

Academic Jobs in Political Science – a Review of listings with the APSA eJobs Service
Update for 2005-2007

Michael Brintnall & Michael Marriott
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One of the best indicators of the job opportunities for political scientists, at least in academic settings, is the number of open positions posted with the American Political Science Association through its Personnel Service. The service began in 1968 as a monthly paper newsletter of job listings and now is managed entirely online as the eJobs service. This report is not a survey of the entire political science profession; however, professional ethics standards for political science¹ call for all academic positions at the Assistant and Associate level to be listed with APSA (and the standards recommend that all positions be so listed) and thus we can treat this longitudinal data set as reflecting the market well. The recent conversion to electronic listings gives us some added flexibility in analysis of the job market.

All Job Postings

From 2005-2007, nearly half of all job listings were for assistant professor positions, and another 5-percent were for lecturer positions. Associate professors postings averaged 3 percent and full professors postings average at 6 percent. Rank was open for 17 percent of the listings. In 2005, positions for visiting professors averaged at 8 percent. Non-academic and research listings were negligible at 2 percent. [Chart 1]

Academic Postings

For academic listings from 2005 to 2007, there is a distinct increase. Listings for assistant professors increased from 1109 to 1230; associate professors, increased from 66 to 77; full professors increased from 117 to 157; lecturers increased from 94 to 128. Overall, from 2005 to 2007, there were 4,481 academic listings. [Chart 1a]

Academic Fields

The major fields for which jobs are listed remain remarkably stable, at least since the mid-1980s from when some comparable data are available. Both American government and international relations were the most demanded field of specialization at 18 percent and 19 percent, respectively [Chart 2]

Location

Nearly half of all job openings are in just 8 states: California (the highest at 11%), New York (8%), Texas (5%), Virginia (5%), the District of Columbia (5%), Illinois (5%), Pennsylvania (5%), and Massachusetts (4%). In comparison, 16 states had less than one-percent of job openings, and 8-percent of openings are in non-US locations. Though by regions, the south has 33-percent of all job openings. [Chart 3a] Nearly 72-percent of all openings were at publicly funded institutions. [Chart 3b]

Type of Institutions

¹ The APSA Ethics Guide reads: "It is a professional obligation of all political science departments to list in the APSA Personnel Service Newsletter all positions for which they are recruiting at the Instructor, Assistant, and Associate Professor levels. In addition, the listings of openings at the Full Professor level are strongly encouraged. It is also a professional obligation for departments to list temporary and visiting positions."

60-percent of academic job openings are in PhD granting institutions, 29-percent in MA granting institutions, 10-percent in BA granting institutions, and one-percent in community colleges [Chart 4]. This roughly reflects the distribution of faculty in the APSA membership as a whole. There is relatively little difference in the type of field specialization sought in different types of institutions, except for what might readily be expected --- there are more methodology openings in the PhD granting institutions and substantially more public administration at the MA level schools [Chart 5].

Specialization

Job openings usually report a preference for a specialized focus of some sort or another in addition to the broadly defined fields such as Comparative, American, or Theory. These preferences can be difficult to categorize. Many are very specific ("Contemporary California Society;") many simply replicate the broad field categories to begin with (public law) and many use widely different ways to describe a possible common thread (country names instead of region names, such as Paraguay versus Latin America; or names of specific techniques instead of general skills, such as case study analysis instead of qualitative methods).

Still we can identify some themes that seem to appear more than others. From a world region perspective, Middle East and Latin America research interests were the most frequently listed. Out of all 9767 listings², 222 specified Middle East, and 216 specified Latin America. 132 specified East Asia, and 108 specified Africa. [Chart 6]

² The following numbers should be considered in a relative sense, not absolute, since specifying such a specialization is optional in the job postings.

Chart 1: All Listings

Academic Year	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor	Lecturer/ Instructor	Non-academic	Open and Multiple Ranks	Other	Post-Doc	Research	Visiting Professor	Grand Total
2005	52%	3%	5%	4%	2%	16%	4%	3%	2%	7%	100%
2006	48%	3%	7%	5%	2%	16%	5%	4%	2%	9%	100%
2007	49%	3%	6%	5%	2%	17%	4%	4%	2%	7%	100%
Grand Total	49%	3%	6%	5%	2%	17%	4%	4%	2%	8%	100%

Chart 1a: Academic Listings

Academic Year	Assistant Professor		Associate Professor		Full Professor		Lecturer/ Instructor		Grand Total	
2005	80%	1109	5%	66	8%	117	7%	94	100%	1386
2006	77%	1150	4%	67	11%	159	8%	127	100%	1503
2007	77%	1230	5%	77	10%	157	8%	128	100%	1592
Grand Total	78%	3489	5%	210	10%	433	8%	349	100%	4481

Chart 2: Fields of Specialization by Year and Institution Type

Academic Year	Institution Type	Administration	American Government and Politics	Comparative Politics	International Relations	Methodology	Non-Academic	Other	Political Theory	Public Administration	Public Law	Public Policy	Grand Total
2005	PhD	2%	19%	21%	20%	5%	1%	12%	6%	2%	3%	9%	100%
	MA	3%	23%	15%	17%	2%	0%	9%	2%	15%	8%	6%	100%
	BA	3%	28%	14%	24%	5%	0%	3%	3%	7%	5%	7%	100%
	Comm.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%	0%	33%	0%	33%	100%
2005 Total		3%	21%	18%	20%	4%	0%	10%	5%	6%	5%	8%	100%
2006	PhD	3%	21%	19%	21%	7%	0%	10%	5%	2%	5%	9%	100%
	MA	3%	26%	13%	14%	3%	0%	6%	3%	17%	5%	11%	100%
	BA	2%	25%	13%	23%	6%	0%	6%	6%	8%	6%	8%	100%
	Comm.	0%	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
2006 Total		3%	23%	16%	19%	5%	0%	8%	4%	8%	5%	9%	100%
2007	PhD	3%	17%	18%	21%	5%	0%	12%	5%	4%	5%	9%	100%
	MA	5%	20%	16%	17%	2%	0%	6%	4%	15%	5%	10%	100%
	BA	2%	21%	21%	23%	0%	0%	6%	2%	4%	9%	11%	100%
	Comm.	0%	38%	0%	13%	13%	0%	0%	13%	25%	0%	0%	100%
2007 Total		3%	18%	18%	20%	4%	0%	10%	4%	8%	5%	9%	100%
Grand Total		3%	21%	17%	20%	5%	0%	9%	4%	7%	5%	9%	100%

Chart 3a: Regional by Year and Institution

Academic Year	Institution Type	Mid Atlantic	Midwest	Northeast	South	West	Grand Total
2005	PhD	15%	22%	13%	23%	26%	100%
	MA	13%	21%	5%	46%	15%	100%
	BA	3%	24%	17%	41%	14%	100%
	Comm.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
2005 Total		13%	22%	11%	32%	22%	100%
2006	PhD	16%	18%	21%	24%	21%	100%
	MA	9%	24%	3%	44%	19%	100%
	BA	0%	17%	32%	45%	6%	100%
	Comm.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
2006 Total		12%	20%	16%	34%	18%	100%
2007	PhD	18%	20%	11%	31%	20%	100%
	MA	6%	38%	5%	42%	9%	100%
	BA	4%	47%	21%	19%	9%	100%
	Comm.	0%	50%	0%	50%	0%	100%
2007 Total		13%	27%	10%	33%	16%	100%
Grand Total		13%	23%	12%	33%	19%	100%

Chart 3b: Funding by Year

Academic Year	Private	Public	Grand Total
2005	32%	68%	100%
2006	27%	73%	100%
2007	27%	73%	100%
Grand Total	28%	72%	100%

Chart 4: Listings by Year and Title

Academic Year	Position Title	PhD	MA	BA	Comm.	Grand Total
2005	Assistant Professor	46%	40%	13%	1%	100%
	Associate Professor	71%	29%	0%	0%	100%
	Full Professor	83%	17%	0%	0%	100%
	Lecturer/Instructor	78%	13%	9%	0%	100%
	Open and Multiple Ranks	82%	13%	5%	0%	100%
	Other	64%	9%	27%	0%	100%
	Post-Doc	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	Research	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	Visiting Professor	47%	22%	31%	0%	100%
2005 Total		61%	28%	11%	1%	100%
2006	Assistant Professor	49%	40%	9%	2%	100%
	Associate Professor	50%	38%	13%	0%	100%
	Full Professor	76%	24%	0%	0%	100%
	Lecturer/Instructor	47%	39%	14%	0%	100%
	Non-academic	25%	0%	75%	0%	100%
	Open and Multiple Ranks	70%	21%	8%	0%	100%
	Other	93%	0%	7%	0%	100%
	Post-Doc	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	Research	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Visiting Professor	44%	40%	16%	0%	100%	
2006 Total		57%	33%	10%	1%	100%
2007	Assistant Professor	56%	30%	11%	3%	100%
	Associate Professor	75%	13%	13%	0%	100%
	Full Professor	79%	21%	0%	0%	100%
	Lecturer/Instructor	61%	27%	12%	0%	100%
	Open and Multiple Ranks	77%	20%	4%	0%	100%
	Other	77%	15%	8%	0%	100%
	Post-Doc	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	Research	75%	25%	0%	0%	100%
	Visiting Professor	43%	46%	11%	0%	100%
2007 Total		64%	26%	8%	1%	100%
Grand Total		60%	29%	10%	1%	100%

Chart 5: Total Fields of Specialization (2005-07)

<i>Institution Type</i>	<i>Administration</i>	<i>American Government and Politics</i>	<i>Comparative Politics</i>	<i>International Relations</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Non-Academic</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Political Theory</i>	<i>Public Administration</i>	<i>Public Law</i>	<i>Public Policy</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
<i>PhD</i>	3%	20%	19%	19%	6%	0%	11%	6%	3%	5%	9%	100%
<i>MA</i>	4%	22%	14%	16%	3%	0%	8%	4%	15%	6%	9%	100%
<i>BA</i>	2%	24%	18%	21%	3%	0%	5%	6%	6%	5%	9%	100%
<i>Grand Total</i>	3%	21%	18%	18%	5%	0%	10%	5%	7%	5%	9%	100%

Chart 6: Specialized Sub Field (Top 21)

<i>Sub Field</i>	<i>Total</i>
International Political Economy	312
Research Methods	306
Middle East	222
Latin American	216
Judicial Politics	198
Environmental Policy	180
International Law & Organizations	174
Political Behavior	168
Constitutional Law & Theory	156
Urban Politics	144
International Security	144
Political Economy	132
East Asia	132
Developing Nations	114
Criminal Justice	114
Latino Politics	108
Africa	108
Open	102
State Politics	96
Public Policy	96
Immigration Policy	96