

A blue speech bubble with a white outline and a black shadow is centered on a white background. The bubble contains the text "Public Policy & Service" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The background features several thin, light gray curved lines, some solid and some dashed, that create a sense of motion or a circular path around the bubble.

Public Policy & Service

Local and State Government

Public policy

Urban planning

City or town management

Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Services

Program administration

General services

Community affairs

Social services

Law enforcement

**Local and
State
Government
Employers**

Counties

Cities

Municipalities

Townships

School districts

Departments of state government

Legislative agencies

Court systems

Local and State Government Strategies

Research your local and/or state government.

Employment opportunities in local government tend to follow population trends in terms of growth and decline in availability of positions. Check statistics on growing communities to find the most opportunities. Be prepared to relocate.

Develop a network of contacts through referrals and informational interviews.

Conduct research, (e.g., education, homelessness, etc. that could be useful to your community).

Get involved in civic organizations and events.

Complete an internship in a government agency.

Participate in local or national election campaigns.

Familiarize self with government application process.

Consider earning a graduate degree in public administration (MPA) or public policy (MPP).

Federal Government

Public policy

Research

Intelligence

Foreign service

Law enforcement

General services

Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Services

Program administration

Federal Government Employers

There are over 170 federal departments and agencies.
See

<https://gogovernment.org/>

Federal Government Strategies

Take courses or minor in applicable interest area(s).

Seek leadership roles in relevant campus organizations such as model United Nations, student government, and cross-cultural organizations.

Write for campus publications focused on national and international affairs.

Develop skills in computers, statistics, and data analysis.

Acquire foreign language competency and travel experience for international positions.

There are a large number of specialized agencies within the federal government. Do extensive research in order to find the area that best fits your interests.

Become familiar with the government application process. Utilize applicable websites and seek assistance from your college career center.

Obtain an internship in a federal agency or department.

Participate in national campaigns.

Conduct informational interviews with government employees.

Build a strong personal network.

Law

Prosecution

Defense

Contractual

Corporate

Nonprofit or public interest

Government

Mediation

Law assistance

Lobbying

Law Employers

Law firms

Federal, state, and local government

Private practice

Corporations

Special interest groups

Universities and colleges

Legal aid societies

Nonprofit and public interest organizations (e.g., ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Legal Services Corporation)

Legal clinics

Other private legal services

Law Strategies

Develop strong research skills and attention to detail.

Participate in debate teams to hone communication skills.

Choose courses or a minor to specialize in a particular area of law, (e.g., a minor in business for a career in corporate law).

Gain practical experience through an internship, part-time job or summer work in a law firm.

Shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties.

Get involved in pre-law organizations.

Plan to attend law school and earn a law degree (JD).

Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations. Prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test).

Obtain specialized certification for paralegal positions.

Politics

Elected or appointed leadership

Campaign management

Staff administration

Special interest advocacy

Political advising

Lobbying

Public policy

Public relations

Community organizing

Government relations

Politics Employers

Legislative, executive, or judicial officials

National, state, or local government

Political action committees

Political parties

Campaigns: national, state, or local

Industrial, educational, and public interest groups

Lobbying organizations

Large business firms

Polling and consulting firms

Advocacy organizations

Politics Strategies

Volunteer for national, state, or local campaigns.

Be prepared to begin a political career as a volunteer before moving to paid positions.

Many elected public officials begin careers in other fields (law, medicine, business) before campaigning for office.

Gain experience through internships with government agencies, lobbying firms, or legislatures.

Obtain leadership roles in campus organizations.

Become involved in campus political groups, student government, publications, or community service projects.

Take courses in statistics, public policy, or other specific interest areas.

Get involved with a political party/group and develop a personal network. The ability to build networks, coalitions and alliances with other associations is highly valued.

Develop excellent public relations, interpersonal, and communication skills.

International Affairs

Governance

Policy making and analysis

Public sector reform

Poverty-reduction strategy

Ethics and anti-corruption

Human rights

Public law

Organization and management development

Resource development

Public-private partnerships

Media/Communication policy and practice education

International Affairs Employers

Intergovernmental agencies (e.g., World Bank, United Nations, etc).

National governments

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Non-profit agencies

Religious organizations

Foundations

Policy and research organizations

Private businesses

Contracting and consulting firms

Research institutes

Defense contractors

Federal government:

- Department of State
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Defense
- National Security Council

International Affairs Strategies

Earn a double major or minor in order to gain additional skills or knowledge, (e.g., Africana studies, Asian studies, business, psychology).

Spend time studying or working abroad. Make and maintain contacts in foreign countries.

Seek cultural experiences on campus and get involved with the international student population.

Obtain internships or volunteer to gain valuable experience in areas of interest.

Participate in overseas mission trips or spend a Semester at Sea.

Research the history and culture interest areas.

Become proficient in at least one foreign language.

Learn about international travel regulations and take steps towards obtaining work or study visas for various locations.

Plan to earn a graduate degree in international affairs, foreign policy, or other specialty areas.

Consider entering the Peace Corps.

Business

Sales

Human resources

Management

Public relations

Market research

Customer service

Marketing

Advertising

Product design

Real estate

Business Employers

Product and service organizations

Retail stores

Hotels

Restaurants

Manufacturers

Insurance companies

Print and electronic media

Consulting firms

Financial institutions

Real estate companies

Property management firms

Other business corporations

Business Strategies

Develop strong analytical, verbal, writing, and leadership skills.

Earn a minor/double major in business or supplement curriculum with business courses.

Gain relevant experience in an area of interest through internships or other employment.

Obtain leadership roles in campus organizations

Demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills.

Hone computer skills and learn software packages such as databases, spreadsheets and presentations.

Become knowledgeable about corporate social responsibility.

Non-Profit

Administration

Management

Public relations

Fund raising/Development

Policy analysis

Research

Grant writing

Direct service

Advocacy

Volunteer coordination

Non-Profit Employers

Local and national nonprofit agencies

Foundations

Charitable organizations

Trade or professional associations

Special interest groups

Labor unions

Libraries

Museums

Historic sites/historical societies

Research organizations and think tanks

Educational institutions

Non-Profit Strategies

Gain practical experience through volunteering or completing an internship with a nonprofit organization of interest.

Earn a minor or supplement curriculum with courses in business, psychology, sociology, or social work.

Obtain leadership roles in relevant campus and community organizations.

Develop strong communication and research skills.

Learn grant writing skills.

Demonstrate knowledge and experience in a specialty area, (e.g., public health, environment, urban issues).

Research organizations' values to find a good fit for you. It is critical that you are knowledgeable about and committed to the work you're going to do.

Investigate term of service or service corps positions as a way to gain entry into the field, (e.g. AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, VISTA)

Consider earning a graduate degree for more job opportunities and advancement.

Media

Editing

Reporting

Circulation

Sales

Publishing

Electronic media

Public relations

News programming

Production

Media Employers

Newspapers: national, local, or trade

Wire services

Magazines

Internet sites

Large corporations

Political parties

Political action committees

Professional publications/associations

Labor unions

Academic journals

Broadcast media companies: television, radio, and the movie industry

Major networks

Public, cable, and private television stations

National, state, or regional radio networks

Independent radio syndications

Video production companies

Government agencies

Media Strategies

Obtain an internship or work experience with a newspaper, magazine, radio station, or television station.

Become proficient in desktop publishing and photography.

Develop a professional network and become aware of various social medias.

Learn HTML and other computer programs to prepare for online work.

Develop excellent verbal and written communication skills through communications courses or other writing intensive coursework.

Join the college newspaper, yearbook, or other publication staff.

Become a student member of professional associations.

Create a portfolio of published writing samples.

Obtain experience in and knowledge of a specialty area of interest. Experience in government is usually required for specialized reporting positions.

Develop professional image for television or other visual media positions.

Volunteer to announce local or campus sporting events.

Become involved in drama (e.g., direct, act, or work with technical crew).

General Public Policy & Service Information

An undergraduate degree in public policy & service is good preparation for graduate or professional study in areas such as psychology, law, or business.

Expect keen competition for federal positions. Prepare yourself with a strong academic background and good experience. Many government jobs have strict guidelines and want to carefully match candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities to the job description. Research this first and seek the classes and experiences that will best prepare you.

Explore application to Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) and the Outstanding Scholar Program for federal positions.

Develop strong leadership skills; run for office in clubs and organizations in school or community. Volunteer to organize or lead an event or project.

Join related social and/or professional organizations.

Build a strong personal network through informal contacts.

Consider military experience and training as an entryway into government jobs and public service. The Peace Corps is also a good way to enter a career in government.