

EXPLORE POLICY & POLITICS

WHAT IS POLICY?

Public policy is a system of laws/regulations/courses of action implemented by governments. These directives touch every aspect of our lives, including education, law enforcement, the allocation of healthcare environmental resources, etc. How do decision-makers (aka politicians) choose which new policies to introduce, and how best to develop and implement them? Enter the public policy analyst. Public policy analysts advise governments, at all levels, on which new policies are needed and what's involved in launching those policies.

FREQUENT JOB TITLES

- Analyst (budget, management, etc.)
- Political or Campaign Staffer
- Public Affairs Officer

KEY SKILLS

- Research
- Data Analysis
- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- Persuasive Communication
- Collaboration

RELATED STUDENT ORGS

- Political Science Students Assoc.
- College Democrats/Republicans

QUALIFICATIONS

- Any major can enter this field
- Persuasive communication skills and the ability to network
- Strong quantitative and analytical skills
- Leadership experience
- Willing to relocate/travel and work long hours for low pay – especially at the start

COMMON EMPLOYERS

- State Legislatures
- US Congress (Senate and House)
- Congressional Committees
- Think Tanks
- Trade Associations
- Federal Government Agencies
- State/City/County Agencies

TIPS

- For legislative staffer roles, start interning as early as your first year and making personal connections
- For think tanks & trade associations, start building quantitative and analytical skills (learn Stata & R)
- Get involved both on and off campus with issues you care about
- Entry level positions in this area with just a bachelor's degree are hard to secure; many are converted to employees after interning for a semester or more
- Consider grad school in Public Policy