



American Political Science Association, April 2026

Division of Political Science, Texas Women's University

About APSA

Founded in 1903, the American Political Science Association (APSA) is the leading professional organization for the study of political science and serves more than 11,000 individual members and nearly 450 department members.

Trends in U.S. Political Science MA Programs

- The 2024 [National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics \(NCSES\)](#) Survey of Graduate Students and Post doctorates in Science and Engineering found that 2,506 terminal master's students were enrolled in political science degrees in 2024 (NCSES Table 1-2). 1,430 terminal master's students studied full-time, and 1,076 studied part-time (NCSES Table 2-7).
- 106 APSA Department members offer MA degrees. These departments graduated an average of 9.2 MA degrees in 2024-2025.

Political Science MA Workforce Demand and Career Prospects

National Summary

- The US median wage in 2024 for individuals with a Political Science MA is \$139,380 per year (Table 1).
- The same 2024 data show that Political Science MA holders' average annual salary significantly exceeds that of the median US worker (Table 1).
 - The lowest 10 percent of earners with a MA in political science make an average of \$25,750 more per year than the median US worker.
 - The median political science MA holder in 2024 earned \$90,000 more than the median US wage.
- The May 2024 BLS *Occupational Handbook Outlook* projects that from 2024-2034, political scientists with an MA will continue to be needed in government, advocacy organizations, lobbying firms, research institutions, public policy, data sciences, and political communication.

Texas Summary

- Political Scientists employed in Texas outperformed the median Texas worker by \$45,680 in 2024 (Table 2).
- Political Science MA holders in Texas are qualified and employed in high-paying sectors, such as Law Firms, Public Relations Managers, Data Scientists, Project Management Specialists, and Statisticians (Table 4; Table 6).



- Sectors employing Political Science MA holders employed at least 1,250,000 Texas workers as of May 2024, comprising 9 percent of Texas' total workforce (Table 4-Table 6).
- Texas Women's University identifies 17 [career possibilities](#) for graduates with an MA in political science. These career areas are denoted with a * in the Tables below.

Texas Higher Education Marketable Skills and Political Science MA Learning Outcomes

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Summary

- Political Science MA graduate training teaches students the high-impact, career-ready skills identified in [THECB's 60x30 marketable skills initiative](#).
 - The 2024 APSA [Rethinking Political Science Education Task Force Report's](#) six core skill learning outcomes for political science undergraduate and graduate students (see pages 17-20) overlap with the soft and hard skills (Project Management) listed by [Texas Woman's University's Career Development Center](#) as part of the THECB's marketable skills initiative.

Texas Undergraduate Enrollment Projections and American Government Credit Requirements

- Texas undergraduate enrollments are projected to increase by 10% between 2025 and 2035, adding another 163,570 students over the next decade (Table 7). Political Scientists will be needed to teach these students American government and Texas government.
- Texas Community College enrollment is expected to increase by 63,000 over the next decade. Political Science MAs with expertise in American and Texas government will be needed to meet classroom demand.

Supporting Tables

Table 1 – National Median Wages (2024)

	Poli Sci MA Degree Holder	Econ MA Degree Holder	Median US worker
Median US Wage	\$139,380 ¹	\$115,440	\$49,000

¹ The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$74,750, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$191,880.

Table 2 – Mean Annual Salaries in Texas (2024)

	Political Scientist (19-3094)	Economist (19-3011)	Median Texas worker
Texas Mean Annual Salary	\$109,340	\$122,400	\$63,660

Table 3 – National Annual Wages for Political Scientists in the Top Industries they were Employed (May 2024)

Federal government, excluding postal service*	\$151,630
Professional, scientific, and technical services*	\$130,580
Religious, grantmaking, civic, professional, and similar organizations*	\$91,150
Educational services; state, local, and private*	\$81,620

Table 4 – Political Science Careers, Mean Wages and Number Employed in Texas (May 2024)

	Mean Wage	Total Employed
Political Science Teachers, Postsecondary (25-1065)* ²	\$107,320	2,020
Social Scientists and Related Workers, All Other (19-3099)*	\$100,140	2,480
Social Sciences Teachers, Postsecondary, All Other (25-1069)* ³	\$86,320	1,760
Social Science Research Assistants (19-4061)*	\$60,160	1,430

² Texas has the [most](#) postsecondary political science teachers across all 50 states.

³ Texas has the [fourth](#) highest number of postsecondary social science teachers across all 50 states.



Table 5 – Federal and Texas Government Number Currently Employed (2025)

Federal Government (January 2026)*	210,900
State Government Excluding Education*	192,000
Local Government Excluding Education*	530,200

Table 6 – Annual Wages and Number Employed in Employment Sectors Poli Sci MAs Enter (May 2025)

	Mean Wage	Total Employed
Lawyers (23-1011)*	\$162,840	54,860
Public Relations Managers (11-2032)	\$134,110	8,360
Legal Occupations (23-0000)*	\$121,730	96,460
Project Management Specialists (13-1082)	\$99,820	116,240
Operations Research Analysts (15-2031)	\$101,100	12,240
Statisticians (15-2041)	\$110,910	1,210
Data Scientists (15-2051)	\$114,800	23,240
Legal Support Workers, All Other (23-2099)*	\$72,950	2,900
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)*	\$62,650	28,770
Judicial Law Clerks (23-1012)*	\$65,670	200
Survey Researchers (19-3022)*	\$45,280	810

Table 7 – Texas Undergraduate Enrollment Data & Trends (Fall 2025)

Public 4- and 2-year institutions

	Preliminary Fall 2025 Enrollment	2030 Projections	2035 Projections
Universities	708,669	756,218	800,892
Community and State Colleges	760,275	809,950	863,783
Independent Colleges + Universities	160,890	127,968	128,729
Totals	1,629,834	1,694,136	1,793,404

Work Cited

- APSA Research, 2024-2025 APSA Departmental Survey, American Political Science Association
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Political Scientists, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/political-scientists.htm> (visited March 26, 2026).
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2021). [Enrollment Forecast 2021-2035](#). Austin, TX.
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2023) [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Strategic Plan: Building a Talent Strong Texas](#)
- [Texas Higher Education Data - Preliminary Fall 2025 Enrollment Numbers](#)
- [Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics: Texas, May 2024](#)