

News of the Profession

Reports

Job Market Remains Stable for Political Scientists

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The placement success rate of new political science Ph.D.s continues to be in 1985 what it has been for over a decade; seven out of ten new Ph.D.s successfully found employment in academia, business, industry, government and nonprofit associations. What is remarkable about the market for political scientists is not the presence of large shifts in the numbers of men and women looking for employment or the number of employment opportunities, for there have been none in the last decade. The job market for political science Ph.D.s is remarkable because of its stability, experiencing only marginal change during the last decade in placement success of firm candidates (Table 1).

This is not to say that there have been no changes nor that these changes have been insignificant. Within the last five years, a steadily increasing percentage of job placements have gone to Ph.D.s, reaching the 1985 high point of 69 percent (Table 2). Whereas during the 1960s and 70s, at least half of new job holders had not completed their Ph.D. before taking their first full-time job, the trend in recent years is for fewer jobs to go to ABDs. Indeed in 1985, 81% of the job seekers with Ph.D.s in hand successfully found full- or part-time employment.

The placement success of women Ph.D.s (90%) was somewhat higher than among male Ph.D.s (78%). Among ABDs there was no significant gender difference in placement rates. Half of the women and men ABDs found employment.

The most striking change in the 1985 market, however, was the large percentage of job seekers placed in temporary positions. Over 40% of the successfully placed found only temporary employment. This means taking into

TABLE 1
Trends in Placement*

	1975-79	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Number of firm candidates	982	779	697	611	523	672	715
% repeats	36	36	35	36	41	38	37
Placement success of firm candidates	69	68	73	62	79	72	70
% of placement in temporary positions	31	33	28	36	33	24	43
% placement to Ph.D.s	55	54	56	64	65	64	69
Placement success of Ph.D.s (%)	77	74	81	72	87	77	81
% of placement in nonacademic jobs	17	24	18	19	19	18	17

* Figures are estimates of total population based on samples of 97 departments in 1980 (79% response rate), 94 departments in 1981 (76% response rate), 91 departments in 1982 (76% response rate), 87 departments (73% response rate) in 1983, 83 departments (71% response rate) in 1984, 82 departments (68% response rate) in 1985.

TABLE 2
Degree Completion and Placement Success, 1980-84 (%)

	Placement Success ^a		
	Total	Men	Women
ABD			
1980	63	61	70
1981	66	63	79
1982	55	54	58
1983	54	53	57
1984	68	64	83
1985	51	52	50
Ph.D.			
1980	74	75	72
1981	81	83	70
1982	68	63	79
1983	87	87	88
1984	77	80	69
1985	81	78	90

^aPlacement success measures number placed within each category as a percentage of the total candidates within each category.

account the numbers not placed and temporarily placed, that 60% of the 1985 placement class will be back on the job market within three years. In 1985, in contrast, 37% of the job candidates had been on the market before.

Placement by Specialty and Academic Institution

Placement success by field of specialization was spread across three major sub-fields in 1985. Twenty-six percent of the total job placements were in American Government; 22% in Comparative and 20% in International Relations. Over the past five years, 60% of the job placements have been in these three fields (Table 3).

These data, however, tell half the story for it is necessary to look at the placement success in a field measured as a percentage of the total candidates in the field. What percent of American Government specialists entering the market, for example, were successfully placed? The answer for 1985 was 86%. Compare this with a 57% placement rate among Comparativists and a 59% placement rate among International Relations specialists.

The distribution of placements by type of hiring institution also demonstrates no significant market change. Ph.D.-granting institutions are the largest single employer (37%) for all candidates, for men (38%), and for women (35%). Undergraduate political science departments are the second largest employers of all candidates (23%), men (23%), and women (22%). Almost as many political scientists were hired by M.A.-granting departments (18%) as by non-academic employers (17%). The same rate is true among men but not women; a higher percentage of women are employed in M.A. departments (23%) than in nonacademic settings (16%) (Table 4).

Gender

Once again women made up over one-quarter of the placement class (27%). There was no significant difference in the placement success rate of men (70%) and women (69%) (Table 5). Just as men and women equally shared the good fortune of placement, they equally shared the misfortune of temporary employment—over 40% of each gender group found only temporary employment. The number of women Ph.D.s entering the job market continues to alter the

TABLE 4
Placement by Type of Hiring Institution, 1980-84 (%)

	Total					Men					Women							
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Ph.D. department	31	36	29	34	37	37	32	36	29	32	36	38	38	35	31	40	40	35
M.A. department	17	18	20	18	17	18	16	18	20	18	19	16	20	13	18	15	12	23
Undergraduate political science	22	25	25	27	24	23	21	24	26	27	24	23	26	33	21	29	27	22
Undergraduate social science	4	2	4	1	3	3	4	2	3	—	2	3	5	—	6	8	3	3
Two-year college	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	6	—	—	1
Nonacademic	24	18	24	19	18	17	24	18	20	21	18	18	19	18	17	4	19	16
Total	100	101	99	100	100	100	99	100	101	100	101	100	100	100	99	96	101	100

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composition of the political science professoriate. The impact, however, is still concentrated among the non-tenured ranks, and it will be several more years before women at these ranks enter the tenured professoriate (Tables 6 and 7).

Race and Ethnic Background

The placement performance of blacks and Hispanics is another area of stability in the job market. Less than 4% of the 1985 placement class was black; less than 2% was Hispanic. The placement success rate of black and Hispanic political scientists was 72%, slightly higher than the 1985 overall placement rate.

Prospects for Change

Although the history of the political science job market suggests otherwise, are

there prospects for significant change in the job market? To answer this question, it is necessary to concentrate on academic employment, the principal job market of political science Ph.D.s. Within the academic market, the employment opportunities will be most influenced by the supply of new political science faculty, undergraduate and graduate enrollments, and faculty attrition.

Supply of Political Science Faculty

The individuals who will become the new political science professoriate in the next six years are already enrolled in graduate programs. It is possible, therefore, to project the number of future job candidates based upon the number of new students beginning Ph.D. study in political science and applying an estimated matriculation

TABLE 5
Placement of Job Candidates in the Eighties, by Sex

	Total*	Men	Women
Number of Firm Candidates			
1980	779	630	149
1981	667	596	101
1982	611	485	126
1983	523	390	133
1984	672	504	168
1985	715	522	193
Number Placed			
1980	560	451	109
1981	511	437	75
1982	379	298	81
1983	414	326	88
1984	485	365	119
1985	497	363	134
Placement Success (%)			
1980	68	68	68
1981	73	73	73
1982	62	61	64
1983	79	79	66
1984	72	72	71
1985	70	70	69
Percent in Temporary Positions (%)			
1980	33	32	35
1981	28	28	28
1982	36	37	36
1983	33	32	39
1984	33	33	34
1985	43	43	43

* Adjusted total.

TABLE 6
Full-time Faculty in Tenure Track and Tenured Positions, 1984-85

	Academic Rank							
	Full Professor		Associate		Assistant		Instructor	
	1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984	1983	1984
Men	2,320	2,226	1,679	1,397	1,057	893	201	100
Women	132	148	295	222	238	250	27	40
% Women	5.6	6.2	17.5	13.7	22.5	21.9	13.4	28.6

Source: APSA Survey of Departments, 1984-1985.

TABLE 7

	All	Ph.D.	M.A.	B.A.	Combined
Percentage of Women at Rank of Full Professor, by Institution and Year					
1984	6.2	3.5	8.2	8.0	9.5
1983	5.6	4.3	6.9	6.3	6.0
1982	5.5	3.5	6.5	7.7	17.3
1981	5.6	4.2	7.1	7.2	11.0
1980	5.5	4.0	7.3	5.8	10.2
1979	4.9	2.9	7.0	6.2	12.8
1978	4.9	2.8	6.6	6.3	4.3
Percentage of Women at Rank of Associate Level, by Institution and Year					
1984	13.7	14.7	12.9	12.4	16.9
1983	17.5	15.7	11.3	11.4	34.7
1982	13.3	15.5	12.0	12.4	10.1
1981	13.2	12.2	11.3	14.6	17.5
1980	11.5	11.3	11.1	11.2	13.7
1979	10.4	10.3	10.2	10.6	13.4
1978	9.5	7.3	8.6	10.6	11.6
Percentage of Women at Rank of Assistant Level, by Institution and Year					
1984	21.9	21.7	19.7	13.6	25.0
1983	22.5	23.0	21.8	29.9	9.8
1982	26.4	28.5	21.8	31.1	16.3
1981	25.1	26.5	24.0	20.4	36.3
1980	23.3	25.4	23.4	21.9	18.8
1979	22.0	27.2	16.3	19.6	19.6
1978	10.7	29.4	19.0	27.7	28.3
Percentage of Women at Rank of Instructor Level, by Institution and Year					
1984	28.6	25.0	34.3	27.7	37.5
1983	13.1	41.6	21.4	15.0	3.7
1982	12.9	35.4	33.3	41.1	37.5
1981	12.5	25.0	45.4	21.1	40.0
1980	12.0	35.4	31.0	27.1	25.0
1979	28.8	28.1	39.3	34.0	16.6
1978	33.0	26.6	25.0	28.0	33.3

Source: APSA Survey of Departments, 1978-1985.

TABLE 8
Supply of New Political Science Faculty^a

Academic Year	New Students Beginning Ph.D. Study	Actual Ph.D. Awarded Six Years Later (Year)	Estimated Ph.D.s Awarded Six Years Later (Year)	Matriculation Rate %
1975	1,174	779 (1980)		66
1976	1,064	697 (1981)		66
1977	1,182	611 (1982)		52
1978	1,034	523 (1983)		51
1979	1,100	672 (1984)		61
1980	1,068	715 (1985)		67
1981	1,042		651 (1986)	
1982	772		470 (1987)	
1983	838		511 (1988)	61 ^b
1984	943		571 (1989)	
1985	933		569 (1990)	

^aIncludes Ph.D.s awarded in political science, public administration, public policy studies, and international relations.

^b61% represents average matriculation rate of previous six years.

Sources: Data from 1975-1983: National Research Council, *Summary Report 1983, Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities*, Washington, D.C., National Academy Press, 1984: pp. 24-25. Data from 1984-85: Patricia King, National Research Council.

rate (61%), assuming that the Ph.D. is awarded six years after a new student enters a graduate program. Not surprisingly, fewer students beginning study in political science will mean still fewer job seekers later on. The low point will be 1987 when only an estimated 470 new Ph.D.s will enter the market compared with the 715 job seekers in 1985 (Table 8).

Fewer job seekers generally means more and better employment opportunities if the number of openings remains constant or increases. Projections of future supply of job candidates suggest possible improvement in the placement success rate.

Enrollment

Beginning in 1988, the number of college-age Americans will decline from over 2.6 million in 1988 to 2.3 million in 1994. Beginning in 1994, the college-age population will increase from 2.3 million to 2.6 million in 1998 (see Andrew Hacker, "The Decline of Higher Learning," *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. 33, No. 2, February 13,

1986, pp. 35-42). The decline in undergraduate enrollment will reduce the demand for faculty. The subsequent period in which enrollment will increase can return market conditions to 1988 levels but will not generate large-scale expansion of employment opportunities.

Total graduate enrollments in 1985 are above the 1983 low of 4,171 (Table 9). Part of the post-1983 increase is attributable to significant growth in the number of foreign students. The number of students beginning Ph.D. study is still below the level of 1,000 students (Table 10). The decline in graduate students means that there will be no pressure to create new teaching positions.

Faculty Attrition

Faculty attrition due to voluntary departure, death and retirement can increase the demand for political scientists to fill vacated positions. Voluntary departure, for example, political scientists leaving academia for careers in nonacademic settings, will not be a significant source of openings. Since 1977, over 160 political scientists have left academia annually to

TABLE 9
Graduate Student Enrollments in Ph.D. Programs in Political Science

Year	Total	Women	Black	Foreign
1985-86	4,894	1,349 28%	277 7%	1,292 26%
1984-85	4,994	1,353 27%	273 5%	1,346 27%
1983-84	4,171	1,105 26%	207 5%	1,075 26%
1982-83	*	* *	* *	* *
1981-82	5,491	1,505 27%	319 6%	1,181 22%
1980-81	5,756	1,415 25%	373 6%	1,212 21%
1979-80	5,888	1,384 24%	406 7%	1,146 21%
1978-79	5,742	1,258 22%	432 8%	948 17%
1977-78	5,737	1,278 22%	413 7%	819 14%
1976-77	5,462	1,209 22%	402 7%	813 15%
1975-76	6,150	1,475 24%	435 7%	* *
1974-75	6,150	1,250 20%	435 7%	* *
1973-74	6,450	* *	* *	* *

* Figures not available.

Note. These figures are taken directly from the *Guide to Graduate Study in Political Science, 1972-1986*.

TABLE 10
New Students Beginning Ph.D. Study in Political Science

Year	Total	Women	Black
Fall, 1985	933	286 31%	52 6%
Fall, 1984	936	264 28%	48 5%
Fall, 1983	838	230 27%	51 6%
Fall, 1982	772	208 27%	39 5%
Fall, 1981	1,042	299 29%	76 7%
Fall, 1980	1,068	301 28%	104 9%
Fall, 1979	1,100	305 28%	101 9%
Fall, 1978	1,051	255 24%	102 10%
Fall, 1977	1,182	270 23%	111 10%
Fall, 1976	1,064	274 26%	100 9%
Fall, 1975	1,174	270 23%	129 11%
Fall, 1974	1,443	342 24%	131 9%
Fall, 1973	1,414	* *	* *
Fall, 1972	1,576	* *	* *
Fall, 1971	1,695	* *	* *
Fall, 1970	2,138	* *	* *
Fall, 1969	2,487	* *	* *

* Figures not available.

Note: The sources are the annual issues of the *Guide to Graduate Study in Political Science* for 1971-1986, *APSA Surveys 1969 and 1970*, and *Graduate Students and Faculty in Political Science Ph.D. and M.A. Programs, 1981*.

TABLE 11
Faculty Leaving for Non-Academic Positions

Year	Number of Faculty Leaving for Non-Academic Positions			Survey Response Rate (%)	Annual Estimates No. of Political Scientists Leaving Academia to Assume Non-Academic Positions
	Males	Females	Total		
1977-78	73	27	100	46	217
1978-79	67	18	82	48	171
1979-80	67	26	93	50	186
1980-81	72	27	99	49	202
1981-82	57	16	73	48	152
1982-83	47	3	50	46	109
1983-84	63	8	71	54	131
1984-85	60	14	74	54	137
1985-86	57	16	73	52	140

Source: *APSA Survey of Departments, 1977-1985.*

assume nonacademic positions (see Table 11).

Neither death nor retirement will generate new positions in significant numbers until well into the 21st century. The political science profession is a young profession, the median age is approximately 43, a long way from retirement. Retirement will only significantly affect the number of job openings around 2010, later than many other academic professions.

Conclusion

Market factors suggest that growth will come slowly and come late in the political science job market. □

New Snags Develop Over Access to Nixon Papers

Page Putnam Miller
National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History

A Justice Department memorandum attached to the proposed regulations for opening the Nixon Administration's records for public use includes language that would greatly diminish the authority of the Archivist, reducing the Archivist to

a "purely executive officer . . . subject to the President's supervision and control" and through a significant expansion of executive privilege would give the former President control over public access to his presidential materials. Congressional concern over the Justice Department memorandum and the precedent it would set for allowing Nixon and future presidents to limit, for years after they have left office, access to their reports led to a recent House hearing.

The Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act (PRMPA) passed shortly after Nixon left office established procedures for assuring that the 40 million pages of documents and 4,000 hours of tape recordings from the Nixon Administration would not be destroyed and would eventually be made available to the public. PRMPA provided for the Archivist to obtain and retain possession

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