

# PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

What can I do with this major?

## AREAS

## EMPLOYERS

## STRATEGIES

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

City Management  
Financial Administration  
Budget Analysis  
General Services  
Community Affairs  
Social Services  
Urban Planning

Counties  
Municipalities  
Townships  
School districts  
Special districts

Learn local government job application procedures.  
Develop a network of contacts.  
Check statistics on growing communities for best opportunities.  
Gain relevant experience through an internship or volunteer position.  
Conduct applicable research that could be useful to your community.  
Get involved in community organizations and events.

### STATE GOVERNMENT

Administrative Services  
Legislature  
Judicial

Various departments of state government  
Legislative agencies including:  
Legislative Reference Services, Bill Drafting Services, Legislative Councils and Budgeting and Auditing staffs  
State Supreme Courts  
Personal staff of legislators  
Intermediate Appellate Courts  
Trial Courts of General Jurisdiction  
Trial Courts of Limited Jurisdiction

Research the organization of your state government.  
Develop specialized skills and interests for particular populations or issues, e.g. disability, education, homelessness, etc.  
Develop strong research and writing skills.  
Make political contacts through local legislators of both houses.  
Volunteer to work on political campaigns.  
Make contacts through referrals and informational interviews.  
Plan to earn a law degree to qualify for some opportunities.

### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Professional  
Administrative  
Technical

Various federal departments and agencies

Obtain an internship in a federal agency or department. Often this is the best way to get a foot in the door for a permanent position.  
Learn federal job application procedures and how to write a federal resume including your KSAs (knowledge, skills and abilities).  
Research various agencies and departments to discover which ones may be the best fit for your major and experience.  
Conduct informational interviews with government employees.

### Legislative Branch

Legislative Agencies

Various agencies including:  
General Accounting Office, Library of Congress, Government Printing Office, Congressional Budget Office

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
<b><u>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONTINUED</u></b>		
Legislature Administrative Staff Washington-based Home District Committee	Offices of senators and representatives	Understand structure of Congress and various opportunities available. Develop excellent research, writing, communication and organizational skills. Build a strong personal network. Explore districts other than your own.
<u>Judicial Branch</u>	Supreme Court U.S. Courts Supporting organizations	Some positions require law degree and bar certification. Understand the structure and functions of the federal judiciary system.
<u>Executive Branch</u> Office of the President Management and Budget Administration Council of Economic Advisors U.S. Trade Representatives Executive Departments	Office of the President Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor	
<u>Independent Agencies</u>	Independent Agencies include the following (not an exhaustive list): Coordination and Public Safety Emergency Response Policy Environmental Protection Agency Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Federal Emergency Management Agency General Services Administration National Archives & Records Administration Nuclear Regulatory Commission Office of Personnel Management Securities & Exchange Commission Tennessee Valley Authority U.S. Information Agency U.S. International Development Cooperation	There are a large number of niche areas and specialized agencies within the federal government. Do extensive research in order to find the area that best matches your skills and interests. Take courses or minor in applicable interest area(s). Research applicable public service exams and hiring procedures. Complete an internship in a related area. Maintain a high grade point average to qualify for government employment. Consider earning a graduate degree to prepare for the largest number of opportunities.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
<b><u>NONPROFIT</u></b> Administration Development Program Management Policy Analysis Research Grant Writing	Local and national nonprofit agencies and foundations Charitable organizations Trade or professional organizations Research organizations and think tanks Educational institutions	Participate in internships and/or volunteer activities for related experience. Develop strong communication and leadership skills. Become a member of relevant organizations and seek leadership roles. Develop strong research skills and learn how to write grants. Research the organizations' values to find a good fit with yours. It is critical that you are knowledgeable about and care about the work you're going to do.
<b><u>POLITICAL SUPPORT/LOBBYING</u></b>	Political Action Committees (PAC) Various industrial, educational, and public interest groups Political parties Lobbying organizations Large business firms	Get involved with a political party/group and develop a personal network. The ability to develop networks, coalitions and alliances with other associations is highly valued. Gain experience with government agencies or departments to help build relationships. Develop excellent public relations, interpersonal and communication skills. Learn how to persuade and negotiate. Participate on a debate team. Volunteer in organizations with similar interests and goals.
<b><u>BUSINESS</u></b> Human Resources Budget Analysis Management Sales/Marketing Management Consulting Occupational Safety Coordination Public Relations	Business firms Contracting and consulting firms Association management firms	Develop strong analytical, communication and technical skills. Obtain related work experience in a business setting through internships and summer or part-time jobs. Earn a minor in business. Hone computer skills and learn software packages such as databases, spreadsheets and presentations. Get involved in student organizations and seek leadership roles.

## AREAS

## EMPLOYERS

## STRATEGIES

### HEALTH/MEDICAL

Healthcare Administration  
Policy Development and Analysis  
Health Delivery Systems

Hospitals  
Healthcare facilities  
Health Maintenance Organizations  
Insurance companies  
Nursing homes  
Social service and community agencies

Most positions will require graduate degree in public health or hospital administration.  
Complete an internship in a healthcare environment to gain knowledge of the industry.  
Learn to work well with different types of people.

### INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Governance  
Policy Making and Analysis  
Public Sector Reform  
Poverty-Reduction Strategy  
Ethics and Anti-corruption  
Human Rights  
Public Law  
Organization and Management Development  
Resource Development  
Public-Private Partnerships  
Media/Communication Policy and Practice  
Education

Intergovernmental agencies, e.g., World Bank, United Nations  
National governments  
Non-profit agencies  
Policy and research organizations  
Private businesses  
Contracting and consulting firms

Obtain internships or volunteer in order to gain valuable experience in areas of interest.  
Participate in overseas mission trips or spend a Semester at Sea.  
Become familiar with national or international application procedures.  
Research the history and culture of countries or geographic areas of interest.  
Take steps towards obtaining work or study visas for various locations.  
Become proficient in at least one foreign language.  
Spend time studying or working abroad, especially working to make and maintain contacts in foreign countries.  
Earn a double major or minor in order to gain additional skills or knowledge needed for various positions (i.e., Africana studies, Asian studies, business, psychology, sociology, etc.).  
For higher level positions an advanced degree is necessary. Research different programs and the concentrations they offer in order to find the best fit for your interests.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- An undergraduate degree in Public Administration, with the appropriate experience, is sufficient for entry-level position in government and business.
- A graduate degree in public administration or public health administration helps prepare students for management and upper-level administrative positions. Carefully research programs in order to choose specializations or concentrations of interest.
- Consider law school for careers in upper level politics, administration or management. Explore joint J.D. and M.P.A. programs to see if they meet your career goals.
- Obtain broad liberal arts background including written and verbal skills, communication and foreign language skills.
- Part-time, summer, internship, and volunteer experiences are extremely helpful in government affairs, organizations or public service areas.
- Develop strong leadership skills; run for office in clubs and organizations in school or community. Volunteer to organize or lead an event or project.
- Get involved in Student Government.
- Demonstrate interest/involvement in community affairs/events.
- Join related social and/or professional organizations.
- Employment opportunities in local government tend to follow population trends in terms of growth and decline in availability of positions. Be prepared to relocate to find the most opportunities.
- Develop a strong personal network through informal contacts.
- Political connections are helpful for appointed positions. Most agencies respond to professional connections.
- Expect keen competition for federal positions. Prepare yourself with a strong academic background and good experience. Many government jobs have strict guidelines and want to carefully match candidates' KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities) to the job description. Research this first and seek the classes and experiences that will best prepare you.
- Develop patience, persistence and drive in obtaining government positions.
- Explore application to Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) and the Outstanding Scholar Program for federal positions.
- Learn applicable application process for area of interest.
- Research websites and books that address various government job opportunities, pay structure and hiring processes.
- Consider military experience and training as an entryway into government jobs and public service.
- Plan on following a flexible career path to higher positions. Many people begin on the clerical or entry level in order to gain experience and network.