



# Political Science

Degree: Bachelor of Arts

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## *Introduction*

Political Science is the study of that activity whereby public policy is made and implemented. Political scientists are concerned with all those ideas, institutions, processes, and policies which constitute that activity, such as equality, legislation, political socialization, and welfare.

Political scientists study a wide range of subjects, including Russian-American relations, the beliefs and institutional policies of nations in Asia and Africa, the politics of a New England town or major metropolis, and the decisions of the Supreme court. Studying topics such as public opinion, political decision making, and ideology, they analyze the structure and operation of governments, as well as informal political entities. Depending on the topic under study, a political scientist might conduct a public opinion survey, analyze public documents, or analyze election results.

Most political scientists work in colleges and universities; but in addition to their teaching and administrative work, they act as consultants and researchers for non-academic organizations. Political scientists are research oriented and systematically analyze data collected from public opinion surveys, election results, and comparisons of economic proposals. Research results are used by public officials, political parties, government administration, legislative committees, citizen groups, and business firms.

## *What are some desirable personal qualities?*

- Training in statistics and mathematics is helpful
- Knowledge of computers for research purposes
- Logical and methodical thinking
- Open-mindedness
- Systematic work habits
- Intellectual curiosity and creativity
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Analyze information and ideas
- Work with others
- Interest in solving problems
- Tact and diplomacy

## *Who hires?*

- Business Firms
- Consulting Firms
- Government Agencies
- Historical Societies
- Hospitals/Health Care Organizations
- International Organizations
- Law Firms
- Museums
- Research Organizations
- Securities and Commodities Firms
- Social Service Agencies

## *What are some potential occupations?*

Civic Rights Enforcement Officer  
Community Relations/Ombudsperson  
Consumer Protection  
Criminal Investigator  
Customs Investigator  
Customs Investigation  
Foreign Aid/Import Analyst  
Foreign Service Officer (Administrative, Consular, Economic, Political)  
Intelligence Specialist  
International Law Researcher  
Lobbyist  
Political Activist/Candidate  
Political Systems Researcher  
Population Studies  
Professor  
Public Administrator  
Public Law Researcher

## *What are some potential occupations? (con't.)*

Public Opinion Polls  
Secret Service Agent  
Urban Planner  
Advertising  
Budget/Financial Administrator  
Credit Analyst  
Editor/Publisher  
International Banker  
Journalist  
Market Research Analyst  
Public Relations  
Grievances/Mediator  
Import/Export Agent  
Industrial Relations  
Insurance  
International Trade/Economist  
Labor Relations/Personnel  
Workman's Compensation/Benefits Analyst  
College/University Faculty  
Consultant/Counselor  
Reporter/Correspondent  
Researcher  
Social Scientist  
Social Worker  
Secondary School Teacher

## *What are some of the job tasks?*

- Conduct public opinion surveys
- Collect/analyze elections results and data
- Analyze public documents
- Research activities/write reports
- Analyze government structures

## *Additional information*

Experience acquired through cooperative education or internships can prove valuable in obtaining professional positions.

The PhD or equivalent degree is usually a minimum requirement for most positions in colleges and universities and is important for advancement to many top-level, non-academic research and administrative posts.

Many Political Science majors go on to law school. It is an excellent preparatory major for those interested in careers in legal fields.

**Path to Ultimate Career Guide**

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