



## CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY POLITICAL SCIENCE 2015 ALUMNI SURVEY

The Political Science Alumni Survey was administered to alums in two stages. Alums that graduated from 2007 through 2011 were surveyed in 2012. Alums who graduated from winter 2012 through spring 2015 were surveyed during August, 2015.

Note: some of the original 2012 survey questions are omitted from this report. These are questions asking alums about the feasibility of a new Master's degree in Political Science. Those responses are not applicable for the program review.

The survey was administered online to 461 alums. The overall response rate was 9%.

	2007 - 2011	2012 - 2015	Combined
Surveys sent	167	294	461
Responses	26	15	41
Response rate	16%	5%	9%

The National Survey of Student Engagement has reported that "Many prominent survey researchers have also questioned the widely held assumption that low response rates are associated with biased results" (Groves, 2006; Massey & Tourangeau, 2013; Peytchev, 2013). They conclude that total responses as low as 25 may be unbiased in some situations. See: [http://nsse.indiana.edu/pdf/Resp\\_Rate\\_FAQ.pdf](http://nsse.indiana.edu/pdf/Resp_Rate_FAQ.pdf).

In my opinion the responses were positive to both written text questions and Likert scale questions. Note that all response leaves improved from the original survey to the recent survey on question #6 "How well did the Political Science department prepare you for each of these competencies?"

**1. What year did you graduate from CWU?**

Year	- n -	- % -	% Data Bars
2007	6	15%	
2008	3	7%	
2009	1	2%	
2010	4	10%	
2011	9	22%	
2012	5	12%	
2013	3	7%	
2014	4	10%	
2015	6	15%	
	41	100%	1

**2. We would like to find out more about what you are doing now. Where do you work or, if you are not working, which option below describes your status? Please check all that apply.**

	Data Bars			Data Bars		
	Pre 2012	- % -	0% - 100%	2012-15	- % -	0% - 100%
Civil Servant	2	6%		2	12%	
Journalist	0	0%				
Lawyer/Paralegal/legal Assista	2	6%				
Management / Business	8	26%		5	29%	
Military	0	0%		3	18%	
Nonprofit	2	6%		1	6%	
Graduate School	3	10%		2	12%	
Public/Social Policy	3	10%				
Seeking employment	2	6%		2	12%	
Other	9	29%		2	12%	
	31	100%		17	100%	

**3. If you are employed, please tell us your job title and the company you work for. If you are a graduate student, please tell us where you are enrolled and the degree you are pursuing.**

I work as the Political Coordinator for the House Republican Caucus, managing their PACs	pre 2012
Veterans Employment Specialist, Catholic Community Services of Western Washington. I also just applied to Seattle U for a Masters of Public Administration.	pre 2012
Central Washington Medical Group Medical office assistant	pre 2012
Washington State Department of Health. Legislative and Communications Coordinator. Received Masters in Public Administration from The Evergreen State College in 2009.	pre 2012

**3. If you are working, would you please tell us your job title and the company you work for? If you are a graduate student, would you please tell us where and what degree you are pursuing? - continued**

Valley Buick GMC Quick Lube Manager	pre 2012
Infantry platoon commander, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, United States Marine Corps	pre 2012
Department of Natural Resources- Public Disclosure/Policy Assistant	pre 2012
Self employed/business manager	pre 2012
International Contracts Administrator - The Boeing Company	pre 2012
Underwriter - Great American Insurance Company	pre 2012
General Manager at Panda Express.	pre 2012
Project Manager, Employee Research System at NISH	pre 2012
Data Secretary Federal Way Public Schools	pre 2012
Bookkeeper and Office Manager	pre 2012
Cashier-Toys R us	pre 2012
International Program Coordinator, University of Washington	pre 2012
Penn State Law/Master of International affairs	pre 2012
Revenue Agent Washington State Department of Revenue.	pre 2012
Political Director 6th Congressional District Republican Committee	pre 2012
Conductor for BNSF Railway	pre 2012
Company Commander / Aviation Officer (Pilot)	pre 2012
US ARMY, JUNIOR OFFICER, PLATOON LEADER AT FT. LEWIS, WA	pre 2012
State Farm Insurance. Fire operations underwriter. Chair of Legislative Action Network for the Pacific Northwest Zone.	pre 2012
Attorney, Social Security Administration	pre 2012
Paralegal Busha Law Offices	pre 2012
Development Assistant, Compass Housing Alliance	2012-15
I am a "Native English Teacher" for iTTTi Japan: Peppy Kid's Club	2012-15
Assistant Project Manager, Toll Brothers Inc.	2012-15
Customer Service Representative at the Internal Revenue Service	2012-15
General Manager of Fitness Club (name will be undisclosed)	2012-15
United States Air Force	2012-15
Evans School of Public Policy and Governance at University of Washington	2012-15
Armor Officer in the United States Army	2012-15
Working as a production manager for Denali Brewing Company	2012-15
I currently work for the U.S. Government doing research analysis and technical writing	2012-15
Membership Coordinator-Passport Unlimited Inc	2012-15
Masters of Arts in International Relations with a focus on Sustainable International Development at American University. Seeking employment in Environmental Nonprofit Advocacy, or Global Health	2012-15

**4. How important are each of the following competencies/skills to you professionally?**

	----- 2007 to 2012 -----			----- 2012 thru 2015 -----		
	- n -	Average	Data Bars	- n -	Average	Data Bars
			0 - 100%			0 - 100%
a. Thinking critically - check your and others' assumptions; consider multiple perspectives from various sources, etc.	26	4.5		15	4.5	
b. Written communications – purpose, organization, development, mechanics	26	4.3		15	4.3	
c. Oral communications – vocal delivery, gestures, eye contact, good listening	26	4.4		15	4.7	
d. Quantitative reasoning - apply quantitative tools and computer skills to solve problems; comprehend symbolic representations	26	4.0		15	4.0	
e. Information literacy - critically evaluate data sources as I gather relevant information	26	4.5		15	4.5	

**6. How well did the Political Science department prepare you for each of these competencies?**

	----- 2007 to 2012 -----			----- 2012 thru 2015 -----		
	- n -	Average	Data Bars	- n -	Average	Data Bars
			0 - 100%			0 - 100%
a. Thinking critically - check your and others' assumptions; consider multiple perspectives from various sources, etc.	26	4.1		14	4.2	
b. Written communications – purpose, organization, development, mechanics	26	4.0		14	4.2	
c. Oral communications – vocal delivery, gestures, eye contact, good listening	26	3.7		14	4.3	
d. Quantitative reasoning - apply quantitative tools and computer skills to solve problems; comprehend symbolic representations	26	3.5		14	3.7	
e. Information literacy - critically evaluate data sources as I gather relevant information	26	4.2		14	4.6	

**5. What were the best or most helpful attributes of the Political Science program at CWU?**

The Professors. always available to help and support us.	pre 2012
Development of critical thinking skills. Understanding the core principles of the constitution, branches of government and public policy. Not the basics but why we do what we do.	pre 2012

**5. What were the best or most helpful attributes of the Political Science program at CWU? - continued**

The amount of writing we had to do and the requirements for said writing. They forced you to think outside the box and to utilize many sources. Critical thinking was a must as the professors would accept nothing less. Overall, the adherence to those standards by the faculty was extremely important and necessary. While attending, my abilities were stretched and expanded due to way the faculty instructed and I am better for it.	pre 2012
The research and writing required by the Political Science department at CWU was the most helpful attribute of it.	pre 2012
I appreciated the variety of courses that were offered every year, especially the specialty courses such as Women in Politics.	pre 2012
Being able to use critical thinking, analyze situations, gather information and use it effectively. I developed the ability to effectively communicate both orally and in written form.	pre 2012
Speeches/presentations and writing papers	pre 2012
Critically reading, summarizing, condensing varied info and data into an easily understood idea or message.	pre 2012
Understanding how our government works, learning about history that has led to where we are today, and thinking about things objectively.	pre 2012
Small class sizes and interaction with other students and professors.	pre 2012
Flexible, variety of subjects.	pre 2012
Talking in front of groups, expressing ideas. I demand more debates! :) Why? Because I said so that's why!	pre 2012
...	pre 2012
The emphasis in analytical thinking.	pre 2012
Critical thinking and problem solving.	pre 2012
Voicing your opinion and debating others in an open environment	pre 2012
State and Local government classes.	pre 2012
The Political Science program at CWU creates a challenging environment that forces students to think more creatively about issues and dig deeper to find solutions.	2012-15
The Political Science program at CWU's most helpful attributes in my opinion are the faculty. I believe CWU's faculty arrangement encourages personalized learning and relationships with CWU's students, and offers a strong diversity in education.	2012-15
Supportive profs.	2012-15
Diversity in classes and programs	2012-15
The professors want to teach curriculum and connect it to the world around us today.	2012-15
Any class with Dr. Manweller and Dr. Flanagan that required you to put two and two together.	2012-15
Having access with professors to help with classes and other programs such as internships or study abroad.	2012-15
Development of written and verbal communication skills, skills in quantitative and qualitative analysis, and awareness of global political perspectives.	2012-15
The emphasis on Critical Thinking, Understanding Policy, and Information Evaluation.	2012-15
Critical thinking and analysis	2012-15

**5. What were the best or most helpful attributes of the Political Science program at CWU? - continued**

Being able to approach my professors (via office hours or by email) and they knew exactly who I was. Being in a small department, everyone knows everyone, professors and students alike, and issues could be resolved quickly, and help was always there.	2012-15
The small class sized turned most classes into seminars, and many of the professors took great advantage of this fact.	2012-15

**6. How well did the Political Science department prepare you for each of these competencies?**

Refer to page 4 for the summary of responses

**7. What aspects of the Political Science program at CWU need the most improvement?**

I didn't take away anything from POSC 101. I would like to see it more geared toward introducing students to the department, maybe introduce or tell the story of successful department alumni - a syllabus that would persuade students to major in Political Science and show them what options it can provide after a BA - MPA/JD programs etc. I also think that the department could and should get its students more involved in campus elections - offer extra credit for manning the ballot drops, designing campaigns, etc. More real world application and practice of useful skills - more emphasis on writing and oral presentation skills.	pre 2012
More public administration classes!	pre 2012
Broader spectrum of political affiliation. During my attendance, it was heavier on one side of the spectrum than the other. Hearing and learning from a broader spectrum would enhance the experience.	pre 2012
The verbal communication piece; few instructors in the department made a point of incorporating this into their classes.	pre 2012
I felt that a lot of the courses were designed for students pursuing a law degree and not those of us that were interested in a career in public service.	pre 2012
It needs to be more demanding. Internships need to be mandatory (networking is very important). Greater emphasis on excellence in writing and communication.	pre 2012
Not much. I thought the quality of the PS Dep ay CWU was very high.	pre 2012
There should be an introduction to quantitative analysis. This was not a requirement when I attended CWU.	pre 2012
Don't recall.	pre 2012

**7. What aspects of the Political Science program at CWU need the most improvement? - continued**

I believe that there should be more writing assignments and that instructors should work to identify key weaknesses in students writing. You could teach it in your 101 course! Either you become English teachers or make upper division English courses a pre-req for Poli Sci courses. OR make the major more competitive by making those English classes be taken before being accepted into the major. I have so many ideas! I think that different styles of writing should also taught such as: business memos, policy, grants, etc. I still need quite a bit of help with my writing, as you can see ;D But that isn't your fault! If anything, one fiery professor did try her best to whip me into shape! I do feel that a lot of the standards of our age have dropped by the wayside. Maybe it's time for the CWU departments to up their game?	pre 2012
teaching quality	pre 2012
Certain details in assignments	pre 2012
More diverse teaching staff. Only had 1 conservative teacher!	pre 2012
It would be helpful for the Political Science program to provide more job oriented networking opportunities. Get in contact with successful graduates and invite them back to share perspectives for plans after graduation.	2012-15
I believe oral communication and quantitative reasoning could benefit from more attention. I can only recall one class with Dr. Schaefer where students presented to the class, two classes (one with Dr. Schaefer and one with Dr. Otopalik) where students debated, and one class with Dr. Otopalik where students routinely met in a computer lab for class time.	2012-15
Technical writing wasn't a priority. I didn't feel that the skills taught in the department prepared me for the work force. I felt confident in my critical thinking skills, but less so in my ability to write professionally, or how to structure a political argument on paper.	2012-15
Senior assessment, should be cumulative project. Graduation from program should not be dependent on one test and one paper.	2012-15
Oral Communication	2012-15
Many professors tend to get off topic during lecture and we don't spend enough time talking about class content.	2012-15
None	2012-15
Oral Communication.	2012-15
Current domestic issues	2012-15
No improvements are needed	2012-15
Undergraduate Research, more prep for graduate school and careers.	2012-15

**8. Do you feel the Political Science education you've received prepared you reasonably well for your future, whether in a job or graduate study in political science or another area? Please explain.**

I don't think my Political Science education prepared me for a job - I work specifically in state-level politics and am surprised at how little state-level emphasis there is in the Political Science Department. I would like to see the department show its students what their options are after graduation, maybe an exit survey/interview with their advisor in the department. I would like to see the Political Science alumni better networked to help recent graduates and current students. I have made these kinds of offers to the department before, but have never been followed up with.	pre 2012
yes. I was given an internship opportunity at the State Legislature, which made me realize what I want to do with my career. The classes were fantastic. Despite being in Ellensburg, I enjoyed my time at CWU specifically because of my involvement in the Poli.Sci department.	pre 2012
Yes. Public policy and public administration are fields that you can apply any topic/lens to. I like public health so I work on health policy. Systems change is huge with the state and feds and I think the PA and public policy part of the department is the where the rubber meets the road and where I apply my understanding of political science in America.	pre 2012
Yes, I have learned to write effectively as well as to think critically. I have been given an excellent tool with which to analyze the world and tasks before me.	pre 2012
REASONABLY well, yes. VERY well, no. I believe that most of my success will come from the jobs I have held, not from my degree from Central Washington University. Such is the case as bachelor's degrees become increasingly common.	pre 2012
Yes, please see my above answer also. I did feel prepared when I graduated for my career field.	pre 2012
Yes, very much. The Political Science department provided me with the education and skills to perform well in my job and life.	pre 2012
Yes, I enjoyed my experience at CWU and it continues to be of good use.	pre 2012
Yes.....	pre 2012
yes	pre 2012
Yes, I have been able to use my ability to communicate effectively, research techniques and writing skills to many jobs.	pre 2012
Fairly, yes. More focus on field-work.	pre 2012
Yes. It taught me to always question what is being told to me about world perspectives. This greatly helps in my everyday work environment. Also, after obtaining my degree I feel that I really value hearing other people's perspectives on issues. I try not to take sides as much and choose instead to listen.	pre 2012
not really. Matt Manweller's classes were the only ones that have been helpful. Actually they have led to much success because he really prepared me.	pre 2012



**8. Do you feel the Political Science education you've received prepared you reasonably well for your future, whether in a job or graduate study in political science or another area? Please explain. – continued**

Yes. My job depends a lot on being able analyze public policy and tax law. The program enabled me to be proficient on these areas.	pre 2012
Yes, Political Science provided a solid backbone of education required for my future.	pre 2012
It gave me a good aspect of how governments function	pre 2012
Yes I think so. I do feel like I had a well rounded background and was able to find a job very easily.	pre 2012
Yes, after graduating I interned with Senator Maria Cantwell's senate campaign. My political science degree was a major part of me landing that internship. The skills that I learned from that internship combined with the analytical and communication skills I gained while studying political science, help me everyday in my current job. Through analyzing giving trends and strategically directing appropriate asks to the write constituents to communicating effectively the value of the work we do at Compass Housing Alliance to new/potential donors.	2012-15
I feel that in order to professionally excel, I need to continue eventually with a masters degree of some sort. However, I do feel that CWU Political Science did prepare me for graduate school.	2012-15
Yes	2012-15
In the position I am in, it has helped me be more approachable to people. But I do hope to get back into the realm of politics at the local community level	2012-15
Somewhat. I'm nervous about applying to an MPA or MPP program because I don't feel like I learned anything from Dr. Wirth.	2012-15
Yes, the political science department has prepared me well for the future with regards to having a job or going to graduate school. Especially having a government or public job it is important to have that educational background in how government functions.	2012-15
My goal is to enter the political field for employment, eventually. So everything I learned here has helped prepare me for what I may need to do for my career in this field.	2012-15
Yes, I feel that the political science department has done a great job as preparing me for working with other people, critical thinking, and comprehension.	2012-15
The political science education I received at CWU helped me tremendously in my current job and for potential future growth personally and professionally. In my current job, I conduct massive amounts of historical, political, and cultural research on a region, or state, put together projects and present them to large audiences. If it weren't for the political science education that I received at CWU, I would not be in the position I'm in today.	2012-15
I feel like the fact that I took the professors that I did prepared me very well. Many professors I took did not prepare me well. Fortunately I was able to focus on the ones that did.	2012-15

**9. These next few questions relate to CWU's Mission and General Education goals. How strongly do you agree that your education from CWU helped you...**

Likert responses range from 1. "Strongly disagree" to 5. "Strongly agree"

	----- 2007 to 2012 -----			----- 2012 thru 2015 -----		
	- n -	Average	Data Bars	- n -	Average	Data Bars
			0 - 100%			0 - 100%
a. become a responsible citizen	25	3.9		15	4.1	
b. become a responsible steward of the earth	25	3.4		15	4.5	
c. become a productive and enlightened (informed, good learner, insightful) individual	25	4.0		15	4.3	
d. value different perspectives	25	3.8		15	4.6	
e. appreciate the breadth and depth of scientific and human knowledge	25	4.0		15	4.3	
f. increase your sense of the interconnectedness of knowledge	25	4.0		14	4.5	
g. integrate knowledge from diverse fields to solve problems	25	4.0		15	4.4	
h. increase your awareness of the many ways that knowledge evolves	25	3.8		15	4.6	
i. ask incisive and insightful questions	24	3.9		15	3.7	

**10. Are you....?**

	pre 2012	- % -	2012 -15	- % -	All Alums	- % -
Male	15	58%	11	73%	26	63%
Female	11	42%	4	27%	15	37%
	26	100%	15	100%	41	100%

**11. What is your approximate annual (gross) personal (not household) income?**

	pre 2012	- % -	% Data Bars	2012-15	- % -	% Data Bars
Less than \$20,000	4	15%	█	4	27%	█
\$20,001 to \$40,000	10	38%	█	8	53%	█
\$40,001 to \$60,000	5	19%	█	2	13%	█
\$60,001 to \$80,000	3	12%	█	1	7%	█
\$80,001 to \$100,000	2	8%	█	0	0%	
\$100,001 to \$120,000	2	8%	█	0	0%	
	26	100%		15	100%	

Average income is estimated using the mid-points of the above pay ranges.

Estimated annual income of alums who graduated before 2012	\$ 46,923
Estimated annual income of alums who graduated after 2011	\$ 31,333
Estimated annual income of all alums	\$ 41,220

**12. What is your highest level of education?**

	pre 2012	2012 -15	Total	- % -
Bachelor's	23	15	38	93%
Master's	2	0	2	5%
Doctorate	1	0	1	2%
	26	15	41	100%

**13. Any other comments for the Political Science department at CWU?**

I felt most challenged by and did the most critical thinking in my political theory class with Professor Flannigan. I remember a lot of what I learned in her class and attribute it to her teaching skills and the level of accountability she exercises in her class. My biggest regret is that I did not take a class with her until my last quarter at Central. The best thing I did was the internship offered by the Washington State Legislature. I would like to see the department encourage and support students in applying to that and other internship programs related to government or politics.	pre 2012
Professors Yoon and Otopalik were the best two Professors I have encountered in all my education. I learned so much from them both! *The whole department was great, but those two made a lasting impression. Thank You!	pre 2012

**13. Any other comments for the Political Science department at CWU? - continued**

I didn't realize how much I had learned from the poli sci department until I applied what I learned during my PA graduate work at Evergreen. Rex's public administration class really clicked for me then. My background in public policy gave me a leg up at evergreen and the state.	pre 2012
No.	pre 2012
I would be very interested in a graduate program in Public Administration at Central.	pre 2012
If the department decided to offer an Executive and/or regular Masters degree program I would apply immediately! I know the quality of education would be superior and the location is so much easier, rather than having to relocate.	pre 2012
Courses taught by Barb Flanagan and Otopalik have been by far the most memorable and I have retained much of the information from them. I Think that International Relations/Politics should become its own major or certificate.	pre 2012
If CWU is serious about an Exec MPA or MPA, it's imperative that it's accredited by NASPAA. I would not seriously consider paying for the degree without the added value of the designation.	pre 2012
Professor Schaefer rules!!!! Manweller is very knowledgeable, but lacks heart.	pre 2012
I really enjoyed my time in the Political Science Department. I miss the instructors and the awesome craziness of some of the classes I took. I wouldn't trade my heart-wrenching, agonizing, mind-bending, sleepless night, intellectually stimulating, and ABOVE ALL comical experience for anything in the world. I truly grew as an individual and I look forward to my future. :)	pre 2012
Manweller and Flanagan are the only two worthwhile professors.	pre 2012
Thank you!	2012-15
Thoroughly enjoyed my time in the department. Wish I learned more practical technical skills.	2012-15
N/a	2012-15
The department is phenomenal as it has a wide variety of professors, each with their own unique fields of study.	2012-15
The department is truly big enough to do things like internships, and small enough to know the professors.	2012-15
If Otopalik is still there, make him full time. He deserves it.	2012-15
Dr. Manweller and Cameron Otopalik were the two best professors in the department.	2012-15
Please maintain the high standards of learning needed for prospective students to succeed. The skills learned in the CWU Political Science Department are skills that private sector employers, and local, state and federal government agencies are looking for in employers. Technical skills are very important, writing, communicating; prospective students need these in the workplace, and the CWU Political Science Department does an outstanding job at this. Keep up the great work!	2012-15
Add stats class to regmine...quantatative analysis is imperative	2012-15