



For-Profit Organizations

A majority of political science graduates today are employed in the for-profit sector, with about one-third of graduates working in traditional business careers. Besides traditional business opportunities, careers in the for-profit sector include positions in advertising, marketing, and management consulting. This info sheet highlights a few sectors, but because the for-profit career options open to political science students are so broad and varied, students interested in one or more of these fields should explore these opportunities further.

Career Trends in Business

Whether they are just starting out or are long established, businesses and their products are subject to many governmental regulations at the local, national and even international level. Thus, there is a need for employees who understand public sector politics and regulatory processes. For example, large automobile or paper manufacturers must comply with scores of federal environmental regulations that are passed by Congress and enforced by Environmental Protection Agency, and numerous state and local regulations as well. Corporate offices that deal with regulatory affairs employ researchers, lawyers, and government liaisons to track regulations and work towards their most favorable interpretation. Graduates with a specialty in international relations might be good candidates to work for multinational corporations, or smaller domestic businesses that are looking to expand their markets overseas. In addition, graduates with a specialty in public administration may be good candidates for personnel management or human resources divisions in small, medium and large sized businesses.

Consulting

Business consultants work in a wide range of for-profit and public sector settings including government contracting and procurement, finance and accounting, administrative services, marketing, logistics and information technology. Consultants analyze management problems and propose solutions that are in keeping with the organization's goals and values. Individual projects vary widely depending on the client and the consultant's specialty. To be effective, consultants must be self-starters who can work under little or no supervision. Strong analytical and people skills are also considered a must, as are team building and oral and written communication skills.

Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations

Despite their many differences, the fields of advertising, marketing and public relations each involve shaping people's perceptions of products and services, which is crucial for a firm's success. Thus, there will always be a need for creative and hard-working professionals in these fields. Political science graduates may be particularly suited to public interest campaigns (for example, those promoting seat belt use or anti-drug messages). Such campaigns are often sponsored by national, state or local governments, or created and managed by firms contracted to provide such services. Similarly, political science graduates can fulfill an essential role in nearly all public and private-sector organizations to link governments, labor unions, educational institutions to the general public. To prepare for a career in those fields, majors should consider adding a minor, or taking electives in communication studies, business or graphic arts.

Media

Many students who aspire to careers in print or broadcast journalism major in communications, but scores of professionals in the field today majored in other fields, including political science. News managers seek people who have broad knowledge, skills and experiences and hire people from liberal arts backgrounds. Political science graduates who have a strong interest in daily news and who have strong writing and analytical thinking skills might consider a career in print and electronic media, as reporters, staff writers and analysts cover a great variety of events at the local, national and international levels.