

IPA Workshop: The Job Hunt

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Career Services Center
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Objectives

- Discuss 3 critical factors in catering a resume to a public policy position
- Summarize the purpose of a cover letter in applying to a public policy position
- Describe 3 ways to be prepare for interviewing success
- Construct a simple strategy for salary negotiations



Adam's Context

RUSA
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
STUDENT ASSEMBLY




EAGLETON
INSTITUTE
of POLITICS

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Career Paths for Public Affairs Graduates

<https://www.udel.edu/apply/career-outcomes/#year=All&major=Public%20Policy>

Public Policy students gain the knowledge and skills needed to pursue careers in government, NGOs, and community nonprofit organizations. Entry-level jobs in these fields are projected to increase over the next decade; these include jobs like:

Researchers

Agency professional staff

Advocates

Program administrators

Policy makers

Political aides

Analysts

Alumni work locally, all over the country, and around the world as leaders in community development, environmental protection, health administration, city management, and in positions influencing virtually every area of policy and every level government.

Info from CollegeFactual.com

Major Overview

- A major in Public Policy allows you go behind the political scene to learn exactly **how and why public policy decisions are made**. You will learn how to **analyze and form public policy decisions** - giving you front row access to shape today's most important economic and social issues.
- Between a broad array of analytical techniques and practical experience, a graduate with a Public Policy degree will be prepared to **influence and change policy decisions**.

Careers

- A career in public policy analysis can go in **two different directions**. Graduates can work producing **policy analysis** for formal research projects, collecting, analyzing, and summarizing their findings from primary data. A second group of jobs involves those who use analysis and research to **apply the information into their policy process**.
- Within these two categories is an array of job titles: political scientists, economists, sociologists, lawyers, urban planners, or natural scientists, among other things. **Graduates find work in many large public and private bodies, government agencies, national governance organizations, corporations, think tanks, and consultancy firms**.
- Graduates with a degree in Public Policy average \$43,451 as a starting salary with a mid-career salary of \$73,728.

What Attributes Make Candidates Stand Out?

- NACE 2018 Job Outlook Survey
 - Influence on Review
 - 4.4/5 “Has internship experience in your industry”
 - 3.7/5 “Has held leadership position”
 - 3.7/5 “Has general work experience”
 - 3.3/5 “Has been involved in extracurricular activities”
 - Essential Competencies Demonstrated on Resume
 - 82.9% “Problem Solving Skills”
 - 82.9% “Ability to Work on a Team”
 - 72.6% “Leadership”

Examples of Experiences

- Congressional campaign canvassing
- Volunteering with a non-profit
- Cabinet position of professional organization
- Campus job with Student Centers
- Resident Assistant position
- Research with professor

Examples of Assets

- Congressional campaign canvassing
 - Strong interpersonal skills
- Volunteering with a non-profit
 - Passion for working toward a need
- Cabinet position of professional organization
 - Peer leadership skills
- Campus job with Student Centers
 - Ability to work on a team
- Resident Assistant position
 - Problem solving skills
- Research with professor
 - Written communication skills



Communicating Experience

- Seeking experiences that are relevant to you will help build professional documents and refine professional skills used in job searching
- As you go through experiences, identify:
 - Tasks you complete or projects you work on
 - Skills you use, especially those that grow, to complete tasks
 - Environments you work in
 - Communication styles you utilize
 - Challenges you overcome
 - Stories you “write home about”



Tailoring a Public Policy Resume

- Prepare a master resume - add to it often
- Look for where you added value - find an action verb
- Think beyond daily tasks to environments, general responsibilities, and exciting experiences
- Make each bullet represent a transferrable skill



Tailoring a Public Policy Resume

- Sections of importance
 - Work Experience
 - Education
 - Skills
 - Leadership Experience
 - Relevant Coursework
 - Objective or Summary
 - Professional Affiliations
 - Hobbies, Interests



Research Assistant, Economic Policy Studies

US-DC-Washington

3 weeks ago

Job ID 2020-1375

of Openings 1

Category Economic Policy

Overview

AEI is seeking a full-time research assistant to work with senior economists. AEI economists study a wide variety of economic policy issues related to the US economy, tax policy, international finance, political economy, financial services, and health care.

Responsibilities include research support in the form of data management, retrieval, and analysis; editing and contributing to scholarly papers, articles, op-eds, and books; creating and formatting charts, graphics, and tables; and writing literature reviews and background reports using national and international publications.

Applicants should have a demonstrated interest in economics and public policy and experience with economic methodologies, acquiring data from official sources, analyzing large data sets, and knowledge of statistical programs — preferably STATA. Applicants should also be willing to learn new statistical programs. A strong math or statistics background is required, and coursework in linear algebra, multivariable calculus, and econometrics is strongly preferred.

AEI offers a stimulating and harmonious work environment and excellent benefits. Interested candidates should submit their resume, cover letter, unofficial academic transcripts, and 500-word writing sample with their online application.

About AEI

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) is a public policy think tank dedicated to defending human dignity, expanding human potential, and building a freer and safer world. The work of its scholars and staff advances ideas rooted in a belief in democracy, free enterprise, American strength and global leadership, solidarity with those at the periphery of our society, and a pluralistic, entrepreneurial culture.

AEI is committed to making the intellectual, moral, and practical case for expanding freedom, increasing individual opportunity, and strengthening the free enterprise system in America and around the world. Its work explores ideas that further these goals, and AEI scholars take part in this pursuit with academic freedom. AEI operates independently of any political party and has no institutional positions. Its scholars' conclusions are fueled by rigorous, data-driven research and broad-ranging evidence.

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- Analyzed
- Assessed
- Forecasted
- Researched
- Computed

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- Authored
- Collected
- Evaluated
- Examined
- Organized
- Systematized

Stand-Out Resumes

- Quantify- Numbers, even if not large, are crucial
- Know your audience- federal, non-profit, etc.
- Prioritize bullets based on position
- Maintain reverse chronological order- choose whether you start with Organization or Position title to show priority of positions
- Demonstrate, don't explain



In Your Cover Letter

- Define yourself (quickly) in your policy interests and the effect you want to have
- Describe how your experiences have highlighted your passion
- Chance to connect experiences that may be less obvious to goal/position
- Share values and “whys”
- Mid-point in story telling - don’t just repeat resume, be specific, but brief
- Chance to explain growth areas – lack of research experience, direct need from job description – must be backed up by supplemental skill/experience



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Overview

Shared values:

- Using data to support free market
- Studying individual opportunity
- Intellectual methods to expand liberty in the US and beyond

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Cover Letter Format

- Purpose- explain the fit between applicant, position, and organization particularly if it's not expressly clear in resume
- Paragraph 1- why you are interested in this position and employer, and to grab the reader's attention.
- Paragraph 2- describe your qualifications for the position using specific examples from academic, work, volunteer, leadership, athletics, and student organization experiences.
- Paragraph 3- Connect your accomplishments, skills and knowledge directly to the position and employer
- Paragraph 4- final statement of your interest and qualifications, gratitude, contact info

Prepping for the Interview

- This is the time to use storytelling to showcase your strengths
- Use your experiences to provide specific examples of skills
 - Remember the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method and use the specifics from your master resume
- Think about your top three strengths for the position and have a story ready to demonstrate each strength
- When thinking of questions to ask, consider what would have been helpful during challenges of past experiences
- Different types of fit (position, skill, organization, team)



Types of Interviews

- Phone
 - Prepare a quiet space for 15 minutes before and after
 - Smile while talking
 - Still dress the part as a mental check
- Skype/Video
 - Look into the camera (pretend it's the eyes of the interviewer) when answering
 - Clear, blank background if possible, with good posture
 - Don't panic with tech issues- everyone has them and your perseverance will be an asset
- In person
 - Arrive 10-15 minutes early- not 30-45
 - Take water and breathing breaks where needed
 - Don't be afraid to ask for a repeat of a question



The STAR Method

Situation: Describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

Task: What goal were you working toward?

Action: Describe the actions you took to address the situation and keep the focus on YOU. What specific steps did you take and what was your contribution? Use “I,” not “we” when describing actions.

Result: Describe the outcome of your actions and don’t be shy about taking credit for your behavior. How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Provide multiple positive results.



Common Interview Questions

- General Questions
 - Tell me about yourself
 - Strengths/**Weaknesses** - be vulnerable and learning oriented
- Behavioral Questions
 - Tell me about a time...
 - What's an example of... - STAR
- Organizational Interest Questions
 - Why here? What do you know/like about us?
 - What specific area would you....
- Reasons for Hire Questions
 - What accomplishments....
 - How are you prepared for...



Critical Factors in Entering Public Service

- Time and energy in career development – research positions, organizations, and chart a path
- Networking – make the most of the people involved in experiences
- Experience – exposure to organizations, skills in needed tasks
- Patience – it is normal for it to take a while for a position to open up, you may have to work up to your dream position
- Communication – know your strengths, communicate your added value
- Commitment – you're going into this field for a reason; sell that reason



Where to look



Non-profit Sector

- Volunteermatch.org – local opportunities to volunteer in areas of interest/need (exposure to organizations)
- Createthegood.org
- Dosomething.org
- Idealist.org – non-profit positions
- Workforgood.org
- Handshake has info about volunteer experience orgs (PeaceCorp, Americorp Vista, City Year, etc)



Federal Government

- Handshake – UD has a lot of federal partners
- Usajobs.gov – federal government and agencies
- usa.gov/federal-agencies – list of all sorts of organizations to work for including state and local level
- LinkedIn – many agencies are using this more heavily
- Governmentjobs.com – non federal organizations across the US
- Indeed.com – many cross posted here



State Government

- Delawarestatejobs
- Xstate jobs



Politics / Policy Influencing

- politicaljobhunt.com
- Social media for legislators
- ncsl.org – State legislators
- Indeed.com has a legislative search



Think Tanks and Research

- Academic searches at college and universities
- onthinktanks.org/jobs/
- state.gov/s/p/tt/ - list of think tanks and research orgs utilized by government agencies
- policyjobs.net (sometimes international)
- They really use their own websites the most



Salary Negotiation

- Networking is key- what has happened or worked in the past?
- Consider audience- do they have wiggle room? Non-profit vs think tank, etc.
- Weigh your priorities and needs
- Budget first
- Do your research
- Location, location, location
- Create a strategy



The conversation- strategy for prep

- Combine and analyze **research**- how does this compare to the offer you received? What could be the reason for that?
- Explain **value**- what are you providing that other candidates could not?
- Explain **needs**- what difficulties will the current offer create? How could that impact work?
- Counteroffer with a **range**- “This is the range where I would be more comfortable.” Use data to inform this (Glassdoor, datausa.io)
- Prep your **redlines**- are you ready to decline an offer? What will work be like after this conversation? How essential is your counteroffer range?



Questions?



Working with the Career Center

- Phone: (302) 831-2392
- Online: www.udel.edu/CSC
- E-mail: udcareers@udel.edu
- Virtual Services
 - Daily drop-ins: M-F, 2pm to 4pm
 - Make an appointment with me on Handshake!
- Follow us on Twitter@Udcareers
- Join our Facebook group
 - www.facebook.com/udcareers
- Connect with professionals on LinkedIn
 - www.linkedin.com (Join the UD Blue Hen Career Network!)

Make sure to **read** the email for our Career Community (from me!) every Sunday!

