

Career/Industry Forecast

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Research will be a significant part of your ISM experience. In order to make the most of your time and reap the most learning, you need to have a direction and know what it is that you want to know. This will require you to do some real thinking and complete background reading to see where you are lacking in knowledge.

At the very minimum, list seven things you want to learn about your topic. This should include basic knowledge and terminology related to your area of interest, and it should include specific information you need in order to develop your interest and skills in your topic area. *As you develop your list of things to learn, try to think about what prior knowledge and skills a potential mentor would expect you to have.*

Suggestions to initiate the thinking process:

Job Title: Political Scientist
[alternative jobs: lawyer, diplomat, journalist]

Job Description: What are the daily, weekly, and long-term tasks that I would do if I pursued this area of interest?

Political Scientists work in many different fields. They can range from working in government, directly with lawmakers, for the news, data analysts, private corporations, public service, labor unions, political entities etc. The office environment varies since they have to go out to collect data, attend political events, or go to various government buildings. Generally, they are responsible for collecting and analyzing political data, creating policies, looking at how American policies will affect citizens and other people on a global scale, and forecasting political decisions. They also analyze the structure and theory of government and pursue practical solutions to political issues.

On a day-to-day basis, they predict economic and social trends, provide advice to government officials, the media, provide legislative proposals for the government, provide commentary on political issues, and publish results of research they conduct. Some things that they need to be aware of are political theory, public policy, comparative politics, national politics, and international relations.

Training, Education, and Certification: What is required to be able to work in this area of interest?

In order to become a political scientist, you need to first get a bachelor's degree and then a masters if you want an entry-level position. Some people in the field also get a PhD but it is only recommended if you'll be able to sustain yourself since it takes a lot

of dedication and time where you could be earning. Most people in this profession have a bachelor's in political science and branch out to something more specific for their masters such as economics, statistics, public policy, international affairs, or something that relates to the specific sector they wish to enter. As of 2022, political scientists in the US were \$11,140 in student loan debt on average.

College or Post High School Programs and Recommended High School Courses:

What courses will I have to complete before I graduate high school in order to be considered for my desired degree/program in college?

In high school, courses like political science at CTE, AP United States History, AP Comparative Government, AP United States Government, AP Statistics, AP Macro/Micro Economics etc would be helpful for gaining background knowledge about the field. Some recommended high school programs for aspiring political scientists are the US Senate Program, Pathway Internship Programs at the U.S. Department of State, & United States Senate Youth Program. Recommended experience for college students interested in political science include working part-time/interning for political campaigns, legislative analysts, policy makers, or other entities in the field. They should also join the student senate. For those who are interested in practicing law, they can work at firms to learn more about the legal side of political science, they can partake in organizations like Model UN, Competitive Mock Trial, Moot Court, or Speech & Debate.

After taking these classes in undergrad, you can specialize into the sector of political science you are most interested in and pursue a masters in economics/statistics if you are more interested in the financial or economic side of politics, public policy/international relations if you are more interested in the social side of politics, or you can go to law school.

National and Local Professional Organizations: Find out what is in our area and attend these meetings. You will find the most up to date information in your field and will likely meet some possible mentors.

National Level:

- American Political Science Association (APSA)
- Southern Political Science Association
- National Capital Area Political Science Association (NCAPSA)

Local Level:

- Supporting Women in Political Science (SWIPS)

****most things online said it's better to go to law firms or meetings and scout out people with interests in political science there, most real legislation and political science organizations are located in Austin****

Related Areas: Are there related areas where you might be able to utilize your same skills and interests? These related areas are worth investigating.

- Attorneys
- Judges
- Data Analysts
- Finance
- Journalism
- Diplomacy

Salary: What is the expected annual salary right out of college? 10 years down the road?

A first year political scientist usually makes \$61,400 and works their way upwards from there. The median annual income for political scientists in the US in 2023 was \$132,350, and the 90th percentile earned \$183,500+.

Career Outlook: What is the future outlook for this career? Will opportunities be available nationwide?

There are around 700 job offerings that open up each year for political science and the industry is growing at a rate of 6.6% a year. Political Scientists usually will start off as assistants in research organizations, political campaigns, or non-profit organizations. They can later work their way up into position in government helping to make policy for campaigns or senior positions in analysis.

Terminology: Does your career have specific terminology with which you need to become familiar?

Some terms that a political scientist should be familiar with are:

- Sovereignty: The authority of a state to govern itself or another state.
- Democracy: A system of government by the whole population, typically through elected representatives.
- Authoritarianism: A political system in which a single entity or a small group holds significant power, often without legal or popular consent.
- Constitutionalism: The principle that government authority is derived from and limited by a body of fundamental law or constitution.
- Federalism: A system of government in which power is divided between a central authority and constituent political units (like states or provinces).

- Populism: A political approach that strives to appeal to ordinary people who feel that their concerns are disregarded by established elite groups.
- Legitimacy: The right and acceptance of an authority, usually a governing law or a regime.
- Bureaucracy: A system of government in which most of the important decisions are made by state officials rather than by elected representatives.
- Political Socialization: The process by which individuals learn and frequently internalize a political lens framing their perceptions of how power is arranged and how the world around them is organized.
- Ideology: A set of beliefs, values, and ideas that influences the way individuals view the world and governs their behavior in society and politics.

Analysis: Make sure to include your detailed analysis addressing the following question:

- 1) What did you learn?
- 2) Why is it important?
- 3) How does it impact your thinking &/or perspective concerning your topic?
- 4) Are you encouraged to continue with this topic or has the information you learned caused you to reconsider - Has it opened your eyes to other career fields/opportunities?
- 5) How will you use this information moving forward?

While researching the field of political science, I learned a lot more about the knowledge and skills required for being successful in the career. I learned that there is a lot more data and static information/economic knowledge needed to be successful in this field than I initially thought, but I don't mind it. I was not aware that most political science jobs require a master's degree, with many people in the professions earning their PhDs before moving up in the field. Some things that stuck out to me were how much the field varies, I did not expect to see how many different pathways that a political scientist can take such as taking an active role in making policy, advising politicians on how to write bills/legislation and aiding the public with civil service. This new insight is important to me going forward because it piqued my interest in the more legislative aspect of being a political scientist and has made me aware of the various paths this career can take.

This has greatly shaped my thinking when it comes to my topic; initially I chose political science as my topic of study because I wanted an umbrella that could apply to many different types of law but now I am more interested in the actual politics of the job. I want to pursue a profession where I'm able to have a direct impact on people and help them advocate for themselves. I'm not sure if I want to go into the government side of political science or the legal side and pursue law school. My original perspective on political science was that it is a major that people take in college if they are interested in going to law school and that there is no other viable application of it. Now I realize that

there are actual professions that having a political science degree could be useful in. I do not wish to run for public office but I think that having a more “background” role in legislation and politics seems interesting to me. I think my strength lies in my people skills and being able to talk to an audience rather than debating and defending legislation/people. I don’t have a lot of experience defending people/a stance so it feels uncomfortable to say I want to be an attorney.

After doing this research I feel confused and unsure about which path I feel would be best for me. Originally I wanted to go into law because of my interest in politics and activism but those jobs are better suited for political scientists, but I also feel unsure about the career path. I think what is holding me back is the experiences of people I know who went to prestigious universities for political science and had a hard time finding jobs in government other than running for office. I feel like being an attorney seems more stable to me but I also have no idea what practicing law is truly like. I want to look more into the data side of politics and potentially finance. Another thing that is steering me away from this career choice is that there isn’t real science involved and I feel like I wouldn’t feel fulfilled in a profession where I don’t get to use math/science on a regular basis. I feel torn between the social and economic aspects of being a political scientist. On one hand, if I become an attorney, then I get to help people with their civil and legal rights, but on the other hand, if I become a political scientist then I get to use data and numbers along with politics and potentially have a role in making legislation.

Going forward, I think it would be best for me to conduct more research into this field and find out if there are ways to incorporate more STEM related work into political science or figure out if I feel more strongly towards social advocacy.

questions

answers

commentary

stuck out to me

i like

i not like

Political Scientist Overview

Political scientists work to understand government and politics in theory and in practice by considering topics in international relations, government operations, local administration and more. They can hold positions at large universities or national nonprofits, for instance, and might focus on teaching, research or service.

As a department head and professor of government at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Michelle D. Deardorff has the “joy of being able to teach, speak, read (and) write about the way in which power and government interact with individuals and communities,” she says.

Though more than half of political scientists worked for the federal government in 2021, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are also opportunities in other sectors. Political scientists mostly interested in research **lowk I'm also interested in lab research if there's a way to combine stem and politics**, for instance, can look for positions at think tanks, while those who wish to focus on teaching might find their home at a community college.

Political scientists employ empirical or normative approaches in their studies. The empirical approach allows political scientists to study "what is" through observation, while a normative perspective supports studies of "what could or should be," Deardorff says. Political scientists should be self-starters who are interested in the field's big questions. **woah that's literally me**

“I think if you're a really passive person this is going to be a harder field,” Deardorff says.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 6.6% employment growth for political scientists between 2022 and 2032. In that period, an estimated 400 jobs should open up. **how many people are going into this field also what percentage of women are political scientist [56%]**

Political Scientists rank #2 in **Best Social Services Jobs**. Jobs are ranked according to their ability to offer an elusive mix of factors. **Read more about how we rank the best jobs. #2 in Best Social Services Jobs #15 in Best STEM how is political science related to stem Jobs #18 in Best-Paying Jobs #29 in 100 Best Jobs**

Political Scientists made a median salary of \$128,020 in 2022. The best-paid 25% made \$163,320 that year, while the lowest-paid 25% made \$89,810.

Average Americans work well into their 60s, so workers might as well have a job that's enjoyable and a career that's fulfilling. **A job with a low stress level, good work-life balance and solid prospects to improve, get promoted and earn a higher salary would make many employees happy.** Here's how Political Scientists job satisfaction is rated in terms of upward mobility, stress level and flexibility.

Becoming a political scientist requires going beyond undergraduate education to a master's or doctorate degree. Master's degrees should be in a relevant field such as public policy or public administration, while doctorate degrees typically focus on a subfield of political science, such as international relations or political theory. how versatile are these degrees and what other fields can they apply to [mainly just law and diplomacy professions]

But prospective political scientists can start gathering relevant experiences in their college years, and a bachelor's degree can help land a job in politics. Deardorff advises undergraduates to look for ways to engage outside the classroom.

"If students find a way to prioritize those kinds of practical experiences, even if it is volunteering for your local government and then waiting tables at night or doing whatever you can to make money, those experiences help pay off," she says.

As an undergraduate, Deardorff got as many experiences as she could, though "they weren't glamorous," she says. "It helps because when people see you're hustling and you're working hard, there's people who will watch that and open doors for you."

When considering a master's or Ph.D. program, prospective applicants should think about the kind of work they want to do after school. Master's programs might prepare students to work in government administration, for instance, while Ph.D. programs can lead students to careers in academia.

Prospective doctorate students should also consider how competitive their application will be. If getting a Ph.D. would put them into debt, "I would think really cautiously about that," Deardorff says. If a student cannot achieve "full funding where they pay tuition and you get a stipend and you're working, you may not be as competitive on the job market afterwards," she adds.

The field of politics is broad, and there are so many things you can do with it. One of the most obvious career choices is to become a political scientist as they can take on many roles. They spend a lot of time studying, researching, and analyzing political trends, political ideas, and so on.

I'm not sold on being a political scientist. I want a career that has politics involved in it but I also love numbers and don't want a job that doesn't have any stem related to it. I also want to be in the courtroom potentially? the thing that

drives me towards political science is me wanting to do social work and have a direct impact on people and communities but i'm not sure if this is the best way to go at it with my interests in mind idk

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What Does a Political Scientist Do?

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If this sounds like an exciting career path and you're wondering whether it's worth it, this article will show you everything a political scientist does and how you can become one.

What Is a Political Scientist?

A political scientist is a multitasker as they do a little bit of everything. They are researchers, analysts, and forecasters. maybe I should take statistics so I can look into data analysis and specialize in a politically adjacent field hmm The process of a scientist involves an investigation paired with a curiosity to gather information and come to a conclusion. If you think about it, a political scientist's roles are similar. They tackle a particular issue, collect data, process it, and then develop a helpful solution. ok too good but where's the actual science 😞

Additionally, political scientists use their expertise to understand how laws and policies affect government, citizens, and business. However, it's essential to know that the field of politics tends to be objective and systematic. This is not to say that a political scientist can't be subjective and offer opinions, but the area requires that their conclusions are based on facts and evidence.

In other words, political scientists analyze the structure and theory of government and pursue practical solutions to political issues.

What Does a Political Scientist Do?

As you've come to learn, political scientists conduct in-depth studies regarding the origin or development of political systems. They analyze the federal government structure; utilize surveys, public polls, election results, economic data, and other documents to conclude and predict new policies. [what jobs IN government can I get other than a state rep or senator with this career path](#)

They also work as policy analysts for the government, political groups, and labor unions. Political scientists provide helpful information and analysis after researching the effects of government policies on a specific region or population.

Some other duties of a political scientist include:

- Research political subjects (foreign relations, U.S. political system)
- Collect and analyze data from public sources like surveys, polls, and election results
- Create and test political theories
- Predict political, economic, and social trends
- Submit research results by publishing articles and giving presentations
- Teach political science

[the points under this seem the most appealing](#)

- Provide advice to government officials, research agencies, civic bodies, political parties, and the media
- Prepare legislative proposals for the government
- Do a media commentary about political problems and public policies **make me the white house press secretary right now im telling u for reals!!**

In addition to these duties, political scientists often use qualitative methods in their research when gathering information from various sources. For example, they can rely on historical documents to analyze former government structures and policies. However, they also use quantitative methods when developing and researching theories. For example, they usually analyze voter registration data when they need to identify voting patterns.

With research and analyses, political scientists concentrate on five main areas:

- National politics (American politics) – the study of the political processes in the U.S.; research and analyze the strategies, effects, and results of state and local governments, national institutions, etc.
- Comparative politics – their expertise is comparing political systems outside of the U.S.
- Public policy – they focus on the development and effects of laws and public policies in the U.S. and abroad.
- Political theory – they research and analyze political ideologies (equality, justice, rights).
- International relations – they research and analyze the political relations between nations, meaning how diplomacy, international policy, and conflict resolution work across countries.

Skills a political scientist needs

To be a qualified political scientist, one needs to have:

- Analytical skills – when collecting, evaluating, and interpreting data. **this is so me**

- **Communication skills** – crucial for writing reports, collaborating with people, and giving presentations. **me**
- **Critical-thinking skills** – essential for examining, processing information, and coming up with logical conclusions from the collected data. **me**
- Creativity – a must when searching for new ideas, information, and staying updated on political issues; coming up with ways to address and solve problems. **me i hope**

How Do You Become a Political Scientist?

As it happens with all careers, there are specific steps you need to follow, and **getting into politics** is no different. Some entry-level positions require only a bachelor's degree, but most jobs demand higher degrees such as a master's or a Ph.D.

As a first step, candidates who want to pursue a career in political sciences should start with a bachelor's degree. To meet the qualifications for acceptance into graduate school, you need to complete an educational program in political science. This program is crucial in preparing you with the basics of political science while **also helping you with statistics, writing, and economics.**

Most bachelor's political science programs take up to four years of full-time study and 120 credits. However, other factors affect the length of a degree, such as internships, a thesis, etc.

If you're interested in a bachelor's degree in political science, check out our program at BAU. **self promo i see you**

Once you complete your undergraduate degree program, you can gain hands-on experience by applying for internships in nonprofit organizations as research assistant, campaign assistant, or in legislative and congressional offices. These roles are helpful as they help you gain valuable experience in the field of politics and build a portfolio that can boost your employment prospects in the future.

Next, to complete your graduate degree, you need a master's degree in a field related to political science. Many political scientists decide on specific roles such as public administration, public policy, international relations, and public affairs.

A master's program for political science includes several study topics during your coursework, such as research methods, statistics, policy development, program assessment, evaluation, etc.

After you're done with your education, it would be best if you considered paid internships, volunteer work, or any role to gain experience. If you gain experience, you're more likely to [find a job](#). Additionally, after earning your master's degree, you can qualify to work as a political scientist for different organizations.

If you want to advance your education, you can also pursue a Ph.D. This is especially important if you're looking to pursue a career as a [professor at the university level](#). Apart from this, you can also find high-level career opportunities in political consulting and national government, but a Ph.D. isn't necessary unless you're working in academia.

What Is the Job Outlook and Salary of a Political Scientist?

Considering the effort they put into research, policies, and such, it makes sense that political science jobs have high salaries. [do they work directly with lawmakers to develop policy and how are they hired?](#) According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\)](#), the average median pay for a political scientist is \$122,510 per year, which is estimated to be \$58.90 per hour.

On average, around 700 openings for political scientists are projected every year. Additionally, job growth is estimated to increase by up to 9% in the next ten years in the U.S. So, if there's ever been a better time to pursue a political scientist career, now it's your chance.

Conclusion

The job of a political scientist may look challenging if you're not used to working in various workplaces. Many political scientists work in private corporations as writers, policy analysts, and commentators, while others may work with the government, television, and so on.

To be a successful political scientist, you must be curious, rational, analytical, creative, and logical. If politics are something you're interested in, you'll be happy to hear that you can also become a political scientist with some time and effort.

so i feel like i like the field but also in my stomach something feels very wrong when thinking about being in the profession so my head is saying yes but my gut is on fire for some reason hmmm

Sources: Include your sources/reference articles in MLA format after your analysis, at the bottom of the page.

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