

De-Centering Employability: Reimagining Student Success in Political Education

Horia M. Dijmarescu, *University of Pittsburgh*

Abstract: The high cost of studying at American universities simultaneously limits their ability to promote socio-economic mobility and creates institutional incentives to foreground employability skills (i.e., data analysis, inter-personal communication, critical thinking, etc.) as a primary marker of degree utility. The centrality of employability skills to how political science departments market their course offerings constitutes an attempt to retain students legitimately concerned about post-college financial stability. This paper examines the relationship between neoliberal discourses and collective understandings of the purpose of political education. It argues that overwhelming attention given to employability skills inhibits students from reimagining global futures in which other kinds of skills might ascend in importance or in which they might put their education towards different ends. Moreover, it is particularly integral to the study of political science to include within its purview analyses of the socio-political factors that animate its own pedagogy.

What does an education in political science offer undergraduate students? Many top political science departments in the United States try to attract and retain students by enumerating a constellation of degree payoffs: e.g., learning theories and methodologies relevant to understanding politics, developing sophisticated written and oral analysis and argumentation skills, critically thinking about contemporary problems, gaining the capacity to discern fact from fiction, etc. Of course, academic interest is not the only factor that affects student choices of major (nor, indeed, their choice of post-secondary institution). Long-term financial considerations, career opportunities, and social status linked to academic pathways also comprise the discourse on what and how to study. This paper examines the centrality of this latter category of concerns to discourse about higher education, starting from the observation that top American political science departments overwhelmingly frame the benefits of studying political science in such terms. Indeed, approximately 85% of American political science departments ranked in the

top fifty (US News & World Report, 2021) either explicitly mention or tacitly allude to the *employability skills* gained through political science education (see *Appendix I*). The meaning of “employability skills” is broad but typically refers to a range of aptitudes, from technical proficiency in areas of specialization (e.g., theoretical or methodological knowledge, capacity to analyze relevant information, etc.) to transferrable “soft” abilities (e.g., interpersonal and presentation communication, critical thinking, problem solving, etc.) (Lowden, et al., 2011). Some suggest that work ethic, maturity, professionalization (including choices related to attire and grooming), and time-management constitute additional skills that employers are particularly eager to find in people seeking employment (Bhaerman and Spill, 1988).

It is noteworthy that although scholars have linked student choice of major to personality (Porter and Umbach, 2006), academic ability (Aldosary and Assaf, 1996),¹ and major attributes (Beggs, Bantham, and Taylor, 2007), regarding the impact on field of study choices of long-term financial factors like availability of major-related jobs, prospective salaries, and social status conferred by one’s major, the literature is mixed. Whereas Aldosary and Assaf (1996) argue financial factors feature prominently, Callender and Jackson (2008) find no significant link between a link between financial factors field of study choice.² Other scholars, such as Sims and Ferrare (2021) find that students’ varied degree of access to career exploration tools leads to distinctions in how they choose their majors, with the rural-urban divide featuring prominently in determining such access for first-generation students. Goyette and Mullen (2006) document that the degree to which post-graduation finances affect major choice depends by gender and race. In any case, disagreement about the extent to which students foreground employability skills in

¹ Scholars note that high school contexts—including infrastructure, social and academic environments, access to in- and after-school activities, etc.—affect academic achievement in post-secondary settings (see Wolniak and Engberg, 2010).

² Financial factors (particularly fear of debt) do, however, shape *where* students decide to study.

their own choices raises additional questions as to why political science departments center them in how they describe the utility of earning a degree in the discipline.

That at least some students are mindful of financial considerations when deciding whether to attend college and what to study upon registering make sense given that average combined inflation-adjusted costs of tuition, room, and board, at American four-year post-secondary institutions has skyrocketed from \$17,070 during the 1995-1996 academic year to \$29,033 during AY2020-2021 (NCES, 2021).³ Meanwhile, between 1995 and 2020, inflation-adjusted median annual earnings for 25–34-year-olds holding a bachelor’s degree employed full-time and year-round grew only modestly, from \$52,560 to \$59,650 (ibid.).⁴ Especially for students of low-income backgrounds and black and Hispanic students (Ratcliffe and McKernan, 2015) who lack access to adequate grants, scholarships, and fellowships, the increased financial burdens graduates face raise anxieties about repayment and may be more likely to complicate decisions about what and how to study. The logic of centering employability skills rests on a tacit acceptance of this cost reality students face. If (at least some) students do not expect that a degree in a particular field will allow them to generate sufficient post-graduation income, they might be more likely to gravitate towards disciplines that do. They sometimes also face tacit or explicit pressure from family or peers to do so (such concerns animate popular press discussion about declining enrollment in liberal arts degrees; see, for instance, Berlatsky, 2018). The financial burden of higher education constitutes a social environment that primes student, their families or peers, advisors, and other actors to value degrees in fields that they see as long-term investments.

³ Figures use constant 2020-2021 dollars. This figure obscures a difference between the average combined tuition, room, and board costs at nonprofit private four-year institution versus at their public counterparts (\$28,007 in AY2020-2021; figures unavailable for AY1995-1996).

⁴ Figures use constant 2020 dollars.

While this facet of the economic context might help us understand why political science departments might expect their discursive centering of employability skills to be intelligible to an audience of prospective students, I argue broader socio-economic and political processes are also at work. Indeed, “investment” rhetoric features prominently in a variety of academic and non-academic discourses of higher education; see, for instance, Canon and Gascon, 2013; Barrow and Malamud, 2015; Abel and Dietz, 2019; Vedder, 2020; Dickler, 2022). That is, students decide what to study in a context of economic uncertainty and are simultaneously exposed to a rich discourse that frames future economic security as a principal reason for studying. Foregrounding employability skills parallels wider neoliberal discourses within which actors within and beyond the university (I group some of the latter kinds of actors in a category I refer to as the “academic self-help market” and consider their contribution to higher education discourses) frame the goals and advantages of higher education. The paper considers pedagogical and ethical challenges that arise from employment-centric narratives that constrain students’ imaginations about their potential post-university trajectories, as well as alternative framings that might help to recruit and retain talented young people to study politics without foreclosing their creative potential to chart long-term goals beyond exchanging their labor for wages. I end with a discussion of the role that faculty and academic advisors could have in de-centering employability skills.

Employability Skills to the Rescue: Neoliberalism and Post-Secondary Education

From the perspective of academic units within universities, attracting and retaining students are significant goals. For instructors and advisors driven by strong academic interests in particular fields, recruitment activities seek to introduce students to ideas and subjects around which they can develop a shared passion. Likewise, instructors’ and advisors’ retention activities

often center student wellbeing. Universities that develop inclusive pedagogy (Thomas, 2016), strong physical and mental health services (Eisenberg, Lipson, and Posselt, 2016), and provide academic support to students (Grillo and Leist, 2013; Hoyt, 2021) tend to do better in recruiting and retaining students from a wide array of backgrounds. That said, enrollment also carries impacts department budgets. The more students a department can attract, the more tuition revenue it raises for the university.⁵ While varying slightly depending on what fiscal model a university uses, tuition revenue distribution for school or department-specific expenditures often relate to enrollment figures (as a proxy for departmental power), especially in cases where university-wide resources are not stretched thin (Pfeffer and Moore, 1980).⁶ Changes in enrollment also affects influences administrative decisions about faculty hiring and faculty-to-student ratios, support staff and programming needs, office and classroom facilities requirements, etc. Affected by students' backgrounds, attitudes, sentiments of belonging and other factors (Bean, 1990), and in addition to indicating whether academic programs cause widespread student discontent and/or insufficiently build on students' pre-college preparedness, retention figures also affect university funding that is tied to institutional accountability (Titus, 2006). Budgetary pressures therefore incentivize departments to increase and maintain high undergraduate enrollment.

Student concern for long-term financial stability with a degree earned in each field becomes, in this context, a concern that departments can actively tap into by presenting themselves as offering a relief against student anxieties regarding the cost of education. Although

⁵ Total university revenue from tuition varies widely. For example, while undergraduate tuition usually accounts for approximately 11% of university revenue at Princeton University (with graduate students contributing another 5%), tuition and fees account for approximately 71% of Michigan State University's FY 2021-2022 general fund (see Princeton 2023; Michigan State University 2023).

⁶ Methods for distributing tuition revenue across university units raises additional challenges in instances where students pursue credentials across budgetary units (e.g., students who double major in a program in a School of Arts and Sciences as well as in a stand-alone Business School) (see CITATION).

the level at which top-50 American political science departments market the benefits of a political science degree by referencing employability skills varies, the preponderance of employment/employability discourses is notable. Towards the more explicit side of the range, Emory University promises the student that “multiple opportunities to conduct original research” and that they will “learn to think clearly and logically about political challenges and potential solutions... learn how to design careful empirical analysis... learn how to effectively summarize what you find.” These are, Emory’s Department of Political Science states, “the necessary skills both for effective political leadership and for a successful career in a global workforce.” Other universities are more subtle, only indirectly tying skills to employment, but nevertheless foregrounding respectable employment and career opportunity as a central payoff of political science education. Princeton University, for example, describes that the internships students secure are “reflected in the post-graduation career paths of Politics concentrators, which in the past couple of years have ranged from jobs at the State Department and The Wilderness Society to analyst careers at top investment banks and consulting firms to the pursuit of graduate degrees.” Taking a unique approach, the University of Notre Dame eschews the approaches of the above examples by refraining from describing employability skills *in its own words*. Instead, it foregrounds a student testimonial wherein the student describes learning to think critically, to write well, to speak up in class, and summarizes that “all the components of my major prepare me for whatever job or whatever path that I would choose to pursue in the future.”

The fact that only 15% of top-50 departments do not explicitly or tacitly refer to employability skills or career outcomes in their pitch to students for why they should consider studying political science supports observations that colleges and universities are deeply enmeshed with neoliberalism, fundamentally shaping their role in public life (see, for example,

Levidow, 2002; Saunders, 2010; Olssen and Peters, 2007; Busch, 2017; and, Tight, 2019).

Morrow (2006) argues that “in the neoliberal model higher education is ideally integrated into the system of production and accumulation in which knowledge is reduced to its economic functions and contributes to the realization of individual economic utilities” (p. xxxi). What one ought to observe is that the focus on employability skills and career outcomes as selling features of a political science education pushes students towards a particular form of post-graduation activity: wage-labor. Among the observations (and critiques) of scholars of higher education is that processes of neoliberalization commodify students by foregrounding their development into “human resources” whose labor provides instrumental benefits for the accumulation of capital (some also note that commodification co-evolves with their consumerization⁷; see, for instance, Saunders, 2010). In studying how this plays out at community colleges, Levin (2005) observes:

In the process of garnering skills with value in the workplace, students are not only socialized to use the tools of business and industry but also educated within the structure of these tools. On site at the community college as well as in courses delivered using technology through continuing education or contract education, the needs of business and industry are at the center of the curriculum. Where the needs of business and industry are central, the doctrine of human capital theory is pitted against liberal learning” (p. 15).

In more generalizable and explicit terms, Slaughter and Rhoades (2000) argue “students are the education industry’s ‘inputs’, or raw materials, that are transformed into the ‘products’ purchased by corporate employers” (p. 74). Giroux (2002) argues such processes in higher education “...have been enormously successful in preparing students for low-skilled service work in a

⁷ Moreover, some scholars argue that the discursive conversion of students into “customers” of higher education has helped to drive up tuition costs (see Mintz, 2021).

society that has little to offer in the way of meaningful employment for the vast majority of its graduates” (p. 441).

One should also note Giroux’s (ibid.) argument that neoliberalism produces a discourse whereby “citizenship is portrayed as an utterly privatized affair whose aim is to produce competitive self-interested individuals vying for their own material and ideological gain” (p. 429). By raising students’ financial self-interests over other concerns, such as potential to impact on social issues that they care about or reimagining the organization of social and political structures, students are encouraged to see themselves as competitors rather than as belonging within a larger community of actors who might develop solidarity with each other and other socio-political communities. The fact that citizenship, activism, and solidarity are a very subject of instruction within political science classes is particularly ironic. The focus on employability skills constitutes a tacit defanging of potential in-class lessons about citizenship models.

Defining the value of political science education in terms of employability skills is an exercise in various forms of power. In most cases, this framing operates on by way of the second and third dimensions of power, agenda-setting and consciousness shaping, respectively (for a discussion of the three dimensions of power, see Gaventa, 1980). In some instances, the first dimension of power (coercion) is always visible, as in the case of the full-throated defense of deploying employability skills at Luton University (now known as the University of Bedfordshire), in rather ominous terms:

For some disciplines (such as, for instance, electrical engineering) there is a clear vocational link to a profession which publicly values skills; in some such disciplines the profession may demand that qualifying programmes include a range of skills-related activities. For other areas of the university (perhaps stereotypically in the humanities) the

vocational links are less well defined and here there can be a tendency to be less enthusiastic. But, the force of Luton's managerially driven central push has been sufficiently strong that even the doubters have been drawn into the fold (Fallows and Steven, 2000, p. 81).

The Academic Self-Help Market

Of course, universities do not operate in political vacuums. They are subject to direct and tacit pressures from a variety of social actors, including governments. Yorke (2006), focusing more explicitly on universities' attention to student employability, argues "the employability of graduates has become an aim that *governments* around the world have, to varying extents, imposed on national higher education systems. This interest in employability reflects an acceptance of human capital theory" (p. 3; emphasis added). Government's involvement in the (re)production of neoliberalism highlights the fact that the neoliberalism's contemporary dominance is not inevitable or natural (see, for instance, Centeno and Cohen, 2012). This fact demands that scholars pay attention to the processes by which neoliberalism establishes footholds in various areas of life and its methods of discursive reproduction. An underexplored yet prominent set of actors that contributes to the discursive reproduction of the relationship between post-secondary education and employment outcomes is the academic self-help market.

I use the term "academic self-help market" to refer to a wide variety of private actors that disseminate information directly to prospective students (and their families) about the tradeoffs and choices associated with post-secondary education. The academic self-help market plays a mediating role between colleges and universities, on the one hand, and individuals curious about post-secondary education, on the other. Actors that participate in the academic self-help market,

whose advice this paper will examine, include standardized test tutoring services such as PrepScholar SAT, think tanks such as the Brookings Institution, online informational portals such as Education Corner, business publications such as Forbes magazine, college application aid firms such as AdmissionSight, and job-hunting forums such as *indeed.com*. While this is not an exhaustive accounting, it conveys the value placed on employability among a variety of non-university actors that constitute the academic self-help market.

The advice of columnists writing for the academic self-help market and analyzed in this paper has several commonalities. The vast majority, to some degree, foreground higher salaries as a primary (albeit usually not singular) advantage of post-secondary education. The vast majority also tie university studies to more flexibility in determining where to work. The vast majority associate higher education with job stability. Furthermore, in some cases, these insights are tied directly to social mobility, suggesting that the greatest value added of a college education is for low-income, first-generation, and under-represented minority students. Nothing in this discussion is meant to impugn the intent of any individuals writing columns for prospective students; on the contrary, I start from the premise that most such advice is likely intended to give readers more information about the choices that await them.

PrepScholar SAT ranks “there are many financial and career benefits” as the no. 1 benefit of going to college; under that subject header, the article, “Should You Go to College? 4 Pros and 3 Cons,” provides an array of statistics about average earnings, relative poverty, unemployment, and living-with-parents rates, etc. of college graduates v. non-graduates (Berkman, 2022). Furthermore, Berkman (2022) argues college serves as a fertile ground on which students can network to attain employment that is not publicly advertised. The career and professional services colleges provide, ranging from job fairs to career centers, further contribute

to the picture of the university as a space designed to ready prospective graduates for the workplace. Even interpersonal connections among students are subsumed under this logic: “Your college friends might one day be able to offer you a job, refer you for a job, or make a lucrative business deal with you” (ibid.; the tertiary position of “you’ll have fun and make friends” in the hierarchy of “pros” suggests the principal contribution of interpersonal relationships developed in college are those related to career networking).

The Brookings Institution advice for potential students is strikingly similar, with the “economic return to a college degree” driving the argument of the article’s titular assertion article, “Why You Should Go to College” (Dew, 2014). The data, the article explains, is clear; individuals who do not complete college have “much worse” economic prospects than those who do, and the difference in prospects has been growing in the years preceding the piece’s publication. By also citing the expected salaries associated with specific majors, Dew (2014) also goes a step farther than Berkman (2022), suggesting that choices about what to study might also follow the economic logic that he presents as central to decisions about whether to attend university at all. While both Berkman (2022) and Dew (2014) are somewhat sensitive to the debt burden that many university students must eventually face, the latter frames student debt as an overblown problem, arguing that “average lifetime incomes of college-educated Americans are keeping pace with debt loads” (Dew, 2014).

Education Corner advice for prospective students maps along the previous two examples. The first reason listed among the “Benefits of Earning a College Degree” is “make more money” followed by good job-related benefits such as access to healthcare, better career opportunities, job stability, and networking (Loveless, n.d.). Although acknowledging income disparity on account of race and gender, and that different fields produce different career income potentials,

the conclusion remains that a college degree still allows graduates to attain higher paying and more stable employment.

Given that its primary intended audience is the business community and business-interested readers, it is unsurprising that the college advice published in Forbes also relies on the same themes: well-paying jobs, employment stability, access to employment related perks, opportunities to network, etc. (Kumok and Hahn, 2022). Forbes does introduce two additional benefits of post-secondary study: “greater life satisfaction” and “opportunities to pursue niche interests”, ranked third and sixth, respectively (ibid.). The former benefit is framed entirely through the prism of family relations and marriage, raising questions about what constitutes life satisfaction and its relationship to heteronormative monogamian marriage (for additional discussions about the processes that reproduce hegemonic marriage discourses, see, for instance, Engstrom, 2008; Arend, 2016). It is perhaps ironic, then, that while the collegiate ability to pursue niche interests promises opportunities for students to “expand [their] worldview” (Kumok and Hahn, 2022), not attending to the diversity of life conditions that might lead people to feel satisfied constitutes a failure to encourage precisely the sort of reimagining of goals and motivations that might result from an expanded perspective.

AdmissionSight’s (2022) advice for people asking, “Why Should I Go to College?” appears to be a plagiarized⁸ version of Kumok and Hahn (2022). The structure of their published reasons—increased income, enhanced employment security, a higher quality of life, simpler access to benefits and health insurance, improved health results, possibility to pursue specialized interests, and widen your network of professionals—is merely a rewording of the article that

⁸ The charge of plagiarism is a serious one. The evidence here is severalfold: both pieces are organized in the same way, cite the same statistics, and differ only marginally in word choice; Kumok and Hahn published their piece in Feb. 2022 whereas AdmissionSight published its version in Nov. 2022; AdmissionSight does not credit Kumok and Hahn and instead claims its piece is “by AdmissionSight.”

appears in *Forbes* nine months sooner. This constitutes a more extreme example of discursive reproduction that I expected to find while conducting this research and demonstrates one particularly obvious way in which some advice circulating within the unregulated space of the academic self-help market can unreflectively get pushed unto different audiences.

Perhaps more surprising is that *indeed.com*, whose primary function is to serve as a job forum, foregrounds post-graduation employment relatively less than the other venues considered herein. That is not to say *indeed.com* relegates job considerations to secondary status—indeed, the parallel top reasons Herrity (2020) lists for enrolling or not enrolling at college is whether doing so is required for one's jobs goals—but rather that other considerations also feature prominently among the advice offered to prospective students. Some such other considerations include whether one enjoys learning, is interested in exploring various fields of study, or has a passion for collegiate traditions. Settings itself apart from the pack, this piece does not directly cite relative salary figures or mention employment stability as long-term benefits of college education. Moreover, it explicitly encourages individuals how are unsure whether post-secondary studies are right for them to consider alternatives to four-year colleges, such as community colleges or vocational schools (though these are explicitly and implicitly framed by reference to career options, respectively), starting a business, or taking a gap year to reflect on their goals.

What scholars ought to note is that the academic self-help market is not merely a consequence of the broader socio-political and economic systems that makes it necessary to advise students on post-secondary opportunities and options. Instead, the discourses that such advice columns generate provide fertile ground on which universities can foreground employability skills and post-graduation employment outcomes as prominent metrics by which to judge outcomes and through which to market their degree offerings to students. Moreover, the

academic self-help market tacitly encourages universities to lean into a customer/consumer model of studentship, where the exchange of tuition dollars for the promise of greater likelihood of lucrative employment constitutes a central objective of post-secondary education.

Possible Global Futures and Alternative Framings

This paper does not argue that the underlying *aptitudes that constitute* employability skills are inherently problematic to foreground in university curricula. On the contrary, critical thinking, creative problem solving, and strong communication allow students, as Fallows and Steven (2000) observe, not to be “merely ‘sinks’ for facts and opinion provided by the lecturer” (p. 81). Instead, I mean to suggest that these skills, as well as to pursue truthful inquiry through reasoned and evidenced claims are *inherently*, not just instrumentally valuable. Their instrumentalization through neoliberal discourses highlights the individualism that underscores neoliberal discourse, that students’ skills are private goods to be used for private gains rather than as tools through which to engage in public life.

Framing “critical thinking” as an employability skill serves as a useful example of the dangers of instrumentalizing and privatizing aptitudes. To take critical thinking seriously means to also turn analytical attention on how universities market that skill. If students’ entry into political science debates is already predicated on an understanding of critical thinking as a tool for securing employment, it is likely harder for students to direct a critical gaze on to the concept of wage labor. Thus, manifesting partially as departmental emphasis on employability skills, rather than open-ended problem-identifying and problem-solving skills, neoliberal discourses pervade the university environment and subvert the power of critical theories of economic organization. How can students imagine alternative futures while studying politics if they are

sold a version of studying politics in which certain alternative futures are already tacitly closed off? Is it possible to seriously contend with the effects of automation on broad swaths of the global economy or proposed solutions for overcoming automation-related challenges (see, for instance, Estelund, 2018; Acemoglu and Restrepo 2019; Martinelli, 2019; Dermont and Wiesstanner, 2020) if the purpose of college education is to find work? What is decidedly missing from the discourses I observe is the possibility that students should pursue post-secondary education for any reasons other than inserting themselves as cogs in the machine of wage-labor.

Missing, also, is the discussion of potential futures that graduates could help to construct if they were to reimagine their relationship to labor and the structures in which they are embedded in yet more systematic ways. Of course, plenty of political science courses at the universities listed in Appendix I do encourage critical thinking, including on topics such as wage-labor. The problem, however, is that the tacit framing of the university as a stable-and-high-paying jobs factory reduces the bite that collegiate exposure to such theories might have. Whether instrumentalized skills framings also contribute to the systematic discursive attacks on critical theory and non-positivist methodologies—both documented phenomena in American political science departments—requires additional study, though such a finding would hardly be surprising.

How might political science departments avoid centering employability skills? I suggest a threefold approach. First, universities and policymakers must seriously begin addressing the cost of higher education. Proposed reforms to provide low-cost access to public universities through bold redistributive taxation would help to reduce the financial burden of higher education and would allow students to envision a wider range of possible outcomes after graduation. Of course,

obstacles to such reforms are profound, requires sustained and broad advocacy, and is likely only to serve as a longer-term goal. Second, a shorter-term consideration and a pragmatic as well as ethical difficulty departments face is whether to continue leading with employability skills as a marker of degree utility. On the one hand, doing so acknowledges the real constraints students navigate vis-à-vis the post-graduation labor market. On the other hand, doing so also reproduces and reifies that market's grip on graduates. Rather than assume student motivation for studying at college, Kennett, Reed, and Lam (2011) suggest inquiring about students' layered motivations for pursuing higher education by directly asking them. While they do so in the context of their study, the lesson is applicable beyond academic research. In their work they find that students have a complex mixture of intrinsic motivators such as wanting to contribute to society, self-fulfillment, and self-improvement as well as external reasons, including to prove themselves to others, career and financial considerations, because of societal expectations, etc. Leaving more space for students to define what they would like to do with the education and aptitudes they gain during their academic training could inspire more creative thinking in and beyond the political science classroom. Third, political scientists ought to spend time critically dissecting (in their research and pedagogy) the development, (re)production, and effects of employability skills discourses. How departments market their degrees is, it turns out, a political act that demands more study.

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Appendix I

Skills marketing among top-50 American political science departments.

Ranking	University	Skills
1	Stanford University	Students who major in Political Science will learn how political decisions are made and will develop analytic skills useful in careers in government, business, professional schools, and not-for-profit organizations. (Department of Political Science, 10/19/22; https://politicalscience.stanford.edu/undergraduate-program/major).
2 (tie)	Harvard University	<p>[The political economy program] provides training for a broad range of careers in government, finance, international organizations, and think tanks. (Department of Government, 10/19/22; https://undergrad.gov.harvard.edu/political-economy).</p> <p>Tech science motivates and seeks to train a new generation of “technologists” to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills to public service in civil society and government and to product development and management in technology companies. (Department of Government, 10/19/22; https://undergrad.gov.harvard.edu/tech-science-within-government).</p>
2 (tie)	Princeton University	Furthermore, the analytical tools you will acquire will be helpful not only in your academic pursuits but can be applied to a broader set of problems in the real world. Many of our students explore such opportunities during their summer jobs, which include a wide range such as legal work for the American Civil Liberties Union, Human Rights Watch, the office of your Congressperson or a White House internship, and of course many of our students also take internships at places like Morgan Stanley. This diversity of options is also reflected in the post-graduation career paths of Politics concentrators, which in the past couple of years have ranged from jobs at the State Department and The Wilderness Society to analyst careers at top investment banks and consulting firms to the pursuit of graduate degrees (including JDs, MPAs and PhDs). (Department of Politics, 1/4/23; https://politics.princeton.edu/prospective-concentrators).
4 (tie)	University of California – Berkeley	Students in the major learn to separate the wheat from the chaff, to distinguish incidental facts from crucial data, and to assess the quality of evidence and the persuasiveness of causal inferences drawn from that evidence. They learn to not only defend their own argument, but also to present and debunk alternatives. These skills are essential to graduates, even those who choose not to pursue careers in political science. The ability to move from complex world events to coherent, persuasive arguments, to show that your position is right and the alternative is wrong, is essential to success across a range of settings, from law (arguing a legal case), to public policy (developing a compelling proposal and winning support for it), to business (convincing supervisors and/or investors to support a new venture or idea). (Department of Political Science, 10/19/22; https://polisci.berkeley.edu/undergraduate-program/learning-political-science).
4 (tie)	University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Students benefit not only from access to faculty’s cutting-edge work, but also from their dedication to developing students’ skills in critical thinking, writing, and analytic techniques. The department offers opportunities for individual, supervised study, through research fellowships, independent reading/research, and honors theses. Students also have the opportunity to gain practical experience through internships and service learning. Among the many career paths that political science concentrators pursue are law, journalism, policy development and implementation, business, teaching, and work in governmental and non-governmental organizations. (Department of Political Science, 10/19/22; https://lsa.umich.edu/polisci/undergraduates.html).
6	Yale University	N/A
7	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	A Political Science major at MIT provides a highly personal, hands-on learning experience. Small classes and seminars ensure extensive faculty contact, and the department's emphasis on cutting-edge research ensures that undergraduates receive world-class training and exposure to the discipline. The Course 17 curriculum emphasizes foundational theories and current methods of political science, while cultivating critical thinking and writing skills through class assignments, research opportunities, and an optional senior thesis. Introductory and advanced classes provide majors with solid competency in the discipline as a whole and its subfields – Political Theory, American Politics, Public Policy, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Methodology. Political science graduates have many avenues for employment and/or advanced study. Majors typically go on to successful employment in

		government, private industry, and non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and abroad directly after graduation. Other graduates are admitted to top-rated law and business schools, or graduate programs in political science or other disciplines. (Department of Political Science, 1/5/23; https://polisci.mit.edu/undergraduate/major).
8 (tie)	Columbia University	First, the discipline lies at the core of a liberal education, since it deals with classic issues in Western and, indeed, global thought, such as justice, rights, and the relationship between the state and the individual. Second, political science provides opportunities to learn both about the United States and about the world beyond the United States. Third, it helps students understand some of the most significant policy issues that affect everyone. Fourth, like other social science disciplines, political science teaches methods of analysis that are useful in personal and professional life. ... A major in political science provides a good foundation for work or advanced study in many fields. As part of a liberal arts education that enhances skills in analytical reading, research, analysis, and writing, political science makes students good candidates for a job in almost any area, including business, finance, consulting, government work, the foreign service, and teaching. Political science is also a good credential for those who plan to apply for graduate education in law, business, social work, education, international affairs--and, of course, political science itself, or other social sciences. (Department of Political Science, 1/5/23; https://polisci.columbia.edu/content/considering-political-science-major).
8 (tie)	University of California – San Diego	Political Science is the sixth largest major on campus, with over nine percent of UCSD students graduating from our department. Our department offers a general political science major along with eight areas of concentration - American politics, comparative politics, data analytics, international relations, political theory, public law, public policy, and race, ethnicity, and politics - and two minors. In recent years, many of our students have been admitted to leading graduate programs in political science, international business, economics, and law. They have also found employment in the private and government sectors. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/index.html).
10 (tie)	Duke University	With an undergraduate major in political science, you will acquire a sophisticated understanding of political processes. More importantly, our major is designed to develop critical and independent thinking, to hone your writing and communication skills, and to provide you with analytical tools. Upon graduation, our majors are highly successful and pursue careers in diverse fields, including non-governmental and public interest organizations, think tanks, consulting, journalism, communications, local, state, and federal government, polling firms, finance, and business management. Many also go on to pursue graduate study in law, political science, public administration, or business administration. (Department of Political Science, 1/5/23; https://polisci.duke.edu/).
10 (tie)	University of Chicago	Political science contributes to a liberal education by introducing students to concepts, methods, and knowledge that help them understand politics within and among nations. A bachelor's degree in political science can lead to a career in business, government, journalism, education, or non-profit organizations. It can lead to a PhD program in the social sciences or to professional school in law, business, public policy, or international relations. Our recent majors have done all these things—and more. (Department of Political Science, 1/5/23; https://political-science.uchicago.edu/content/undergraduate-major).
12 (tie)	University of California – Los Angeles	Students completing the Political Science B.A. major are expected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think critically about basic political processes, institutions, and concepts as these operate in different national and cultural contexts. Evaluate arguments in an impartial fashion. • Locate, evaluate, and use information and scholarship needed to place particular political events in broader historical, cross-national, and theoretical contexts. Demonstrate familiarity with various approaches to the study of politics, and their application to specific questions, puzzles, and debates. • Apply mathematical and logical reasoning to political processes, and use and evaluate statistical and other types of evidence in arguments, while recognizing the limits of both quantitative and non-quantitative analysis. • Acquire a knowledge of diverse theories of politics, by engaging critically with texts, media, and contexts. Learn to employ cultural, hermeneutical, normative, and historical approaches. • Make written and oral arguments about significant political processes, events, and concepts using appropriate evidence, with sensitivity to opposing perspectives. (Department of Political Science, 1/5/23; https://polisci.ucla.edu/academics/undergraduate/learning-outcomes/).

12 (tie)	University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill	<p><i>Why Study Political Science?</i> Are you interested in politics in the US and globally? Questions concerning how we ought to govern ourselves? Critical issues such as health, the environment, and civil rights? Theories about how power and resources are allocated in society? Do you want to study these subjects and pursue a career based on your interest? If so, you should consider studying political science. Political science majors gain a versatile set of analytical and organizational skills that can be applied in a wide range of exciting careers in government, law, business, international organizations, nonprofit organizations, survey research, journalism, and teaching. (Department of Political Science, 1/5/23; https://politicalscience.unc.edu/undergraduate/).</p>
12 (tie)	Washington University in St. Louis	<p>The study of political science can be an exceptional means for students to acquire a broad liberal education, and our faculty has a strong commitment to this objective. Undergraduates in the department are among the best and brightest in the nation, and they work with professors at the top of their fields. In addition, students find the major a useful preparation for a number of career options. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.wustl.edu/undergraduate).</p>
15 (tie)	Cornell University	<p>The Department of Government offers broad training in the discipline of political science. Course offerings reflect the breadth of faculty expertise in this exciting and growing discipline, and the study of Government at Cornell trains students with skills that are in high demand in public service, business, law, the non-profit sector, and many other professions. Students receive a broad introduction to the major tools and approaches to the study of politics, and then apply these tools to understand the many facets of public life, from contemporary political thought to campaigns and elections, public policy, conflict and peace, and beyond.</p> <p><i>Why Major in Government?</i> The Government Major is one of the largest majors in the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Department of Government is a world-leading center for the study of politics. Students new to Cornell may nevertheless be curious about why Government is such a popular major. For some the answer is obvious: because the discipline of political science is such a broad and interesting field, many students major in Government to explore their interests in politics and public life, in the U.S. and around the world. However, the Government department at Cornell also has particular strengths that draw students into the major.</p> <p><i>Career Options.</i> Government majors go on to enjoy careers in fields as diverse as law, business, the non-profit sector, and public service. Majoring in government is a natural way to prepare yourself for one of these careers. As a Cornell Government major, you are in good company: nationwide data from the National Center for Education Statistics shows that political science leads the other social sciences in the number of undergraduate degrees granted. But your choices are not limited to just those standard careers paths—in recent years Government graduates have accepted positions at Google, joined tech startups, and taught English in Indonesia on a Fulbright. Many of Cornell’s distinguished undergraduates have also gone on to become distinguished professors of political science themselves, holding positions at Harvard, Stanford, Yale, and others.</p> <p><i>Practical Skills.</i> Government is a cornerstone discipline of a liberal arts education. But just as importantly, Government at Cornell provides students with training in the specific practical skills that are in high demand among employers and graduate and professional schools. For example, Government courses teach analytical thinking and problem solving: the ability to synthesize complex real-world information in order to identify solutions. Government courses also teach persuasive writing, a skill that employers identify as being in short supply among current college graduates. Many of our newer courses teach quantitative skills: these include new courses in fielding public opinion surveys, constructing mathematical models, and solving problems with data. And tying all of these together is the skill of knowledge with a purpose, giving majors the critical thinking skills to understand what is at stake—normatively, philosophically, theoretically as well as practically—in contemporary public debates. Students who major in Government can choose from among a wide menu of course options to tailor a course of study that focuses as they prefer on one or more of these skills. (Department of Government, 1/6/23; https://government.cornell.edu/undergraduate).</p>
15 (tie)	New York University	<p>The analytical skills gained by Politics majors prepare them for a wide range of careers. Our graduates accept positions with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks, international finance groups, multinational corporations, law firms, and other institutions. Many pursue further study in fields such as political science, law, and public and international affairs at highly competitive universities. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://as.nyu.edu/departments/politics/ba-politics.html).</p>

		<p>The analytical skills gained by IR majors prepare them for a wide range of careers. Our graduates accept positions with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks, international finance groups, multinational corporations, law firms, and other institutions. Many pursue further study in fields such as political science, law, and public and international affairs at highly competitive universities. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://as.nyu.edu/departments/politics/ba-international-relations.html).</p>
17 (tie)	Ohio State University	<p>A political science major will prepare students for a wide range of career opportunities in law, business, political analysis and consulting, public policy, secondary and higher education, journalism and many other fields. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.osu.edu/undergraduate/ba-political-science).</p> <p>Most political science majors do not become professional political scientists; they go into careers such as law, education, business, and federal, state or local government. A degree in political science or world politics can also open doors to a wide range of rewarding part-time and volunteer opportunities. US News recently published an article examining the different kinds of job opportunities that individuals who graduated with a political science degree can seek.</p> <p>Our graduates have found employment with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law firms around the country • The State Department • The White House • Local government offices and agencies, such as the Mayor's Office • Public offices as elected officials • State government offices and agencies, such as the Ohio House of Representatives and Ohio Department of Natural Resources • Federal agencies such as the CIA • The Democratic and Republican parties at the local, state and national level • Congressional and presidential campaigns • Congressional offices • Colleges and universities • Think tanks and research institutions, such as The Brookings Institution and RAND Corporation • Non-profit and advocacy organizations, such as Doctors Without Borders, Common Cause, and Innovation Ohio <p>(Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.osu.edu/undergraduate/careers-political-science).</p>
17 (tie)	University of Wisconsin – Madison	<p>Majors in political science obtain a broader understanding of the world, but also develop important skills in critical thinking and analysis. Students who major in political science will emerge better prepared to make professional choices. These skills are indispensable in any career path you decide to pursue. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.wisc.edu/advising-and-major-information/).</p>
19 (tie)	Emory University	<p><i>Why major in Political Science?</i> Gain a better understanding of issues that affect all of us. The most important global challenges of the 21st century require political solutions. Problems stemming from climate change, public health challenges, economic inequality, or violent conflict cannot be solved via science, technology, or artistic thinking alone. Real solutions require collective action within and across borders, led by states, international organizations, firms, and civil society. By majoring in political science, you will gain a deeper understanding of the possibilities of and the challenges associated with producing significant political change. Develop diverse skills that can help you find and make progress on your career path. Our degree programs emphasize learning by doing, giving students multiple opportunities to conduct original research. You will learn to think clearly and logically about political challenges and potential solutions. You will learn how to design careful empirical analysis. You will learn how to effectively summarize what you find. In short, you will develop the necessary skills both for effective political leadership and for a successful career in a global workforce. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; http://polisci.emory.edu/home/undergraduate/index.html).</p>
19 (tie)	Northwestern University	<p><i>How does political science prepare me for the future?</i> Our curriculum focuses on critical thinking, data analysis, and ethical reasoning and provides you with knowledge about current and past political events across the world. Our alumni pursue a number of</p>

		<p>different careers. These include government service (at federal, state, and local levels) nonprofits, law, campaigns and polling, journalism, consulting, and business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigor and flexibility: You can become an expert in a specific area of study and choose from a wide range of electives within the major. • Diverse career paths (e.g., law, government service, business, policy analysis, teaching, consulting) • Strong analytical skills: Learn to critically evaluate problems and solutions; develop skills in research, writing, and argumentation; acquire quantitative skills and become familiar with multiple methodologies; earn skill-based certificates of achievement in foreign language and/or quantitative skills. <p>(Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/index.html).</p>
19 (tie)	University of Pennsylvania	<p>Upon graduation, Political Science majors enter a wide variety of careers in the public and private sectors, both in the United States and abroad. Typical careers include government, law, business, international and civic organizations, journalism, and education. Many students also choose to pursue graduate degrees in policy, law, business, international affairs, and other professional or doctoral programs. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.polisci.upenn.edu/undergraduate).</p>
19 (tie)	University of Rochester	<p>Political science exists at the intersection of history, politics, economics, law, sociology, and theory. In understanding government—its politics, policies, and practices—we become better citizens locally and globally. At the University of Rochester, we emphasize the scientific underpinnings of political science, including systematic testing, analysis, and theory. With concentrations in political science and international relations in one department, you can study American politics and governmental institutions within the frameworks of global warfare, international trade, and social movements... Undergraduate students at Rochester can enhance their studies in political science or international relations through internships, study abroad, and even research. Such opportunities help to build our students' academic portfolios and professional resumes in preparation for their graduate studies or future careers. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.sas.rochester.edu/psc/undergraduate/index.html).</p>
19 (tie)	University of Texas – Austin	<p>As one of the liberal arts, Government - also called political science - teaches students how to think and communicate about politics. A Government major can dissect and evaluate actual or proposed courses of political action by analyzing the evidence for and against them, setting them in historical and comparative perspective, and relating them to ends that are prized or feared. A Government major is an intellectual jack-of-all trades who is fitted for any career that demands thought, analysis, reading, writing, and speaking about complex organizational and public matters. He or she can write a business memo, understand and evaluate a Supreme Court decision, analyze a chain of command, comprehend the impacts of government policies on public and private domains, and see how the private and the public are entwined in all modern societies. Armed with such knowledge and skills, Government majors go on to become leaders in many arenas - the law, a host of governmental and non-governmental organizations, academia, the media, the military, political parties, and a great many social and political movements. (Department of Government, 1/6/23; https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/government/).</p>
19 (tie)	Vanderbilt University	<p><i>Why Political Science?</i> Our department will help you to understand how and why people use and misuse power within and outside of political institutions and systems throughout the world. Our curriculum provides our students with strong theoretical foundations in all subfields of political science, as well as opportunities to cultivate robust quantitative and analytical skills to help them enhance their understandings of contemporary developments in politics, governance, political and military conflicts, representation, and public policy. Whether you are drawn to a career in law, government, education, private industry, or the non-profit sector, a degree in political science will provide you with the insights and tools you need to achieve your goals. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://as.vanderbilt.edu/political-science/).</p>
25 (tie)	University of California – Davis	N/A
25 (tie)	University of Minnesota – Twin Cities	<p>Do you have intellectual curiosity? A major in political science will help you gain a broader understanding of the world and stimulate your intellectual curiosity and imagination. It will help you develop your capacity for critical analysis, as well as your ability to express yourself clearly. These skills are indispensable in any career path you decide to pursue. (Department of Political Science, 10/19/22; https://cla.umn.edu/polisci/undergraduate).</p>

27	University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign	<p><i>Why Political Science.</i> Study political science to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand why countries go to war, and how to help maintain and foster cooperation. • Learn the basics of the new political data science and research design that is driving campaigns and is providing the evidence for policy. • Figure out what people mean when they talk about “freedom” or “equality.” • Debate about whether a presidential system is better than a parliamentary system. • Think about what is needed to have a well-informed citizenry. • Work out the reasons for authoritarian coups and democratic transitions. <p>(Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://pol.illinois.edu/admissions/why-political-science).</p> <p>Political science is a great major to have in college. The discipline looks at the most important issues of our time and issues that endure for all time. Past and present students who major in political science do interesting and important things on campus, and they have wonderful careers and lives after graduation. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://pol.illinois.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions).</p>
28 (tie)	Indiana University – Bloomington	<p>Our nationally-ranked Political Science department is one of the oldest in the nation, established in 1914. We provide a world-class education in all aspects of political science. We teach courses in American politics, the politics of countries around the world, the politics between nations and international actors, political philosophy, and research methodology. Our students are engaged in political life in Indiana and around the world. We offer a B.A. in Political Science, as well as two dual degrees with Economics and Philosophy and several minors. Our undergraduate students are encouraged to build specializations in areas such as international relations, world political regions, and political theory. We also coordinate internships, service learning, and “on the job” learning experiences to help you develop skills to build your career. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.indiana.edu/about/index.html).</p>
28 (tie)	Rice University	<p><i>Mission and Learning Outcomes.</i> The mission of the undergraduate program is to provide students with a strong, substantive and theoretical understanding of political science, to teach students how to conduct empirical research, to help students develop and improve their communication skills, and to encourage students to be informed and responsible citizens... As a Political Science major, you will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a broad understanding of political science and more specific knowledge in one or more subfields (<i>Substantive knowledge</i>) 2. Develop critical thinking skills and the ability to apply political science theories to understand the political world (<i>Critical thinking</i>) 3. Learn how to interpret, conduct and evaluate political science research, including data collection and data analysis techniques and statistical software (<i>Empirical analysis</i>) 4. Develop and strengthen written, oral, and visual communication skills and the ability to present political science research to an audience (<i>Communication</i>) 5. Become an informed citizen able to participate effectively and meaningfully in the political process (<i>Citizenship</i>) <p><i>Career Options.</i> The Political Science major provides students with a variety of marketable skills, such as written, oral, and visual communication, critical thinking, policy evaluation, data analysis, some programming skills, and research methods. These skills, in addition to the in-depth knowledge of political institutions, behavior, and policy gained as part of the major, prepare students for a wide variety of professional careers and post-baccalaureate educational opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government (local, state, and national level) • non-governmental and international organizations • policy and public administration • international affairs • business • consulting • journalism • law school • medical school • education • and more! <p>Beyond preparing students for a host of future careers, political science courses equip students for life as an informed citizen ready to participate in political activities within</p>

		interest groups or political parties; related to community organization and political advocacy; or even service as an elected or appointed official. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://politicalscience.rice.edu/undergraduate-studies)
28 (tie)	Stony Brook University – SUNY	The Department of Political Science is committed to excellence in research and scholarship, graduate student training, undergraduate teaching and learning, public outreach, and the promotion of responsible citizenship. It contributes to the generation of knowledge about politics and aims to deepen scholarly and public understanding of political institutions and the citizenry. The department seeks to prepare students for successful careers in government, academics, and the private sector. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/polisci/about_us/mission.php).
28 (tie)	Texas A&M University – College Station	<p>Political science is a social science that investigates collective decision-making. It is concerned with governments, individuals' attitudes and choices, and the interactions between governing institutions and mass behavior. Among other things, political science addresses power, authority, influence, identity, ethics, law, liberty, justice, wealth, and violence. The study of political science introduces students to a powerful set of analytical tools for understanding interactions within and among groups of people. These include systematic knowledge of recurring patterns and problems in political life and methods for collecting and analyzing data and other forms of evidence. Studying political science also cultivates critical thinking and effective communication and prepares students for active citizenship, professional success, and lifelong learning. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://bush.tamu.edu/pols/)</p> <p>Study abroad courses, language immersions and leadership and exchange programs supplement the curriculum, helping to prepare students for careers in international affairs. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://bush.tamu.edu/inta/).</p>
28 (tie)	University of Virginia	A Politics degree enables students to approach life after college with a critical eye, an analytic edge and sensitivity to the concerns of people all over the world. Our two majors stress the acquisition of analytical and critical thinking skills; we teach students to construct arguments of their own about our political world. We hope our courses and our faculty unsettle our students a bit, creating a habit of skepticism about received wisdom. Perhaps more important, we strive to help our students develop their own ideas, support them with evidence, and put them into words and numbers that will engage and persuade their peers, their co-workers and their fellow citizens. Students who major in the Politics Department follow many different paths after they graduate. Most of our students join the labor force upon graduation. Many students work in government itself, in public service, journalism, or in other closely related fields. An increasingly large percentage of students go on to graduate work, in one of the academic disciplines, or in policy, law or other professional schools around the country. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://politics.virginia.edu/undergraduate-program).
34 (tie)	Georgetown University	The Department seeks to provide its students with more than extensive knowledge of political institutions and processes; it aims to arm them with additional tools that help them to better evaluate, advance, and refute political arguments. These tools involve logical analysis, causal inference, research skills, and effective communication of ideas. A degree in Government cultivates relevant skills in a number of different ways. Most Government courses require students to practice and develop analytic writing skills — whether in the form of in-class essays, out-of-class essays, or research papers. Students also must complete at least one Department Seminar. These seminars, which majors usually take during their junior or senior years, are limited to fifteen participants and involve significant writing assignments geared toward developing a student's skills under the close supervision of a faculty member or advanced graduate student. The Government Department takes a pluralistic approach to methodological issues; it aims to instill its students with an understanding of a variety of different forms of rigorous causal and logical analysis. Majors should therefore expect exposure to various forms of statistical inference, singular causal analysis, deductive reasoning, and conceptual analysis. Many students take classes on statistical techniques and go on to more extensive work with—or even the development of—data sets on topics that interest them. Others focus on the explanation of specific historical events and develop skills in, for example, process tracing, the identification and vetting of causal mechanisms, and qualitative counterfactual analysis. Some students prefer to focus on methods appropriate for the assessment of normative claims about political institutions, justice, and other important issues in political theory. Through the required introductory courses, students develop competency in multiple methodologies. In order to ensure a thorough understanding of key normative and ethical concerns in political life, the Department requires students to take an upper-level course in political theory. This

		<p>requirement not only reflects Georgetown’s Jesuit traditions, but the long history of student and alumni engagement with domestic and international politics. In all of these respects, a Government degree not only assists students to become better national and global citizens, but also provides them with a foundation for leadership in their chosen vocations. (Department of Government, 1/6/23; https://government.georgetown.edu/undergraduate/).</p>
34 (tie)	Pennsylvania State University – University Park	<p>The Political Science major teaches students the techniques of the trade of political science. Since the methods that political scientists use in research are often quite technical, the program is designed to give students practical experience applying research methods to questions and problems they will encounter in jobs as political researchers, policy analysts, or managers.</p> <p><i>What careers can I have with a degree in Political Science?</i> Employment opportunities have grown steadily for International Politics and Political Science graduates due to the global integration of political and economic activity and the increasingly global scale of both human problems and efforts to solve them. Political Science and International Politics are two of the most versatile majors in the College of the Liberal Arts and prepare students for careers in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and government-related agencies • Multinational corporations • Banks • Lobbying and consulting firms • Humanitarian organizations (United Nations, UNICEF, the Red Cross, etc.) • Legislative affairs • Journalism <p>(Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/majors-and-minors/political-science/)</p>
34 (tie)	University of Washington - Seattle	<p>Political science majors advance their skills with analytical thinking, written and oral communication, research, and using data and evidence to support arguments. These skills prepare political science students for a variety of careers and leadership roles. Many political science graduates put their skills toward careers in areas such as government, NGOs and nonprofit organizations, law, business, consulting, journalism, teaching, and more. Political science graduates also frequently pursue graduate degrees in law, policy, business, and international affairs, in addition to political science and other social sciences. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.polisci.washington.edu/careers-political-science-majors-minors).</p>
37 (tie)	George Washington University	<p>Since its founding, the GW Department of Political Science has risen to national prominence and is consistently listed among the top political science programs in the country. The department has been ranked seventh in the country by USA Today and eighth by Foreign Policy magazine. One of Columbia College’s largest academic units, it boasts more than 40 full-time faculty as well as 600 undergraduate students and 90 graduate students. Our nationally renowned faculty are Fulbright scholars, Carnegie fellows and members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Our alumni include college presidents, members of Congress, judges and leaders in law, business and academia. And our students are active participants in Washington, D.C.’s many internship and research opportunities. The Department of Political Science has grown in stature and size, but our mission remains true to our roots: to promote the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge about political behavior and governance; to support excellent research and scholarship; and to prepare students with the knowledge and analytical tools they need for productive careers in teaching, research and public life. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://politicalscience.columbian.gwu.edu/about).</p>
37 (tie)	Michigan State University	<p>Students wanting to enter politics, journalism, business or teaching, and students wanting to pursue graduate studies in political science or who want to prepare for employment in international agencies concerned with foreign affairs normally choose the General Political Science program. The flexibility of this program makes it a logical choice for those who wish to sample a wide variety of courses within the political science discipline. The undergraduate major in political science is designed to provide students not only with a broad education in political and other social sciences but also with the analytical skills essential in many professions. The wide range of career opportunities open to political science graduates includes administrative positions in local, state, and federal government, or in public and private agencies; work with citizen’s action groups and voluntary organizations; employment in the foreign service and various governmental and private international agencies; and careers as teachers and policy analysts. Because additional training beyond the bachelor’s degree is necessary</p>

		<p>for some careers, many students in political science plan to attend law or graduate school. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.msu.edu/undergraduate/index.html).</p> <p>The students and faculty at James Madison College share a common goal of addressing and examining the major political, legal, social, and economic issues affecting our world. Each major within the college allows students to examine a unique aspect of public affairs while developing strong communication, analytic and problem-solving skills. Graduates of James Madison College go on to careers in government, politics, business, education, and human services, as well as continue their education at top graduate and law schools. (James Madison College, 1/6/23; https://jmc.msu.edu/future-students/index.html).</p>
37 (tie)	University of Notre Dame	<p>Majoring in political science helps students develop the reading, writing, analytical, research, and data skills they need in order to make the most of their time at Notre Dame and after graduation.</p> <p><i>Student testimonial video:</i> “Studying Political Science really helps you understand the world as it is today and kind of how we got to be where we are now. And not only that, but we get to learn to think critically. Writing is a big part of it. Discussion and speaking in class. All the components of my major prepare me for whatever job or whatever path that I would choose to pursue in the future.” (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://politicalscience.nd.edu/undergraduate-program/).</p>
37 (tie)	University of Pittsburgh	<p>Considering a major in political science? If so, you'll be joining a highly motivated, active community of scholars where the focus is on providing our undergraduates with a well-rounded education that combines substantive knowledge of political systems and processes with theoretical and normative perspectives along with analytical and communication skills. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.polisci.pitt.edu/prospective-students).</p> <p>Political Science is a popular major that prepares students for a range of careers in the public and private sectors and in academia. We offer a wide variety of courses in American Politics, Comparative Politics, World Politics, and Political Theory. Students have the flexibility to select courses in their primary fields of interest and to integrate their coursework with global and area studies certificates, study abroad, internships, service learning, and independent research. In addition, we offer two advanced degree options for students interested in an even more rigorous and challenging course of study. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.polisci.pitt.edu/undergraduate).</p>
41 (tie)	Brown University	<p>The Political Science department enjoys a reputation for intellectual pluralism, creativity and research productivity. Political Science is one of the largest and most dynamic concentrations at Brown. Undergraduates gain skill in critical thinking, empirical analysis, and normative inquiry, preparing them for leadership careers in the public, nonprofit and private sectors. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.brown.edu/).</p> <p>Roughly two-thirds of the students who concentrate in political science at Brown go on to pursue careers in teaching, government service, or law. For the rest, the political science concentration points in many different directions. Our graduates report such varied activities as graduate study in MBA programs, military service, communications, and hospital administration. By far the category that attracts the largest percentage of our graduates is business and industry. At 26 percent of all political science concentrators at Brown, employment in the private sector ranks as the second most popular career option, after law school (30%). The significance of these statistics is clear: political science has a wide range of applications and provides a useful preparation for a variety of career options. While it is an appropriate base for advanced professional study and for government service, it also frequently serves as a springboard into business, industry, and such related careers as journalism, communications, research, publishing, advocacy work, and government affairs. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.brown.edu/undergraduate/career-planning-and-placement).</p>
41 (tie)	Florida State University	<p>Our department offers baccalaureate and graduate instruction in American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, and Public Policy. In addition, our Applied Master's degree program in American Politics and Policy (MAAPP) allows for professional training towards careers in political campaigning, fundraising, lobbying, legislative affairs, and active participation within all levels of government. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://coss.fsu.edu/polisci/)</p>

		<p>We are a nationally ranked Department of Political Science with over 1,300 majors, offering courses in American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, Public Policy. Courses taught by the Askew School of Public Administration and political theory courses from the Department of Philosophy are also accepted towards course requirements. The major in political science offers a solid undergraduate education in the liberal arts and sciences. Such study prepares the graduate for a variety of careers by emphasizing the acquisition of skills in communication and analysis, and by encouraging independent thought, tolerance, and informed interest in current affairs. Our program offers excellent preparation for those interested in graduate study in political science, law, or the other social sciences. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://coss.fsu.edu/polisci/undergraduate/).</p>
41 (tie)	Johns Hopkins University	<p>The Department of Political Science has two main sets of learning goals. The first is the acquisition of specialized knowledge in the field of political science. The second is the development of general skills that will serve students regardless of their future course of study or employment.</p> <p><i>Specialized Knowledge in the Discipline of Political Science.</i> Political science majors should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become acquainted with each of the four major subfields within the discipline: American politics; comparative politics; political theory; international relations • Demonstrate advanced knowledge in, and understanding of, one of the subfields within the discipline • Be familiar with the place of political science within the broader spectrum of the social sciences and history. • Understand the central role of racial diversity and hierarchy in shaping the state, national politics, international relations, and the discipline of political science itself. <p><i>General Skills.</i> Political science majors should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and use the methods that political scientists use to answer questions about politics • Use critical thinking and evidence to understand and evaluate rival theories and interpretations • Formulate and express in writing a well-organized argument, supported by evidence • Conduct research in political science, using materials such as primary, secondary, and online sources or databases, in support of an original argument. <p>Student progress is assessed with reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student papers, ranging from short essays to original research papers and senior theses • Oral presentations and performance in discussions in classes • Examinations. <p>Department performance will be assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student course evaluations • Feedback from teaching assistants • Tracking the number of courses that require original research papers, oral presentations, and/or the development of methodological skills. <p>(Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://politicalscience.jhu.edu/undergraduate/learning-goals/)</p>
41 (tie)	University of California – Irvine	<p>As a political science major at UCI, you explore how politics works at the individual, group, national, and international levels. Students are introduced to the findings and the methods for gathering information about political behavior and political processes. Course work emphasizes the development of analytic thinking and clear writing skills. Upper-division courses are organized around general areas of study, including American society and politics, comparative politics, international relations, public law, and political theory. Students have many opportunities to pursue special topics in political science through independent study courses, field studies, the department's honors program and internships. Many political science majors participate in such programs as the UC/DC Internship Program, in Washington, D.C. and the University's Education Abroad Program. Political science majors learn how to understand politics and acquire the skills for effective performance in many professional fields. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.polisci.uci.edu/undergrad/major.php).</p>
41 (tie)	University of Georgia	<p>SPIA offers four undergraduate degree programs. Guided by an award-winning teaching faculty, SPIA students engage in active learning about politics, public affairs, criminal justice, governance, and international relations. Through classroom simulations,</p>

		internships, guest speakers, and research collaborations, SPIA offers students the kinds of experiential and classroom learning opportunities that position them for careers in both the public and private sectors. (School of Public and International Affairs, 1/6/23; https://spia.uga.edu/undergraduate/).
46 (tie)	University of Colorado – Boulder	We are proud to be among the best political science departments in the country. Our faculty are active researchers whose publications have appeared in the most prestigious outlets in the profession. The faculty is also highly devoted to graduate training and undergraduate education and can boast of numerous teaching awards. We offer research and teaching in American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Methods, Policy, and Political Theory. We pride ourselves in the diversity and rigor with which our faculty and students ask questions that challenge all of us to think more clearly about politics, government, and citizenship. Our graduates are found at the highest levels of government, in politics and law, and across the business world. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.colorado.edu/polisci/undergraduate/prospective).
46 (tie)	University of Iowa	A degree in political science or international relations from the University of Iowa is your start to an enjoyable and rewarding career that makes a difference in people's lives. Our degrees open doors to exciting opportunities in a wide range of fields, including politics, government administration, public health, nonprofit management, law, communications, education, sustainability, human rights, and much more. We work with you from day one to develop the skills and make the connections to launch your career. After your last class, you'll join a group of successful graduates (nearly 98% of graduates who land good jobs within a few months of earning their degree!), with opportunities to stay involved in our active community of alumni. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://clas.uiowa.edu/polisci/undergraduate).
48 (tie)	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – New Brunswick	The Political Science Department at Rutgers is a center of excellence in research, teaching, and service. Rutgers Political Scientists do path breaking research on the causes and consequences of political inequalities based on gender and race, on political psychology and voting behavior, on the causes of war, on democratization and autocratization, and much more. Our graduate program is the only one in the nation to have a major field of study in Women and Politics. Our internationally renowned faculty are leaders in their fields and winners of some of the most prestigious awards in the discipline. Our faculty are also frequent contributors to public debates, providing expert analysis and sharing academic knowledge with the public and policy-makers. We are one of Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences' largest departments, with over 600 undergraduate majors and over 6,000 students per year enrolled in our courses. We also offer undergraduate minors in Political Science, Critical Intelligence Studies, PPE (Politics, Philosophy and Economics), and Business and Politics. We train our undergraduates not only to analyze politics using the most sophisticated tools of social science, but also to be active global citizens who can think critically about contemporary issues. Our graduates gain analytic and communication skills that prepare them for a wide variety of career paths in public service, the law, nonprofits, and the private sector. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.rutgers.edu/).
48 (tie)	University of California – Riverside	Political science is concerned with the systematic study of collective decision-making, whether through formal political processes such as elections or legislature or in less formalized venues in which actors compete for influence and power and seek to organize around particular goals or interests through, for example, the media or mass protests. Our faculty study a wide variety of political phenomena and includes leading scholars across the fields of American politics, comparative politics, mass political behavior, international relations, and political theory. We are committed to providing our undergraduate and graduate students with a rigorous education that emphasizes critical thinking and the attainment of a skill set that will serve them in their future careers. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://politicalscience.ucr.edu/).
50 (tie)	Syracuse University	Understand the people, policies, institutions and organizations that shape public life. As a student of political science, you will gain essential analytical and organizational skills that can be applied to exciting careers in government, law, business, international organizations, nonprofit organizations, survey research, journalism and teaching. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/academics/political-science-department).
50 (tie)	University of Arizona	SGPP is one of the largest schools at the University of Arizona and is uniquely situated to serve as a model for public affairs education. We engage in high-caliber research, teaching, community outreach, and civic leadership, preparing our graduates for leadership positions in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. (School of Government and Public Policy, 1/6/23; https://sgpp.arizona.edu/about).

		<p>The School of Government and Public Policy at the University of Arizona will prepare your for leadership positions in the public, government, and nonprofit sectors. Our school combines robust curriculum, outstanding faculty, and internship opportunities to foster critical thinking and strong leadership skills among students. Our alumni include campaign managers, police sergeants, city managers, DEA special agents, and many more! (School of Government and Public Policy, 1/6/23; https://sgpp.arizona.edu/prospective-students).</p>
50 (tie)	University of Florida	<p>The mission of the undergraduate major in Political Science is to educate students who are interested in politics into politically literate citizens capable of understanding governments and political processes in the U.S. and abroad, as well as the interactions among governments. The undergraduate major is intended to develop students' frames of reference and their critical and analytical skills in order to help them understand the political world. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://polisci.ufl.edu/undergraduate/letter-from-undergraduate-coordinator/).</p>
50 (tie)	University of Houston	<p>The political science program focuses on the study of theories of government, government processes, and political forces that contribute to the formation, evolution, and operation of government. Students are offered a wide range of courses in several areas including political theory, comparative politics, international politics, American government, public law, public administration, and methodology. These areas draw on the related disciplines of economics, history, and sociology. The study of political science assists students to develop reasoning and analytical skills and in building competence in oral and written expression. Students are also given the opportunity to learn research and methodology procedures, and are encouraged to become familiar with statistical analysis and use of the computer. The Department of Political Science has designed its program not only to develop informed and active citizens, but also to be useful for those who plan careers in higher education, the legal profession, state and local government, urban planning, the federal bureaucracy, journalism, or any other field that requires critical thinking and analysis. Political science also provides an excellent background for those who wish to pursue advanced studies in business, law, or public administration. (Department of Political Science, 1/6/23; https://www.uh.edu/class/political-science/undergraduate/).</p>