

Why Political Science

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Overview

- ▶ Common jobs for political scientists
- ▶ Why people hire PS students

Jobs

- ▶ Academic
- ▶ Nonprofit
- ▶ Private Sector
- ▶ Government

Academic Jobs

- ▶ Research
- ▶ Teaching

- ▶ National politics
- ▶ World/Comparative politics
- ▶ International relations

Nonprofit Jobs

- ▶ NGOs: Red Cross, Mercy Corps, Gates Foundation
 - ▶ IGOs: UN, UNESCO, UNICEF
 - ▶ CSOs
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- ▶ Program officer/manager
 - ▶ Program director
 - ▶ Researcher/ “Monitoring and Evaluation”

Private Sector Jobs

- ▶ Policy analysis: determining the consequences of government policies.
- ▶ Research
- ▶ Surveys: design, sampling, enumeration, analysis

Government Jobs

- ▶ Bureaucratic/Technocratic
 - ▶ Policy design
 - ▶ Policy implementation
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- ▶ Campaign consultant
 - ▶ Public relations manager

Why do people hire political scientists?

- ▶ Reading/writing skills
 - ▶ Verbal communication
 - ▶ **Identifying cause and effect**
 - ▶ **Quantitative analysis** in Python, R, Stata, SAS, SPSS etc. . .
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- ▶ The future of social sciences, including political science, is quantitative analysis.

Why do people hire political scientists?

- ▶ PS students are good at:
 - ▶ determining if X affects Y , and *how* X affects Y
 - ▶ Analyzing data about X and Y

Cause and Effect

Lots of organizations are doing things (X) and want to know if those things work

- ▶ First need to think about what X would affect
- ▶ Then need to think about how to determine if X affects those things
- ▶ Then need to analyze data

- ▶ *Example:* Government passes new housing policy and real estate firm wants to know how it will affect profits.
- ▶ *Example:* City providing new services to citizens and wants to know if more people pay taxes

Discussion

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How can a government encourage people to pay their taxes?

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- ▶ Why do people pay taxes?

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- ▶ Why do people pay taxes?
- ▶ Why do people *not* pay taxes?

Discussion

How can a government encourage people to pay their taxes?

- ▶ Why do people pay taxes?
- ▶ Why do people *not* pay taxes?
- ▶ What are the barriers to tax payment? What prevents people from paying taxes?

Discussion

Hypothetical

- ▶ Let's say the government increases service delivery with the goal of increasing tax payment
- ▶ How would you determine if a policy increased tax payment of citizens?

Discussion

How would you determine if a policy increased tax payment of citizens?

- ▶ Theorize: Use logical reasoning to assess if a policy will work
 - ▶ Example: Government increases service delivery

Discussion

How would you determine if a policy increased tax payment of citizens?

- ▶ Theorize: Use logical reasoning to assess if a policy will work
 - ▶ Example: Government increases service delivery
 - ▶ People might pay because they want the service
 - ▶ But what if I don't pay but everyone else pays? Still receive service.
 - ▶ What if I pay and no one else pays? No service.

Discussion

How would you determine if a policy increased tax payment of citizens?

- ▶ Correlations in the world: do people who receive more services pay their taxes?

Discussion

How would you determine if a policy increased tax payment of citizens?

- ▶ Correlations in the world: do people who receive more services pay their taxes?
- ▶ But could be that people who pay taxes receive services, not that people who receive services pay taxes.

Discussion

How would you determine if a policy increased tax payment of citizens?

- ▶ Experiments: Provide people with more services and see if they pay taxes

Discussion

- ▶ PS students are prepared to answer questions like our example
- ▶ Answering those questions requires thought about cause and effect
- ▶ Answering those questions requires quantitative analysis

Conclusion

- ▶ Think about cause and effect broadly
- ▶ Get good quantitative/statistical skills
- ▶ Look for jobs in academia, nonprofits, and governments
- ▶ Look for quantitative analysis jobs in private sector

Questions

Ask!