LAW, GOVERNMENT, AND PUBLIC POLICY

The Law, Government, and Public Policy Career Cluster is designed for those who are interested in doing careers related to shaping policy, the effective management of government, and espousing the rule of law.

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Key Roles & Work Environments

Most people who work in the legal practice sector are lawyers. While all lawyers have achieved the Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree before entering the profession, they tend to break down into two distinct groups of practice:

- **Transactional** – lawyers whose work revolves mostly around deals, negotiations, and contracts. Transactional lawyers rarely end up in court.
- **Litigation** – Lawyers whose primary work involves arguing before the court in either civil or criminal matters.

Most lawyers are transactional in their work. Despite impressions given through TV, most lawyers are never in a courtroom. If they are, it is typically a sign that something has gone awry!

There are other types of legal professions that can be explored, including paralegals and legal assistants. These professions do not require the J.D. degree. Paralegals serve to assist lawyers in firms with case research and preparation, and legal assistants often work to assist paralegals and lawyers in the firm with these same tasks. Depending upon the firm, legal assistants may be called a variety of titles including Case Clerk, File Clerk, Document Clerk, or some other similar clerking title. Clerking in a law firm should not be confused with clerkships that are taken after law school by newly-minted lawyers. These clerkships are done in courts and the clerk works directly for a judge. They do require the J.D. degree and a rigorous application and interview process to secure. They are considered a great first job right out of law school instead of the traditional law firm route. The Occupational Outlook Handbook provides additional information on lawyers, paralegals, and legal assistant career paths.

The most common work environment in the field of law is a law firm. Law firms range in size from the single solo practitioner up to 500+ person, multi-national firms, with many medium-sized and boutique law firms in between. Each firm also has its own culture and practice area specialties. Most law school graduates seek to go directly into a law firm after graduation.

In addition to law firms, some lawyers work in corporate/business settings as either in-house counsel (serving as a lawyer for the company) or in a non-legal capacity within the company. An example of such a role would be working in the compliance division of a company. The strong legal background that a lawyer brings with them makes them especially adept to work in this area even though compliance work does not require a J.D. Knowledge of the law is a strong benefit for this field.

Other lawyers work in a variety of environments including nonprofits, government, public policy groups, education, healthcare, and other industry sectors. Because laws govern so many areas of society, there is a need for legal counsel in nearly every industry that exists.

**Key Skills**

Those who pursue work in the legal practice area will need to amass certain key skills to be at the top of their game:
• Strong writing skills
• Research skills
• Critical thinking/analysis skills, including analytical reasoning and logical reasoning skills
• Problem-solving skills
• Oral advocacy and public speaking

In addition to these, the American Bar Association (ABA) recommends that those working in the field acquire some additional skill sets and knowledge bases that could be helpful to them as lawyers.

Recommended Resources

To learn more about the practice of law and legal careers, here is a list of recommended books:

• The Official Guide to Legal Specialties by Lisa Abrams
• So You Want to Be a Lawyer by Law School Admission Council
• So You Want To Be A Lawyer? by Marianne & Susanne Calabrese
• Should You Really Be a Lawyer? by Deborah Schneider & Gary Belsky
• The Lawyer’s Career Change Handbook by Hindi Greenberg
• Nonlegal Careers for Lawyers by Gary Munneke and William Henslee
• How To Succeed in Law School by Gary Munneke
• Law School Confidential by Robert Miller
• What Every Law Student Really Needs to Know by Tracey George and Suzanna Sherry

Web-based resources for exploring the field and keeping abreast of changes in the profession of law include the following:

• Equal Justice Works
• ABA Journal
• Law Professor Blogs
• LegalEvolution.org

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES AND GETTING INVOLVED

Jobs & Internships

One of the best ways to learn about the practice of law is to gain exposure through hands-on experience. While most law firms reserve their internship opportunities for current law students, undergraduates can still find options for gaining experience in firm settings. Doing this requires a bit more patience and persistence on the part of the student, but it can lead to a great opportunity. To locate experience in law firms, the following steps are recommended:

• As a first step, always check Handshake, the Emory student job and internship database, to see if any law firms have posted opportunities for Emory students to which you can apply.
• Look up and contact local law firms in the area where you are interested in working. Smaller firms and solo practitioners may be more willing to take on undergraduate students than larger firms, as these firms can often use the help that a student can provide to perform basic tasks of the law practice. You can use Martindale.com or HG.org to search for law firms and lawyers in a specific area.
• Share, share, share! Tell everyone you know (parents, friends, family, family friends, etc.) that you are looking for a legally related opportunity. Forward them a copy of your resume and ask them to share it with any lawyers they know. Even if those lawyers don’t have an opening in their practice, they may know a colleague who does. You never know who knows whom!

In addition to direct law firm experience, consider other work environments where you could intern in a legal capacity through various legally related programs or other community resources that don’t require formal legal training:

• Legal departments in companies
• Local and county court systems, Public Defender’s Offices, and District Attorney’s Offices
• State and federal government offices
• Legal non-profit organizations, such as Legal Aid or the Southern Poverty Law Center

Another key consideration to make when searching for legally related experience is the type of law in which you may be interested. Knowing this upfront may make it easier for you to target your search for potential options for internships. For example, if you knew that you were interested in environmental law, it would be helpful to you as a future environmental lawyer to learn about the environment as a whole, not just the law affecting it. Therefore, doing internships in organizations that work with the environment, or would give you a good baseline of knowledge about the topic itself, not just the law. This knowledge base can be helpful to you once you reach law school and are taking classes in that practice area as well as in your legal future career.

Campus Organizations & Volunteering

Another great way to build experience is to get involved with campus organizations and doing community service in your area of interest. Joining student groups on campus and volunteer organizations can open additional doors for you to build experience, make new connections, and learn about additional opportunities that you can partake of in the future. Some on-campus clubs in which you could get involved if interested in law as a career include:

• Emory Pre-Law Society
• Oxford Pre-Law Society
• Emory Black Pre-Law Society (main campus only)
• Emory Mock Trial

For contact information for these organizations, contact Emory’s Pre-Law Advisor.

PREPARING TO APPLY

Resumes & Cover Letters

Because of the nature of work that goes on in legal work settings, writing resume and cover letters for positions in these environments should focus heavily on conveying the key skills mentioned above. Showcase prior experiences that speak to your gathering and use of these skills as well as demonstrating tangible results achieved while working in those experiences. Even if the positions were not legally related themselves, highlighting relevant skills can still result in being selected for an interview for a legally-related position.

Interviewing
As with all interviews, a few standard rules apply:

- Be prepared to discuss in detail anything you have written on your resume. It’s all fair game! This means having in-depth answers for questions such as why you chose particular opportunities, what skills you learned in your previous roles, and how those skills can be transferred into the current position for which you are interviewing.

- Be prepared with specific examples to demonstrate the quality of your work! Behavioral interview questions are quite common in interview settings, and these require you to be able to describe a specific instance in which you dealt with the situation at hand. Consider the skills that will be required of the job and reflect back on your own experiences. Look for matches between your experience and the skills needed in the job to be able to answer these questions. Some sample behavioral questions include the following:
  - “Tell us about a time when you had to meet a tight deadline and use good time management skills to accomplish a task.”
  - “Can you tell me about a time when you worked on a project that didn’t go as planned? What was your role in the situation and how did you handle it?”
  - “Can you give me an example of a time when you had to work with a difficult colleague?”

Be prepared with specific questions about the organization to close the interview. In most cases, your interview will end with the interviewer asking you if you have any questions that you want to ask. It is always best to have a few questions prepared in advance, in addition to any that you might think of during the interview. Not asking questions at the close of an interview can make you seem uninterested in the role or the organization.

Continuing Education

If you plan to pursue a career as a lawyer, law school will be a necessary first step. It is important to note that law schools do not require or even prefer that you have legal experience before coming to law school. Therefore, choosing to gain this type of experience before going to law school should be done more for the sake of career exploration and decision-making rather than for any type of admissions “brownie points.” For more information on pursuing law school, visit the Pre-Law Advising Office webpage and be sure to meet with Emory’s Pre-Law Advisor and get registered as a pre-law student. You can register by clicking on the link at the bottom of the Pre-Law Advising Office homepage.

As mentioned above, paralegals are another option in the legal career space. Unlike lawyers, law school is not necessary to become a paralegal. Being a paralegal is its own career path, and can be as rewarding and fulfilling as becoming a lawyer. Paralegal work requires a certification to become qualified for jobs in this field. There are a number of programs from which to choose, including Emory’s own Paralegal Certificate Program through Emory’s Continuing Education Division.

MEETING PEOPLE, MAKING CONNECTIONS

In addition to gaining hands-on experience, networking and building contacts and connections with professionals in your field of interest is a great way to advance your knowledge about the field and expedite your career success as you enter the field. There are a number of ways to expand your network in the legal careers sector.

Alumni Connections
The Emory Alumni Association has a great platform, Emory Connects, to allow for networking both alum-to-alum networking as well as student-to-alumni connections. Be sure to join Emory Connects and take advantage of this great resource!

Professional Associations

The field of legal practice is broad, to say the least. There are more than 30 major practice areas, with more coming online as the world changes and evolves. One way to stay up-to-date with changes in a given area is to stay plugged into professional associations for the area. Below is a general listing of professional associations associated with the field of law. While this list is not meant to be comprehensive, it does capture many of the big players:

- **American Bar Association** (the ABA also has various sections revolving around different practice areas that can be accessed from their main site)
- **National Association for Law Placement (NALP)** – An association of over 2,500 legal career professionals
- **National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA)** – the leading paralegal association in the U.S.
- **American Health Lawyers Association**
- **American Immigration Lawyers Association**
- **American Intellectual Property Law Association**
- **Association of Legal Administrators**
- **Education Law Association**
- **Maritime Law Association**
- **National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers**
- **National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA)**
- **National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA)**
- **National Lawyers Association**
- **Sports Law Association**

Events on Campus

Emory students have the opportunity to connect with law school admissions officers and legal career professionals right on campus each year. The Career Center and The Pre-Law Advising Office host several programs throughout the school year that facilitate these connections.

**Fall Semester**

- Law Admissions Networking Night – An event bringing over 75 law school representatives to campus for a night of mixing and mingling with students
- Grad School Fair – Held every October, Emory hosts a graduate school fair welcoming programs from all graduate and professional school disciplines, including law schools.

**Spring Semester**

- Law School Fair – Similar to the Grad School Fair, this event is held each January and is only for law schools.
- Legal Careers Networking Night – Bringing together a group of lawyers from a wide variety of practice areas, this event allows students the ability to talk face-to-face with practicing legal professionals and get their questions answered about a day in the life of practicing law.
For more details and exact dates for these events, be sure to check The Career Center’s Program Guide (accessible from The Career Center’s homepage) each semester. Events will also be posted on Handshake.
PUBLIC POLICY

EXPLORING THE INDUSTRY

Key Roles & Work Environments

As a field, public policy is very broad in the sense that policy work is done across many topics, from education to government to public health and social services. Their work occurs on both the domestic as well as international fronts. Many public policy professionals conduct research and provide political and industry leaders with information regarding trends that may affect their decision-making, while other groups are more position-focused and develop policy statements with the goal of lobbying elected officials toward a particular cause or position.

Public policy professionals work in a variety of environments, including:

- Local, state, and federal government agencies
- Public policy groups and think tanks
- Non-profit organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Corporations

Public policy work is also similar to public administration. However, public administration officials tend to work more specifically in government as opposed to public policy organizations or think tanks.

Key Skills

For the typical type of work that is done by public policy groups, some key skills to gather include:

- Research skills
- Communication skills (both in writing and oral advocacy)
- Critical thinking and analysis skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Negotiation and persuasion skills (especially for lobbying)

Some additional soft skills such as interpersonal skills, teamwork skills and leadership skills will also go a long way on the path to advancement in the field. Time management and good organizational skills will also serve to support quality performance in the other more prominent skills of the job, including research.

Recommended Resources

Some great online tools to use to learn more about the industry include the following:

- www.policyexperts.org
- www.thinktankwatch.com
- NIRA World Directory of Think Tanks
- Worldpress.org
- Harvard Kennedy School Think Tank Search
- International Affairs Resources
- Policy Library
- Source Watch – an extensive list of policy organizations
FINDING OPPORTUNITIES AND GETTING INVOLVED

Jobs & Internships

In addition to using Handshake to search for opportunities that have been posted directly to Emory by employers in the field, there are a number of other web-based resources that you can use to find opportunities:

- PolicyJobs.net
- Work For Progress
- www.PublicServiceCareers.org
- Idealist.org (for non-profit organizations)
- USAJobs.gov (for federal government)
- LobbyingJobs.com
- HumanRightsJobs.com
- EthicalJobs.net
- U.S. PIRG
- Congressional Research Service Careers

In addition to these sites, be sure to check local and state government websites for policy-related internships, fellowships, and jobs. Because public policy groups can cover a wide range of topics, it is just as important to narrow down your policy focus area as it is to decide that you want to enter the field overall. Doing so will help you to better target your search for niche-specific opportunities.

Fellowships & Research

Fellowship opportunities are great ways to launch a career in the field of public policy. Many public policy groups have one-year fellowship programs that are open to graduating college seniors as an entry-level role in the profession. A sample list is below:

- Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies
- Bosch (Robert) Foundation Fellowship Program
- Commonwealth Fund Fellowships in Public Policy
- Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Louis Stokes Urban Health Policy Fellows Program
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Public Policy Fellowship Program
- Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program
- Fulbright Program for U.S. Students
- John Heinz Senate Fellowship in Issues of the Aging
- State Policy Fellowship Program
- The Presidential Management Fellows Program – For graduate students who have an interest in the analysis and management of public policy programs and an internship experience in cabinet departments and other federal agencies.

Campus Organizations & Volunteering

Emory is a treasure trove of student organizations and volunteer opportunities where you can get involved and gain hands-on experience with issues of importance to you. Check in with the Student Involvement, Leadership,
and Transitions Office and Volunteer Emory for more information on ways that you can become engaged on and off campus.

PREPARING TO APPLY

Resumes & Cover Letters

Writing resumes and cover letters for positions in this career field should focus heavily on conveying the key skills mentioned above. Showcase prior experiences that speak to your gathering and use of these skills as well as demonstrating tangible results achieved while working in those experiences. Even if the positions themselves were not directly related to the industry, highlighting relevant transferable skills can still result in being selected for an interview. Be sure to meet with your assigned Career Counselor for help in creating and refining your resume, if needed.

Interviewing

As with all interviews, a few standard rules apply:

- Be prepared to discuss in detail anything you have written on your resume. It’s all fair game! This means having in-depth answers for questions such as why you chose particular opportunities, what skills you learned in your previous roles, and how those skills can be transferred into the current position for which you are interviewing.
- Be prepared with specific examples to demonstrate the quality of your work! Behavioral interview questions are quite common in interview settings, and these require you to be able to describe a specific instance in which you dealt with the situation at hand. Consider the skills that will be required of the job and reflect back on your own experiences. Look for matches between your experience and the skills needed in the job to be able to answer these questions. Some sample behavioral questions include the following:
  - “Tell us about a time when you had to meet a tight deadline and use good time management skills to accomplish a task.”
  - “Can you tell me about a time when you work on a project that didn’t go as planned? What was your role in the situation and how did you handle it?”
  - “Can you give me an example of a time when you had to work with a difficult colleague?”

Be prepared with specific questions about the organization to close the interview. In most cases, your interview will end with the interviewer asking you if you have any questions that you want to ask. It is always best to have a few questions prepared in advance, in addition to any that you might think of during the interview. Not asking questions at the close of an interview can make you seem uninterested in the role or the organization.

Continuing Education

In the field of Public Policy, the most common graduate degrees are the Masters of Public Policy (MPP) and the Masters of Public Administration (MPA). Increasingly, those who want to work on the international stage are pursuing the Masters of International Affairs (MIA) degree. Doctoral degrees are also available in these fields, but tend to be reserved for those whose goal is to pursue academia or research as a career path or those who want to advance to higher leadership levels within organizations. The Masters-level degrees are sufficient for entry into the field as the professional working degrees. To research programs in these fields, use the following resources:
MEETING PEOPLE, MAKING CONNECTIONS

In addition to gaining hands-on experience, networking and building contacts and connections with professionals in your field of interest is a great way to advance your knowledge about the field and expedite your career success as you enter the field. There are a number of ways to expand your network in the public policy sector.

Alumni Connections

The Emory Alumni Association has a great platform, Emory Connects, to allow for networking both alum-to-alum networking as well as student-to-alumni connections. Be sure to join Emory Connects and take advantage of this great resource!

Professional Associations

Professional associations are a great vehicle for learning more about a field generally as well as finding opportunities to connect with professionals in the field. Here is a list of some professional organizations in the field of public policy:

- **American Society for Public Administration** (ASPA) – ASPA is a membership association of public administrators at all levels of government. Discounted student memberships are available.
- **Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management** (APPAM) – A membership association for both institutions and individuals, focused on research and analysis of public policy and management issues. Discounted doctoral student memberships are available.
- **International City/County Management Association** (ICMA) – ICMA is the organization for municipal administrators at the local, regional, and state levels. Discounted student memberships are available.
- **American Political Science Association** (APSA) – The organization of political science faculty, researchers, and students. Student memberships available.
- **National Forum for Black Public Administrators** (NFBPA) – An organization committed to strengthening the position of African-Americans in public administration.
- **International Public Policy Association** (IPPA)
- **Public Affairs Council** – Non-partisan, non-political association for public affairs professionals. Its mission is to advance the field of public affairs and to provide members with the training and information resources they need to achieve success while maintaining the highest ethical standards.
STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

EXPLORING THE INDUSTRY

Key Roles, Work Environments, and Skills

Those who work in state and local government cover a wide expanse of roles and departments as they work to ensure the smooth function of day-to-day government for citizens. These roles can range from clerical and administrative jobs to departmental/agency management and elected office. The skills needed in these jobs will depend largely on the role itself as well as the department/agency of government in which the job is located.

Recommended Resources

Some web-based resources for learning more about state and local government include the following:

- State and Local Government on the Net – A directory of official state, county and city government websites.
- State and Local Governments – State and local government information searchable by state.
- National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
- Republican Governors Association
- Democratic Governors Association
- State, Local, and Tribal Governments

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES AND GETTING INVOLVED

Jobs, Internships, Fellowships & Research

In addition to using Handshake to search for opportunities that have been posted directly to Emory by employers in the field, there are a number of other web-based resources that you can use to find opportunities:

- Local Government Job Net
- GovtJobs.com
- Georgia Legislative Internship Program
- Georgia Governor’s Intern Program
- New York City Summer Internship Program
- California Capital Fellows Programs
- State Legislative Internship Programs – extensive list of internship programs by state with coordinator contact information
- Careers in Government
- GovernmentJobs.com
- PolicyJobs.net

Campus Organizations & Volunteering

Emory is a treasure trove of student organizations and volunteer opportunities where you can get involved and gain hands-on experience with issues of importance to you. Check in with the Student Involvement, Leadership.
and Transitions Office and Volunteer Emory for more information on ways that you can become engaged on and off campus.

**PREPARING TO APPLY**

**Resumes & Cover Letters**

Writing resumes and cover letters should focus heavily on conveying the key skills mentioned in the job posting. Showcase prior experiences that speak to your gathering and use of these skills as well as demonstrating tangible results achieved while working in those experiences. Even if the positions themselves were not directly related to the industry, highlighting relevant transferable skills can still result in being selected for an interview. Be sure to meet with your assigned Career Counselor for help in creating and refining your resume, if needed.

**Interviewing**

As with all interviews, a few standard rules apply:

- Be prepared to discuss in detail anything you have written on your resume. It’s all fair game! This means having in-depth answers for questions such as why you chose particular opportunities, what skills you learned in your previous roles, and how those skills can be transferred into the current position for which you are interviewing.
- Be prepared with specific examples to demonstrate the quality of your work! Behavioral interview questions are quite common in interview settings, and these require you to be able to describe a specific instance in which you dealt with the situation at hand. Consider the skills that will be required of the job and reflect back on your own experiences. Look for matches between your experience and the skills needed in the job to be able to answer these questions. Some sample behavioral questions include the following:
  - “Tell us about a time when you had to meet a tight deadline and use good time management skills to accomplish a task.”
  - “Can you tell me about a time when you work on a project that didn’t go as planned? What was your role in the situation and how did you handle it?”
  - “Can you give me an example of a time when you had to work with a difficult colleague?”

Be prepared with specific questions about the organization to close the interview. In most cases, your interview will end with the interviewer asking you if you have any questions that you want to ask. It is always best to have a few questions prepared in advance, in addition to any that you might think of during the interview. Not asking questions at the close of an interview can make you seem uninterested in the role or the organization.

**Continuing Education**

While many jobs in state and local government do not require graduate education, there are options for those who want to further their knowledge in the area of advance into leadership roles. The usual option for further education related to government is a Masters of Public Administration (MPA) degree. Some may also opt for the Master of Public Policy (MPP) degree. However, depending on the role you are looking to play in the government, other forms of graduate education may be more appropriate, including an MBA (business), MPH (public health), or even a JD (law) degree. No matter what type of graduate degree you plan to pursue, a great resource for researching programs is Petersons.com, a comprehensive resource for finding graduate programs in all areas.
MEETING PEOPLE, MAKING CONNECTIONS

In addition to gaining hands-on experience, networking and building contacts and connections with professionals in your field of interest is a great way to advance your knowledge about the field and expedite your career success as you enter the field.

Alumni Connections

The Emory Alumni Association has a great platform, Emory Connects, to allow for networking both alum-to-alum networking as well as student-to-alumni connections. Be sure to join Emory Connects and take advantage of this great resource!

Professional Associations

- National Association of Counties
- Council of State Governments (CSG) – Our nation’s only organization serving all three branches of state government.
- State Government Affairs Council (SGAC) – The premier national association for multi-state government affairs professionals, providing opportunities for networking and professional development.
- Women in Government – National, nonprofit, non-partisan organization of women state legislators that provides leadership opportunities, networking expert forums, and educational resources to address and resolve complex public policy issues to all women state legislators.
- American Public Works Association (APWA) – Education and networking for public works professionals.
- Government Finance Officers Association – The professional association of state/provincial and local finance officers.
- Association of County Commissioners of Georgia
Key Roles, Work Environments, & Skills

The federal government covers a wide expanse of functions and touches on nearly every aspect of citizen life. Job roles in the federal government cover a wide variety of areas ranging from clerical and administrative jobs to departmental/agency management and elected office. The skills needed in these jobs will depend largely on the role itself as well as the department/agency of government in which the job is located.

Recommended Resources

A listing of web-based resources for learning more about the federal government:

- USA.gov
- Partnership for Public Service – Nonprofit, non-partisan organization that works to revitalize our federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.
- GoGovernment.org
- A-Z Index of U.S. Government departments and agencies
- Cabinet Departments

Resources on international affairs:

- U.S. Agency for International Development
- U.S. Department of State
- U.S. International Trade Administration

Resources for national security, defense, and intelligence:

- Central Intelligence Agency - student programs and job opportunities
- Defense Intelligence Agency - student programs
- Department of Homeland Security – careers page
- National Security Agency - student programs

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES AND GETTING INVOLVED

Jobs, Internships, Fellowships, & Research

In addition to using Handshake to search for opportunities that have been posted directly to Emory by employers in this field, there are a number of other web-based resources that you can use to find opportunities:

- AvueCentral – Allows applicants to apply directly to its member agencies through one site.
- Congressional Research Service Careers
- FederalJobSearch.com
- Governmentjobs.com – Site lists federal, state, county, city, nonprofits.
- HillZoo – Features classified job listing for Hill jobs as well as jobs in political consulting, law, and other firms.
• Intelligence Community Careers – Information for students from diverse disciplines about careers in intelligence in different government agencies and organizations.
• Pamela Harriman Fellowship
• Roll Call – A resource for Capitol Hill news and information, which includes RCjobs.com, an interactive employment site.
• The Presidential Management Fellows Program – For graduate students who have an interest in the analysis and management of public policy programs and an internship experience in cabinet departments and other federal agencies.
• Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship
• USA.gov – information on finding a federal government job
• USA Jobs.gov – The official federal government job listing site. Information is also included about federal salary rates and benefits.
• U.S. Dept. of State undergraduate student programs – This site includes internship and post-graduate opportunities.
• U.S. House of Representatives – Employment opportunities site.
• White House Internship Program – Application site for undergraduate students and alumni with two years or less of experience.

Campus Organizations & Volunteering

Emory is a treasure trove of student organizations and volunteer opportunities where you can get involved and gain hands-on experience with issues of importance to you. Check in with the Student Involvement, Leadership, and Transitions Office and Volunteer Emory for more information on ways that you can become engaged on and off campus.

PREPARING TO APPLY

Applying for federal government jobs can be daunting due to the differences in application procedures at various agencies as well as general application process differences from the private sector. The resources below will help you to better understand and prepare for the process:

• How to navigate USAJobs.gov
• Information on background checks and security clearances
• Application tips

Resumes & Cover Letters

Writing resumes and cover letters for positions in the federal government can be different than what is typically required in the private sector. See the resource below for more details on preparing a resume for applications:

• Guidelines on building a federal resume
• Federal resume writing tips
• Application questionnaires, essays, and other materials

Be sure to meet with your assigned Career Counselor for help in creating and refining your resume, if needed.

Interviewing
Check out tips on interviewing for federal government jobs here. In addition, as with all interviews, a few standard rules apply:

- Be prepared to discuss in detail anything you have written on your resume. It’s all fair game! This means having in-depth answers for questions such as why you chose particular opportunities, what skills you learned in your previous roles, and how those skills can be transferred into the current position for which you are interviewing.
- Be prepared with specific examples do demonstrate the quality of your work! Behavioral interview questions are quite common in interview settings, and these require you to be able to describe a specific instance in which you dealt with the situation at hand. Consider the skills that will be required of the job and reflect back on your own experiences. Look for matches between your experience and the skills needed in the job to be able to answer these questions. Some sample behavioral questions include the following:
  - “Tell us about a time when you had to meet a tight deadline and use good time management skills to accomplish a task.”
  - “Can you tell me about a time when you work on a project that didn’t go as planned? What was your role in the situation and how did you handle it?”
  - “Can you give me an example of a time when you had to work with a difficult colleague?”

Be prepared with specific questions about the organization to close the interview. In most cases, your interview will end with the interviewer asking you if you have any questions that you want to ask. It is always best to have a few questions prepared in advance, in addition to any that you might think of during the interview. Not asking questions at the close of an interview can make you seem uninterested in the role or the organization.

MEETING PEOPLE, MAKING CONNECTIONS

In addition to gaining hands-on experience, networking and building contacts and connections with professionals in your field of interest is a great way to advance your knowledge about the field and expedite your career success as you enter the field.

Alumni Connections

The Emory Alumni Association has a great platform, Emory Connects, to allow for networking both alum-to-alum networking as well as student-to-alumni connections. Be sure to join Emory Connects and take advantage of this great resource!

Professional Associations

- American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
EXPLORING THE INDUSTRY

Key Roles, Work Environments, & Skills

Engaging in the political realm is a common professional interest for students. Whether pursuing a goal of becoming an elected official, working as a staffer, or working directly for political parties, careers in politics run the gamut. Depending upon the job, key skills needed can vary. However, given the nature of political work in general, a few skills are essential:

- Communication skills (both oral and written)
- Research skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Interpersonal skills (especially in constituent-facing roles)
- Teamwork skills
- Initiative and the ability to work in a fast-paced environment

Recommended Resources

Selected resources for learning more about careers in politics include the following:

- Democratic National Committee
- Republican National Committee
- Libertarian Party
- U.S. House of Representatives
- U.S. Senate
- The White House
- National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
- Republican Governors Association
- Democratic Governors Association
- The United States Conference of Mayors

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES AND GETTING INVOLVED

Jobs, Internships, Fellowships, & Research

In addition to using Handshake to search for opportunities that have been posted directly to Emory by employers in this field, there are a number of other web-based resources that you can use to find opportunities:

- PoliticalJobs.net
- PoliticalJobHunt.com
- HillZoo
- The Hill
- Roll Call Jobs listing
- The Guardian
- Democratic Gain
Campus Organizations & Volunteering

Emory is a treasure trove of student organizations and volunteer opportunities where you can get involved and gain hands-on experience with issues of importance to you. Check in with the Student Involvement, Leadership, and Transitions Office and Volunteer Emory for more information on ways that you can become engaged on and off campus.

PREPARING TO APPLY

Resumes & Cover Letters

Writing resume and cover letters for positions in this career field should focus heavily on conveying the key skills mentioned above. Showcase prior experiences that speak to your gathering and use of these skills as well as demonstrating tangible results achieved while working in those experiences. Even if the positions themselves were not directly related to the industry, highlighting relevant transferable skills can still result in being selected for an interview. Be sure to meet with your assigned Career Counselor for help in creating and refining your resume, if needed.

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Professional Associations

Professional organizations are a great way to learn more about a field as well as build contacts and connections. A list of associations relevant to the field of politics is below:

- American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC)
- American Political Science Association
- International Association of Political Consultants (IAPC)
- Society of Professional Consultants