

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR
Career Education

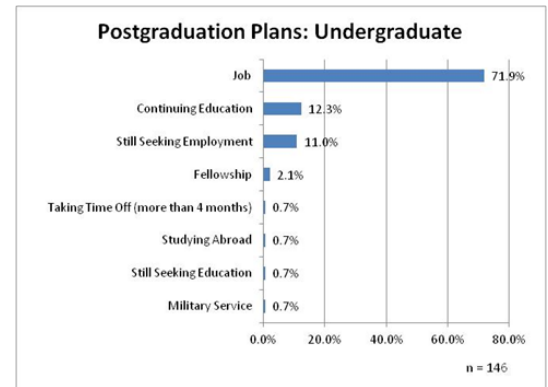
WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A DEGREE IN **POLITICAL SCIENCE?**

Where do Political Science majors go?

According to the 2015 Graduating Student Survey (with a 73.7% response rate for undergraduates in the Political Science department):

- 86.3% of graduates were employed or going to graduate school.
 - 71.9% were employed
 - 12.3% had secure plans to attend grad school
 - 2.1% had a fellowship

Here are some examples of organizations that have hired Columbia Political Science majors in recent years:



Examples of graduate schools and fellowship programs that have accepted Columbia Political Science majors in recent years include:

- Columbia University
- Georgetown University
- University of Oxford
- University of Iceland
- Duke University
- Peking University
- University of California–Berkeley
- Harvard University
- Ben Bagdikian Fellowship Program
- NYC Urban Fellows
- Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship

What jobs do Political Science majors do?

A degree in political science provides knowledge and skills relevant to a wide variety of jobs across the career spectrum, including:

- **Local and State Government:** Public Policy, Regional Planning, City or Town Management, Program Administration, Community Affairs, Social Services, Law Enforcement
- **Federal Government:** Public Policy, Research, Intelligence, Foreign Service, Law Enforcement, Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Services, Program Administration
- **Law:** Prosecution, Defense, Contractual, Corporate, Nonprofit or Public Interest, Government, Mediation, Lobbying

- **Politics:** Elected or Appointed Leadership, Campaign Management, Staff Administration, Special Interest Advocacy, Political Advising, Lobbying
- **International Affairs:** Governance, Policy Making and Analysis, Public Sector Reform, Poverty-Reduction Strategy, Ethics and Anti-Corruption, Human Rights, Public Law
- **Business:** Sales, Human Resources, Finance, Management, Public Relations, Consulting, Market Research
- **Non-Profit:** Administration, Management, Public Relations, Fund Raising/Development, Policy Analysis, Research, Grant Writing, Direct Service
- **Media:** Editing, Reporting, Circulation, Sales, Publishing, Electronic Media, Public Relations, News Programming, Production
- **Education:** K-12, Higher Education, Administration, Student Affairs, Library Services

Use CCE's [Industry Exploration](#) webpages to learn more about these, and other fields.

What do employers want?

Most of the skills/qualities sought by employers are transferrable and/or soft skills that students can gain through classes, extracurricular activities, internships, volunteer experiences, or part time jobs including:

1. *Ability to work in a team structure*
2. *Ability to make decisions and solve problems*
3. *Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization*
4. *Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work*
5. *Ability to obtain and process information*
6. *Ability to analyze quantitative data*
7. *Technical knowledge related to the job*
8. *Proficiency with computer software programs*
9. *Ability to create and/or edit written reports*
10. *Ability to sell or influence others*

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015 Job Outlook

Your major can definitely demonstrate relevant coursework and knowledge to a prospective employer, but your studies aren't the only aspect of your experience that employers are evaluating. They select people who they believe can do the job (have the right skills), want the job (have demonstrated an interest in the field) and are a personality fit for the team and organization.

What value do Political Science majors bring?

According to the Department of Political Science at Columbia, the political science curriculum helps you to develop the following skills:

- Ability to thoroughly understand the American political system, international politics and policy
- Ability to apply, synthesize, and analyze data and materials and to think critically
- Ability to communicate ideas clearly and persuasively in writing
- Ability to analyze a problem and draw correct inferences using qualitative and/or quantitative analysis
- Understanding of consequential policy issues within and beyond the U.S.
- Ability to apply political thought to global issues like justice, rights and the relationship between state and the individual

What if I'm an international student?

For international students at Columbia under student visas, selecting your major can play a significant role if you plan to work in the US after completion of your degree. Optional Practical Training is a work authorization that allows an international student to work in a job directly related to the student's major area of study either before or after degree completion. Employer sponsored H1B Visas also have similar strict requirements. Students with more questions about this should visit the International Student & Scholars Office (ISSO) and view CCE's International Students webpage at careereducation.columbia.edu/students/International-Students.