills.” The study called cross-cultural competence “the critical new human resource requirement created by the global environment” (*Careers in International Affairs*, 1997: 3)

- “**Experience reinforces formal education.** You should seek internships and volunteer activities to explore the careers that interest you.”
- “There is considerable mobility across categories of economic sectors – profit, nonprofit, and public. You will be able to transfer training and experience from one sector to another.”
- “Your liberal arts and sciences education prepares you for lifelong learning and gives you core communication and adaptation skills that will be valuable in any career.”
- “In the modern workplace, most jobs require **interpersonal skills** and...demand that you be able to **work in teams**” (*Careers and the Study of Political Science*, 6th edition, American Political Science Association, 2003, p. 3) .

What you should do?

- “It is crucial that you realize responsibility for finding a job is basically yours” (*Careers in International Affairs*, 2008, 5)
- Consider internal and external factors: Internal is your self-knowledge; external is your knowledge of the world: know both and combine them.
- “You should approach career planning in the same way you approach your studies” hence, research, use resources, learn how to prepare an impressive resume and write a targeted cover letter, etc. **FINDING A JOB IS A FULL TIME JOB** and takes a lot of work.
- Think now about the future and think of ways to enhance your career skills while you are in college. **WHAT HELPS MAKE YOU MARKETABLE?** Consider doing things that help distinguish you like an internship, study abroad, a unique program, public service, etc.
- While most are well aware of the essential elements of a job search (education, internship, resume and cover letter, interview and contacts), aspects that tend to receive less attention include:
 - The importance of self-knowledge,
 - The ability to communicate that knowledge, and
 - The need for networks and mentors.
- Explore and utilize the resources available at MTSU’s **Career Development Center**.
- Seek help... start early... know your options ... discover and create your opportunities...

Career Options

A bachelor's degree in political science can lead to exciting careers in federal, state and local governments; law; business; international organizations; nonprofit associations and organizations; campaign management and polling; journalism; pre-collegiate education; electoral politics; research; and university and college teaching. Political science majors gain analytical skills, administrative competence and communication abilities that are valued in a wide spectrum of potential career areas.”

Analyze Yourself Do you work best by yourself? Or working with others? Do you write well? Do you enjoy statistical analysis? Are you able to organize or lead?

Useful Skills Skills that a political science major helps you develop that are applicable to any job:

Ability to Communicate:

- Present ideas clearly in writing and orally
- Turn data into useable information
- Argue and debate effectively
- Negotiate and mediate conflicts
- Listen critically

Methods and Research:

- Interpret and analyze data
- Discern good information from bad
- Perform basic quantitative analysis
- Use summary statistics
- Understand the basics of a reliable sample survey
- Employ effectively a variety of research sources
- Use computers with facility
- Design research
- Summarize findings
- Test theories and hypotheses

Analytical Ability:

- Interpret data
- Understand components of complex problems
- See problems from a variety of perspectives
- Synthesize themes from complex issues
- Think “outside the box”
- Think internationally
- Access policy and propose options
- Analyze and solve problems systematically and logically

Planning and Development:

- Organize information
- Conceptualize problems
- Implement strategies
- Make effective decisions
- Demonstrate leadership

Group Skills:

- Work in a team and individually
- Develop consensus
- Interact effectively within a diverse environment

“Political science gives you the specific information and skills to become an effective member of your community and participant in civic life” (Careers and the Study of Political Science, p. 8).

Areas/options (sample of job titles)

<i>Sample Job Titles</i>	<i>Sources of Information</i>
<p><i>Federal Government</i></p> <p>“The political science graduate may find a job any agency or branch of the U.S. Government. The majority of federal jobs are located outside of Washington D.C., thereby providing numerous employment opportunities throughout the nation and the world.”</p> <p>To find out what type of government work you might be interested in pursuing, the annual <i>US Government Manual</i> (www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/index.html) lists all the departments, agencies, and offices.</p> <p>Most of the hiring for federal agencies occurs through the civil service in a process managed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Excepted service agencies include the Federal Reserve, CIA, Defense Intelligence, State Department, FBI, AID, National Security Agency, US Postal Service, TVA, and US Mission to the UN.</p>	
<p>Civilian Consultant to... Assistant Secretary of State for... Deputy Undersecretary of... Officer, FBI Secretary, Department of... Teacher, Overseas School for... Program Analyst Management Auditor Tax Inspector Researcher Foreign Service Officer/Specialist Ambassador Archivist Budget Analyst Historian GAO Evaluator Public Affairs Specialist Intelligence Specialist, CIA Staff Aid, Congressional Committee Information Technology Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Government Jobs, http://www.dcjobsources.com/fed.html • Federal Job Search, http://www.federaljobsearch.com • Federal Jobs Net, http://www.federaljobs.net • FedJobs, http://www.fedjobs.com/ • FedWorld, http://www.fedworld.gov/jobs/jobsearch.html • Government Departments and Agencies, http://www.firstgov.gov/Agencies/Federal/All_Agencies/index.shtml • Govtjobs.com, http://www.govtjobs.com • National Security Agency, http://www.nsa.gov/careers • StudentJobs.gov, http://www.studentjobs.gov/ • U.S. Customs and Border Protection, http://www.customs.ustreas.gov/xp/cgov/careers • U.S. Government Manual, http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/index.html • U.S. Government Office of Personnel Management, http://www.usajobs.opm.gov

State & Local Government

“There are approximately 87,500 local governments in the US. Employment in state and local governments has generally been rising. Entry-level jobs are available, and government are major employers for political science graduates.”

County Treasurer
 Advisor
 County Council Member
 Chief of Staff
 Deputy Secretary
 Assistant Chief of Police
 Program Director
 Legislative Coordinator, Mayor’s Office
 State Personnel Officer
 Juvenile Justice Specialist
 State Chief Purchasing Officer
 City Planner
 Labor Relations Specialist
 City Project Coordinator
 Senior Criminologist
 Assistant Budget Examiner
 City Housing Administrator
 City’s Coordinator of...
 Supervisor, State Department of...

- GovJobs, <http://www.govjobs.net>
- Lcweb.loc/global/state/stategov.html
- www.statelocal.gov
- www.govspot.com
- www.piperinfo.com/state/index.cfm
- www.naspaa.org/students/careers/service.asp
- GovSpot, <http://www.govspot.com>
- Council of State Governments, <http://www.statenews.org>
- International City/County Management Association, <http://www.icma.org>
- Local Government Institute, <http://www.lgi.org>
- National Association of Counties, <http://www.naco.org>
- National Conference of State Legislatures, <http://www.ncsl.org>
- National Governors Association, <http://www.nga.org>
- National League of Cities, <http://www.nlc.org>
- State and Local Government on the Net, <http://www.statelocalgov.net>
- State and Local Governments, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/stategov/stategov.html>
- U.S. Conference of Mayors, <http://www.usmayors.org>

NGOs and Nonprofits

Since the 1960’s, the number and role of nonprofits have grown considerably. Many hire political science graduates. Many focus on policymaking process and thus require employees who understand how governments function and have the ability to analyze and assess public policy. There are NGOs at all levels of government and in virtually every issue area, “from neighborhood housing and environmental renewal to food banks and youth development to national policy areas such as health, education, civil rights, and criminal justice.” Many apply for and receive government funding, often implementing government programs. Good writing, verbal, analytical and interpersonal skills are necessary.

Director, Nonprofit Agency
 Field Officer, Human Rights Campaign
 Public Relations Specialist
 Director, Fund Raising
 Research Analyst
 Political Director
 Budget Analyst
 Program Manager
 Lobbyist

Nonprofits

- AmeriCorps, <http://www.americorps.gov/>
- Chronicle of Philanthropy, <http://www.philanthropy.com>
- Corporation for National and Community Service, <http://www.cns.gov/Default.asp>
- Federal Jobs Digest, <http://www.jobsfed.com>
- Federal Jobs through OPM, <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>
- GuideStar, <http://www.guidestar.org>
- Human Services Career Network, <http://www.hscareers.com>
- Idealist, <http://www.idealists.org>
- IHireSocialServices, <http://www.ihiresocialservices.com/default.asp>
- Nonprofit Career Network, <http://www.nonprofitcareer.com/>
- Nonprofit Times Jobs, <http://www.nptjobs.com>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Knocks, http://www.opportunitynoc.org • PeaceCorps, http://www.peacecorps.gov • Philanthropy Journal, http://www.philanthropyjournal.org/ • Social Service, http://www.socialservice.com • United Way, http://national.unitedway.org/ <p>Public Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, http://www.cbpp.org/ • Global Policy Forum, http://www.globalpolicy.org/ • Public Agenda, http://www.publicagenda.org/pages/career-opportunities • Think Tanks, http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/psthink.html
<p>Campaigns and Polling</p> <p>Each person running for office in the US must put together their own campaign organization. Usually the higher the office, the more professional the staff. Beyond the traditional jobs in parties, individual campaigns, and campaign consulting firms, jobs exist as for political writing, directing political action committees, or issue analysis for a policy organization.</p>	
<p>Campaign Manager/Consultant Political Director Survey Researcher Political Reporter Pollster Fundraiser Director, Political Action Committee Press Officer for Candidate Issue Analyst Political Consultant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Association of Political Consultants, http://www.theaapc.org • American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ • Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, http://www.dccc.org • Democratic National Committee, http://www.democrats.org • GWU's Semester in Washington, http://www.gwu.edu/%7Esiw • National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee, http://www.nrcc.org • Political Resources on the Net, http://www.politicalresources.net/usa1.htm • Project Vote Smart, http://www.vote-smart.org/index.htm • Republican National Committee, http://www.rnc.org
<p>Law</p> <p>Despite the perception, many lawyers are not in private practice, but work for corporations, unions, trade associations, universities, NGOs, and the government.</p>	
<p>Paralegal Deputy Secretary to the Governor Research Consultant Assistant Chief of Police Public Interest/Consumer Advocate Broadcast/Newspaper Reporter Public Policy Analyst State Legislator\ Mediator Judge CIA Inspector Criminologist</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Bar Association, http://www.abanet.org/?gnav=global_home • Association of American Law Schools, http://www.aals.org/ • Association of Corporate Counsel, http://jobs.acca.com/search/browse/ • Association of Trial Lawyers of America, http://www.atlanet.org/ • Attorney Jobs, http://www.attorneyjobs.com • Counsel.net, http://counsel.net/jobs/ • FindLaw, http://careers.findlaw.com • Internet Legal Research Group, http://www.ilrg.com/pre-law.html

<p>Commissioner Juvenile Justice Specialist Lobbyist Labor Relations Specialist Assistant Budget Examiner Politician Labor Union Official Attorney Corporate Legal Counsel Law Professor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LawInfo Career Center, http://jobs.lawinfo.com • LawJobs, http://www.lawjobs.com • Lawyers Weekly Jobs, http://www.lawyersweeklyjobs.com • Legal Employment, http://www.legalemploy.com • National Association for Law Placement, http://www.nalp.org • National Bar Association, http://www.nationalbar.org • National Center for State Courts, http://www.ncsconline.org/D_KIS/info_court_web_sites.html • National Federation of Paralegal Associations, http://www.paralegals.org • NC Bar Association, http://www.ncbar.org/ • NC Court System, http://www.nccourts.org/Citizens/Jobs • U.S. Courts, http://www.uscourts.gov/Home.aspx • WashLaw, http://www.washlaw.edu
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International

With heightened globalization, the opportunities and the demand have grown for qualified people who wish to work in international business, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). Opportunities to work abroad are numerous.

“A liberal arts education is still the single best preparation for international jobs.”

To view local international opportunities in the US government, check the web sites for the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and State, and the International Trade Commission, the CIA, etc.

Many jobs at the international level go to candidates with graduate degrees.

Fluency in lesser known languages such as Chinese or Russian, as well as widely spoken languages such as Spanish and French, are highly marketable skills.

<p>Peace Corp Volunteer International Banker Analyst, CIA International Research Specialist Foreign Service Officer Press Officer Strategic Planning Specialist Translator Instructor Director of International Marketing Policy Analyst Lobbyist Field staff Agent, International Bureau, FBI, DEA Consultant to Multinational Corporations International Correspondent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Employment Network www.peoplebank.co.uk/pbank/owa/pbk06w00.main • Information on companies with offices around the world www.yale.edu/yciascareers/links.html • International Career Employment Weekly www.internationaljobs.org/index.html • Jobs at non profits and NGOs abroad www.idealists.org • Green Jobs http://www.greenjobshub.co.uk • View jobs by region, post resume, search companies www.jobsadverts.com • Job listings by country www.escapeartist.com/jobs/overseas1.htm <p>Volunteer Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Executive Service Corps www.iesc.org • Volunteer Work Information Service www.workingabroad.com
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amizade Volunteer Vacations - save the rainforest amizade.org • Earthwatch Institute www.earthwatch.org • Explorations in Travel www.exploretravel.com • Peace Brigades International www.igc.org/pbi • InterAction interaction.org • Food First www.foodfirst.org • Jesuit Volunteer Corps www.jesuitvolunteers.org • Peace Corps http://www.peacecorps.gov/
<p>Education</p> <p>“The range of career opportunities in education is expanding as is the demand for skilled teachers, educational administrators, educational researchers, and writers.”</p>	
<p>Government/Politics Teacher Curriculum Developer/Supervisor Researcher Education Reporter College Professor Student Affairs Administrator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APSA Teaching Page www.apsanet.org/teach/ • APSA civic education page www.apsanet.org/CENnet • National Council for Social Studies www.ncss.org • ERIC Clearinghouse on Social Studies/Social Studies Education www.indiana.edu/~ssdc/etic_chess.htm • National Association of State Boards of Education www.nsbe.org • Overseas teaching www.state.gov/www/about_state/schools/oteaching.html
<p>Journalism</p> <p>The job market is tight and highly competitive. Opportunities in Internet-based journalism are expanding.</p>	
<p>Writer/Editor Producer, Local Television News Director of Corporate Public Affairs Information Manager Television Reporter Press Officer Public Affairs Research Analyst Director of Surveys, Television Network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication www.aejmc.org • National Diversity Newspaper Job Bank www.newsjobs.com • Television jobs and internships www.tvjobs.com • Newspapers Jobs Page www.freep.com/jobspage
<p>Business</p> <p>Many political science graduates have found employment in the business sector. You may begin a career in business or management training with a bachelor’s degree. For a career in business, recognize that you will be competing against students with diverse undergraduate educations. You should, therefore, try to ensure that you have the appropriate skills. These include communication skills (both written and verbal) and a familiarity with economics and math. The political science graduate offers potential employers a solid understanding of the institutions and processes of different levels of government as well as research skills.</p>	
<p>International business analyst Corporate manager of environmental/regulatory affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business www.aacsb.edu • Careers in Business www.careers-in-business.com

Information manager Public affairs research analyst Director, political action committee Manager, political risk division Market research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Career Builder www.careerbuilder.com• America's Job Bank www.ajb.dni.us
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Miscellaneous Links

American Political Science Association (APSA) provides good career information at http://www.apsanet.org/content_6457.cfm

American Political Science Association (eJobs), http://www.apsanet.org/section_74.cfm

Careers In Government, <http://www.careersingovernment.com/index.cfm?page=jobSearch>

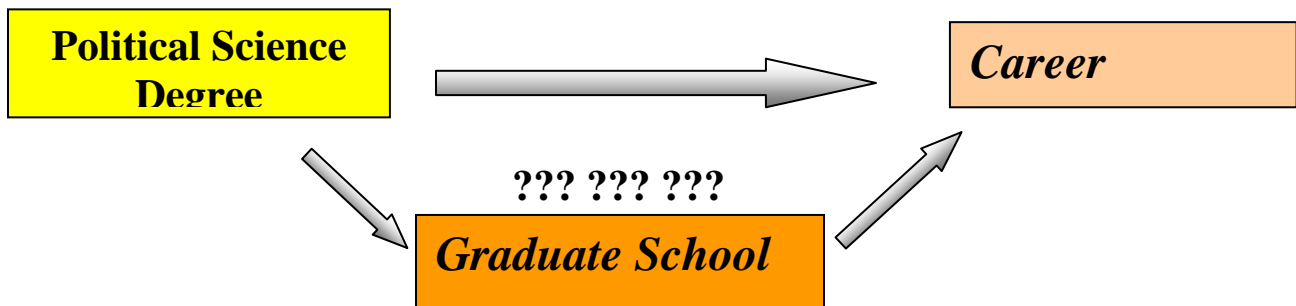
Examples of Careers for Political Science majors click on: http://www.apsanet.org/section_361.cfm.

Governmental and Political Science Resources, http://www.educationindex.com/poli_sci/

Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars, <http://www.twc.edu/>

More Education ?

Should you go to graduate school before entering the job market?



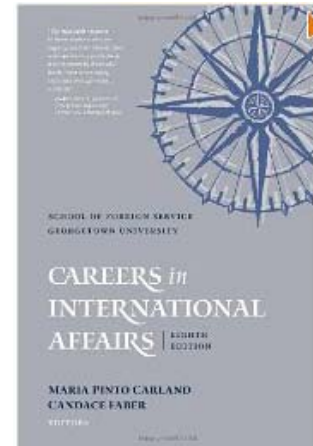
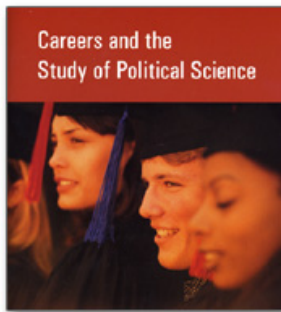
Many of the careers in government and international affairs require some form of graduate education. See the Department's GRADUATE SCHOOL WORKSHOP handout (http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/documents/Grad_school_handout.doc) (also available in the Department's offices in Peck Hall).

Questions To Ask When Thinking About Pursuing a Ph.D.

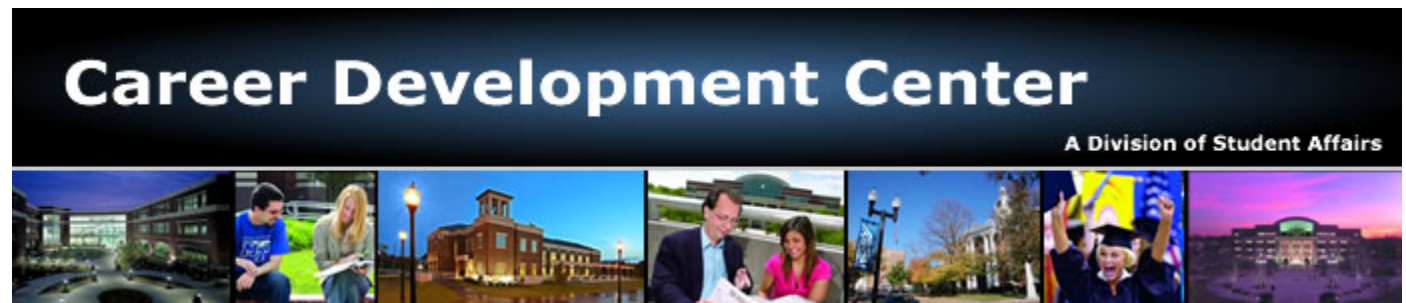
Looking for some guidance on what to ask when taking the next step in your career? Chris Golde's article, "[Questions to Ask When Thinking About Pursuing a Ph. D.](http://www.phd-survey.org/advice/advice.htm)," (<http://www.phd-survey.org/advice/advice.htm>) in the [Survey on Doctoral Education and Career Preparation](http://www.phd-survey.org/) (<http://www.phd-survey.org/>) provides some questions to consider for selecting and researching Ph.D. programs.

In house RESOURCES

- Carland and Faber, eds. *Careers in International Affairs* 8th edition. School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2008.
- *Careers and the Study of Political Science*, 6th edition, American Political Science Association, 2003



On CAMPUS



The Career Development Center is a comprehensive Center serving all departments and colleges of MTSU with career exploration, on-campus recruiting, and job searching.

<http://www.mtsu.edu/career/>