**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS**

**INITIAL MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

The first author, Ben, an MA student at the time, was considering pursuing a PhD in

Political Science, and met with the second author, Pete, a Professor, and asked “What are my realistic chances of obtaining a tenure track position at a research university if I don’t get accepted to a top program?” Pete responded, “Sounds like a good research question, why don’t we collect some data and go from there?” And so, the study began. Ben used a first cut of the data for his MA capstone project but as we progressed, our motivations and project developed further, and we saw a need for this information to be made available to future potential graduate students and departments.

**ACADEMIC BACKGROUND OF THE AUTHORS**

Ben earned his Bachelor’s in Business Administration with minors in Portuguese and Entrepreneurship from Utah State University in 2017. Spurred on by an interest in global politics, by the time this study was near completed, he earned a Master’s from the School of International Affairs with a concentration in Political and Organizational Psychology from the Pennsylvania State University in 2023.

Pete joined the US Army as a teenager and developed his reading and writing abilities there. His First Sergeant made him do 50 push-ups for every word mispronounced or not correctly defined in his daily reading of a physical copy of the NYT (sometimes it was the WSJ, the Financial Times, or whatever English periodical was available depending on what part of the world we were in). Pete maxed his physical fitness (PT) test while receiving an education. His first college class was in the Army in 1990 through a correspondence course where a booklet was mailed to him in hard copy, and he completed it when not in the field, and mailed it back for grading. He eventually attended classes at local community colleges on or near whatever base he was at, both stateside and overseas and sometimes was able to finish them, though youth and national defense work were the priorities. In and out of uniform, working full-time, he sporadically attended state schools and eventually earned a BSBA at West Virginia University. Later, he went to graduate school at the University of Nebraska for Political Science, funded by the department, and trained at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research for Genetic Epidemiology, funded by one of his mentor’s, Nick Martin. He continued his training in Psychiatry (non MD), Clinical Psychology, and Behavioral Genetics at the Virginia Institute of Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics at Virginia Commonwealth University with his advisor, Lindon Eaves, funded by an NIMH training grant and finished in 2009.

**PRIOR WORK**

We could find only one prior attempt of something similar to this study, an unpublished essay dated over a decade ago (Oprisko, Dobbs and DiGrazia 2013). It appeared more focused on the prestige part using US News rankings and less on graduate student success. The essay did not include some Political Science doctoral programs, while also including many non-Political Science departments and non-PhD granting departments. The paper available on SSRN is listed as “in process with PS” as of 2013, with a single author, Robert Oprisko. However, a search of the journal PS finds no such paper was ever published. The downloaded pdf from SSRN, dated in 2013, provides two additional authors, Kirstie L. Dobbs and Joseph DiGrazia. We contacted all of the authors using publicly available university email addresses to gain clarification on the status of the paper and their data in late 2022 and again in the summer of 2023. We have not received any reply from any author and it is unclear if any remain in the academy.

**ETHICS**

All procedures contributing to this work comply with the ethical standards of the relevant national and institutional committees on human participants (STUDY00025221).

**DATA COLLECTION**

*Departments and Faculty*

For this project, we collected CVs of every TT faculty member in every identified PhD granting political science, government or politics department (n=122).

Identifying all departments with a Political Science PhD program turned out to be a bit more complicated than we originally thought. There are a number of places that have some form of a list - external rankings (US News etc.), data collections like the AARC, and the NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates, among others. All had differences in how they made determinations of a PhD program and what constituted Political Science. Some included policy schools, international studies and affairs programs, general social sciences, women’s studies, ethnic studies and so on. Others missed some Political Science PhD departments entirely. In addition, several departments recently halted their PhD programs. We took those lists and other sources as a starting point, and then looked up each department on their webpages to come up with our list of 122, US-based, PhD programs in Political Science or close synonym. Despite numerous efforts to identify all PhD granting Political Science departments, it remains possible we missed one, or possible we included one that just closed.

We assessed each member of the universities’ Political Science faculty by documenting several key variables from their curriculum vitae (CV). We relied primarily on departmental and faculty websites to gather information for this project. Most scholars provide access to their CV or list their educational background on their faculty website bios. Secondary sources of information used to fill in the blanks included scholars’ public personal websites, public LinkedIn profiles, dissertations and Wikipedia pages.

*Working Around A Data Refusal*

At the start of our data collection, we also submitted a detailed data request to the Academic Analytics Research Center (AARC) for their files; several scholars in other disciplines have used their data recently (Wapman et al. 2022). The AARC holds data on academic faculty and states that they are “committed to creating reproducible and open scholarship covering all aspects of the scholarly research enterprise…and to empower scholars…to improve academic research policy, management, and equity through independent, data-based inquiry.” We had a different experience. In Feb of 2023 they rejected our request for data with a form letter and without an explanation or any offer or process to re-apply. We found their refusal unfortunate given our study justification was to provide public goods through a peer reviewed venue, and similar studies have been done in other disciplines and that we offered to share all the data we collected. Their data would have been a second form of validation. They never responded to our offer to share the data we collected, without reciprocity, of >3,000 records of faculty.

*Quality Control*

The first author and two research assistants collected and entered the data, and the second author audited 33% of each of the three coders’ entries for quality control, error checking and consistency.

As part of our audit and quality control we sought to make positive contact with 12.5% of the faculty (final count was 390) to verify their CV information– primarily to ensure that CV information was not out of date, or for missing information. It is not uncommon for people to not update their CV regularly. Recall, however, we were looking primarily for where one graduated, what degree, current rank, and when promoted. We were not looking at publications or other data on CVs that change frequently. And typically, promotion or location changes are exactly what trigger scholars to update their CVs. Nevertheless, we wanted to verify our assumptions were correct. Of these 390 scholars, we only found 5 webpages or CV’s where rank or other information was ambiguous or incorrect giving us confidence that our larger sample would also have a low error rate (~1%). This QC process also helped us reduce our missingness. We made only one initiating contact per scholar but responded to subsequent queries from each scholar. We focused only on what they made or chose to make public. We used the following language (there were some differences or options depending on who we contacted).

My name is (Name Redacted), along with (Name Redacted) we are studying whether prestige among PhD programs affects academics' ability to earn tenure-track positions at research universities. I'm collecting basic metrics limited to publicly available items that are common on department web pages such as faculty rank, when hired and where, where professors earned their PhDs/Bachelor's, and so forth. This information is posted online either in the form of a public CV or as part of the university profile for the majority in the discipline but for a few, I've been emailing university addresses, when email addresses are made public, to verify existing information or follow up for missing information.

[then one of the following or similar] Do you have a public version of your CV available? Can I have the most recent copy of your public CV; I am having difficulty finding some information on your CV; I could not access the copy of your CV on your faculty webpage. Do you have a public CV you would be willing to send?

Kind regards

A very early version of our QC email went out to handful of persons

I am conducting research with Dr. (redacted) studying whether prestige among PhD programs affects academics' ability to earn tenure-track positions at top-ranked universities. The variables we are focusing on are tenure-track appointments, where professors earned their PhDs/Bachelor's, years hired at current institution, and gender among others. I could not access the copy of your CV on your faculty webpage. Do you have a public one you would be willing to send?

This first email was amended, and the majority received the updated version noted further above.

One faculty member who responded to the early version of the email thought the purpose of the study was unclear, leading us to revise our QC email to a longer one. All others responded positively to both the updated and original email. Many were eager to see the results and were remarkably supportive of the project.

Overall, our QC process did find some errors, though these were few and far between. Some were spelling errors, others a typo in the year they graduated, while others used descriptions of their PhD that were areas of specialty (e.g., Terrorism) without the actual name of the department degree (Political Science). The data file contains the corrected or complete information. For all data points we could not verify, we left as missing.

**Target Departments**

The following universities comprise the 122 Political Science PhD granting departments where we collected all TT faculty CVs from- these are found in the *InstitutionName* variable:

American University

Arizona State University Tempe

Baylor University

Boston College

Boston University

Brandeis University

Brown University

California Institute of Technology

Case Western Reserve University

Catholic University of America

City University of New York

Claremont Graduate University

Clark Atlanta University

Colorado State University Fort Collins

Columbia University

Cornell University

Duke University

Emory University

Florida International University Miami

Florida State University Tallahassee

George Mason University Fairfax

George Washington University

Georgetown University

Georgia State University Atlanta

Harvard University

Hillsdale College

Howard University

Idaho State University Pocatello

Indiana University Bloomington

Johns Hopkins University

Kent State University

Louisiana State University Baton Rouge

Loyola University Chicago

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Michigan State University East Lansing

New School for Social Research

New York University

Northeastern University

Northern Arizona University Flagstaff

Northern Illinois University DeKalb

Northwestern University

Ohio State University Columbus

Pennsylvania State University

Princeton University

Purdue University West Lafayette

Rice University

Rutgers University New Brunswick

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Stanford University

State University of New York Albany

State University of New York Binghamton

State University of New York Stony Brook

Syracuse University

Temple University

Texas A&M University College Station

Texas Tech University Lubbock

Tulane University

University at Buffalo State University of New York

University of Alabama Tuscaloosa

University of Arizona Tucson

University of California Berkeley

University of California Davis

University of California Irvine

University of California Los Angeles

University of California Merced

University of California Riverside

University of California San Diego

University of California Santa Barbara

University of California Santa Cruz

University of Chicago

University of Cincinnati

University of Colorado Boulder

University of Connecticut Storrs

University of Dallas

University of Delaware Newark

University of Florida Gainesville

University of Georgia Athens

University of Hawaii Manoa

University of Houston

University of Idaho

University of Illinois Chicago

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

University of Iowa

University of Kansas Lawrence

University of Kentucky Lexington

University of Maryland College Park

University of Massachusetts Amherst

University of Michigan Ann Arbor

University of Minnesota Twin Cities

University of Mississippi Oxford

University of Missouri Columbia

University of Missouri St Louis

University of Nebraska Lincoln

University of Nevada Las Vegas

University of Nevada Reno

University of New Mexico Albuquerque

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

University of North Texas Denton

University of Notre Dame

University of Oklahoma Norman

University of Oregon Eugene

University of Pennsylvania

University of Pittsburgh

University of Rochester

University of South Carolina Columbia

University of Southern California

University of Tennessee Knoxville

University of Texas Austin

University of Texas Dallas

University of Utah

University of Virginia

University of Washington Seattle

University of Wisconsin Madison

University of Wisconsin Milwaukee

Vanderbilt University

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Washington State University Pullman

Washington University in St Louis

Wayne State University Detroit

West Virginia University Morgantown

Western Michigan University Kalamazoo

Yale University

Which had one of the following departments (or very close synonym):

Government

Government and …

Political Science

Political Science and …

Politics

Politics and …

…and Government

…and Political Science

… and Politics

There were some important inclusion criteria to consider and caveats

1. We did not include tangential solo departments such as international studies/relations, public policy, or public administration. Those departments are 1) from a different discipline 2) tend to have a majority of faculty from many disciplines 3) are more often structured as professional degree programs and 4) the number of graduates from these fields in a TT position in a Political Science PhD department were very few (Table 1). The handful of graduates from non-Political Science programs that are currently professors in one of our 122 Political Science PhD programs will be reflected in the first 2 tables (all analyses with an N of 3,059). For example, we did not collect faculty CVs from Tufts and the University of Miami because they do not have a graduate program in Political Science. However, six graduates from Tufts and 3 from Miami (PhD’s International Affairs/Studies respectively) have been hired into some of our 122 PhD granting Political Science departments. Because we include all 3,059 faculty members from all 122 granting Political Science departments, our full data will include some Political Science professors who received their degrees in another discipline. These are displayed for general sample-wide descriptives in Tables 1-2. However, as we move forward in the paper, we restrict the analyses to only those with a Political Science PhD from one of the 122 US PhD granting departments as that is our point of comparison.
2. Some PhD programs have closed or changed their degree titles. For example, the University of Miami Ohio, Fordham University, University of New Orleans and University of South Dakota – all have closed their PhD Programs as far as we can see. None currently advertises a PhD program in Political Science, and we verified 7 faculty with a Political Science PhD from these institutions, at least according to their published dissertations, are in a TT position at one of the current 122 PhD-granting institutions. Therefore, while these 4 Political Science departments are not included as one of the 122 target institutions where faculty CV’s were collected, since they no longer have or advertise a PhD program, their graduates are represented as faculty in the discipline’s PhD-granting institutions, and thus those graduates are included in the analyses when possible. The University of New Orleans and University of South Dakota only recently closed their PhD programs.
3. Some PhD programs appeared on the border of Political Science, and we made the choice of inclusion based on several factors. For example, Virginia Tech has a PhD in the College of Liberal Arts titled a PhD in Planning, Governance, and Globalization, and appears to go through both Political Science and Public and International Affairs faculty, so it was included. Whereas, the University of South Florida has a “Politics and International Affairs PhD” – but they do not have a Political Science department, rather the program is housed in the School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies. They also did not have a single placed PhD graduate hired into any of our 122 PhD granting institutions, so we did not include USF as one of the target institutions in the study. Arguments could be made to alter any of these and other choices and therefore we disclose them in this SI for interested parties to add or change our logic to suit their interest.
4. We developed a partial list of departments that have MA programs, discontinued PhD programs, or PhD programs in other fields but do not currently have a PhD program in Political Science. We place them here for interested parties.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **University** | **Degrees Offered** | **Placements in one of our 122 PhD Granting Departments** |
| Auburn University | PhD Public Administration and Policy | 0 |
| Auburn Montgomery | UG only | 0 |
| Bowling Green State University | UG only | 0 |
| Bryn Mawr College | UG only | 0 |
| Carnegie Mellon University  | MA only, PhD in Public Policy, Econ, Statistics | 5 |
| Clemson University | PhD Policy Studies | 0 |
| Columbia Teachers College | PhD Education and Politics | 0 |
| Dartmouth College | UG only | 0 |
| DePaul University | UG only | 0 |
| Drew University | UG only | 0 |
| Florida Atlantic University | PhD Public Administration | 1 |
| Fordham University  | PhD philosophy /appears PS program closed | 2 |
| Georgia Institute of Technology | PhD Internat. Affairs, Science, Tech and Policy | 1 |
| Indiana Uni-Purdue Uni Indianapolis | UG only | 0 |
| Iowa State University | UG only | 0 |
| Kansas State University | PhD International Relations and Security Studies | 0 |
| Marquette University | UG only | 0 |
| Miami University, Oxford | MA - PhD program closed | 2 |
| Mississippi State | PhD in Policy and Administration | 1 |
| North Carolina State University | PhD Public Administration | 2 |
| North Dakota State University, Fargo | MPA | 0 |
| Oklahoma State University | MA only | 0 |
| Old Dominion University | PhD Public Administration and Policy | 2 |
| Oregon State University | PhD Public Policy | 0 |
| Pardee RAND Graduate School | PhD in Policy Analysis | 2 |
| Providence College | UG only | 0 |
| Portland State University  | MA | 0 |
| Saint Louis University | Ph.D. in Public and Social Policy | 1 |
| Seton Hall University | UG only | 0 |
| Southern University A&M | MA | 0 |
| St. John's University | MA only | 0 |
| Texas Christian University | UG only | 0 |
| Tufts University  | PhD, School of International Affairs | 6 |
| Tuskegee University | UG only |   |
| University of Arkansas | PhD Public Policy / MA Politics | 2 |
| University of Baltimore | PhD Public Administration | 0 |
| University of Denver | PhD International Studies | 4 |
| University of Louisville | MA only | 0 |
| University of Maryland Balt. County | PhD Public Policy | 0 |
| University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth | UG only | 0 |
| University of Memphis | MA only | 0 |
| University of Miami | PhD International Studies | 3 |
| University of Nebraska, Omaha | MA/MS only | 0 |
| University of New Orleans | Closed PhD Program, Last Grad hired 2019 | 2 |
| University of South Dakota | Closed PhD Program, Last Grad hired 2021 | 1 |
| University of South Florida | PhD, Interdisc. Global Studies, Pol & Int. Affairs | 0 |
| Villanova University | MA only | 0 |
| Virginia Commonwealth University | UG only | 0 |
| Wake Forest University | UG only | 0 |

*Degree Earned* (*PHDEarnedIn*) In a study of this kind many coding choices must be made. Most choices are obvious, such as Government being put in the same category as Political Science. But take “Political Economics” for example; one could choose to place it under either Business and Economics or under Political Science. We looked at the college where the department was housed and, in the case of Political Economics, it was the Graduate School of Business, so we chose Business. Using this and similar logic we coded degree earned using the following:

All Other Disciplines =0

Anthropology

Atmospheric Science

City and Regional Planning

Communication

Communication Arts and Sciences

Computer Science

Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Development studies

Economic Geography

Environmental Studies

Forestry and Environmental Studies

Geography

Higher Education

Human Geography

Public Health

Regional Science

Religious Studies

Resource Management and Environmental Studies

Rhetoric

School of Education

Science and Technology Studies

Social Anthropology

English

Social Ethics

Statistics

Sustainability

Theoretical Physics

Political Science=1 (anything with Political, Political Science, Politics or Government in it)

African American Studies and Political Science

Political Science/International Relations

Public Policy and Political Science

African American Studies & Political Science

American Government and Political Behavior

American Politics

American Politics and Public Law

American Politics and Public Policy

Comparative Government

Department of Government

Economics & Political Science

Economics and Political Science

European Political Economy

Foreign Affairs

Government

Government and Foreign Affairs

Government and International Studies

Government and Politics

Government and Public Policy

Government and Social Policy

History and Political Science

International Political Economy

International Politics

International Politics and Comparative Politics

International Politics & Comparative Politics

International Politics, Economics, Organization

International Politics Economics Organization

International relations and comparative politics

International Relations/Government

Political and Social Science

Political Economy and Government

Political Science

Political Science & Government

Political Science and African American Studies

Political Science and Agricultural and Applied Economics

Political Science and Communication

Political Science and communications

Political Science and Economics

Political Science and Government

Political Science and International Affairs

Political Science and International and public affairs

Political Science and International Relations

Political Science and Organizational Behavior

Political Science and Public Administration

Political Science and Public and Environmental Affairs

Political Science and Public Policy

Political Science and Scientific Computing

Political Science and Security Studies

Political Science and Statistics and Data Science

Political Science/International Relations and Pacific Studies

Political Studies

Political Theory

Political Theory and American Politics

Political Theory and Constitutional Law

Politics

Politics (International Relations)

Politics and French Studies

Politics and Government

Politics and International Relations

Politics and international studies

Politics and International Studies

Politics and Political Philosophy

Politics and Public Policy

Politics and Social Policy

Politics, economics, and science

Public law and government

Security Studies

Social and Political Thought

Sociology, Philosophy, and Political Science

Political Science and International and public

Political Science and Public and Environmental

International Politics and Comparative Politics

International relations and comparative politics

International Politics, Economics, Organization

Political Science/International Relations and

Political Science and Agricultural and Applied

Political Science and Statistics and Data Science

African American Studies and Political Science

Social Science

Social Sciences

Humanities and Social Studies

Integrated Social Sciences

Committee on Social Thought

World Politics

Business =2

 Business

Business Administration

Graduate School of Business

Economics

Economics and Administrative Studies

Economics and Political Economy

Economics of Development

Environmental and Natural Resource Economics

Marketing

Political Economics

Political Economics, Graduate School of Business

Political Economics Graduate School of Business

Political Economy

Agricultural and Resource Economics

Political Economics, Graduate School of Business

Political Economics Graduate School of Business

Agricultural and Resource Economics

Sociology=3

Criminal Justice

Criminology and Criminal Justice

Criminology, Law and Society

Criminology Law and Society

Sociology

Sociology and Demography

Sociology and Public Policy

Sociology of Art

Psychology=4

Educational Psychology

Organizational Behavior

Psychology

Social Psychology

Social Psychology and Neuroscience

 Public Policy/Admin=5

Environmental and Natural Resources Policy

Environmental Science and Policy Division

Environmental Science, Policy, and Management

Environmental Science Policy and Management

Health Services, Organization and Policy

Health Services Organization and Policy

Policy Analysis

Political Economy and Public Policy \*POIR

Public Administration

Public Administration and Management

Public Administration and Policy

Public Administration and Public Policy

Public Administration and Urban Policy

Public administration, public policy, and urban studies

Public administration public policy and urban

Public Administration/Public Affairs

Public Affairs

Public Affairs and Mathematics and Statistics

Public and International Affairs

Public Management

Public Policy

Public Policy Analysis

Public Policy and Administration

Public Policy and Public Administration

Public Policy and Public Management

Public Policy Management

Statistics and Public Policy

Transportation Technology and Policy

Urban Studies and Public Affairs

Public administration, public policy, and urb

Public administration public policy and urb

Public Policy and Management

Education Policy

Law=6

Jurisprudence and Social Policy

Law and Public Policy

Law and Socio-legal studies

Law JD

Law, JD)

Philosophy=7

Philosophy

Philosophy of Education

Political Philosophy

International Studies/Affairs=8

International Affairs

International and Public Affairs

International Relations

International Studies

School of Public and International Affairs

School of Public & International Affairs

Area or Ethnic Studies=9

African American and African Studies

American Studies and Ethnicity

American Civilization

Near and Middle East Studies

Near Eastern Studies

History=10

Comparative Black History

European History

European intellectual history

History

History of Consciousness

History of Ideas

Two measures were created *DegreeProgramShort* and *DegreeProgramShortwMissing*. The DegreeProgramShortwMissing codes the 60 missing degrees as Political Science to ensure that we erred on side of positively counting graduates from those institutions for placement. We used this second measure in all analyses after Table 2.

*DegreeProgramShort*

1 'Political Science/Government'

2 'Economics/Business'

3 'Sociology'

4 'Psychology'

5 'Public Policy/Affairs'

6 'Law'

7 'Philosophy'

8 'Integrated Social Science'

9 'Area or Ethnicity Studies'

10 'History'

0 'other'

After the initial data descriptions, we restricted our analyses to focus on only scholars in those departments above who earned their PhDs in one of the 74 political science or synonym fields as noted above.

**OTHER VARIABLES AND CODING CHOICES**

*Impact factor*

We include several measures for the individual productivity/merit of each scholar, to include the number of times they have been cited, along with their h-index (*Citations\_num* and *HIndex\_num*). We used Google Scholar to gather this information. If someone had a Google Scholar profile during the time of data collection, we accessed it. We accessed all 2448/3059 Google Scholar profiles within a 24 hour window June 2023 as these numbers change daily. Missing information means we could not find a Google Scholar profile for those individuals. Finding one’s profile was a little trickier than expected. Many people use nicknames, others use grammatical accents, some have different last names than their faculty profile, and so forth. And even when there are no spelling differences, some profiles don’t show up in the Google Scholar search page but show up in a general Google search page.

*sex\_num*

*Sex*, 0= Female, 1= Male. This measure is accurate to the best of our ability based on the combination of name, department metrics, image and self-identification. We follow disciplinary norms of male/female but make no claim about any individual’s gender identification or take any position on how best to report sex and gender.

*Rank\_Num* is faculty members current academic rank 1.00 = Assistant Professor, 2.00= Associate Professor, 3.00 = Professor.

*PHDEarnedfrom, PHDEarnedIn* are the institutions and PhD degree majors each of the TT faculty graduated from. We assumed that scholars referred to the main campus of public universities unless indicated otherwise. We doubled checked these when possible as part of quality control using their dissertations. If the name of a university changed after someone received their PhD degree (i.e., Northeastern Missouri State changed to Truman State), we listed the most current university name. In addition, in the data file we listed the full names of universities instead of shortened versions (i.e., "State University of New York, Binghampton instead of Binghampton University"), but used shortened names for tables and figures for formatting reasons. We listed department names where faculty currently reside exactly as they are featured on their department websites. We used the degree department name exactly how each faculty member stated it in their CV but made corrections when errors were identified.

*InternationalPhD*

This is 0 for US, 1 for non-US PhD. There were 4 cases where we did not have the institution name. In all analyses after Table 1, we treat these as US PhD’s to err on the side of inclusion in the study.

*Years2Assoc* and *Years2Full* are how long it took scholars to earn promotions. We subtracted the year they earned their PhD, from the year they were promoted (*YearMadeProfessor, YearMadeAssociate, YearPHDearnedGraduated*). This takes into account all the years on the job market or working in temp positions.

*Ranking Departments and Movement variables*

The two measures, *RankbyGraduatingPhDFrom* and *RankbyGraduatingCurrentlyAt*

are derived from the frequency of placements. We ranked each department based on the number of graduates they have in a TT position in one of the 122 PhD-granting departments (1 being the best and 44 being the worst). Ties are given equal rankings and are sequential (no skipping). Movement\_All is computed by taking the difference between these two measures.

*Undergraduate Institution*

The variable *Undergrad* contains the listed institution where one earned their first bachelors degree according to their CV. We coded undergraduate institutions by type (research university, liberal arts, etc.) labeled *Typeofundergrad* and classified whether it is public or private as stated on the university’s web page.

There are many official and unofficial terms used to describe colleges and universities. We used the language found on the institutions’ web sites. If the institution called itself a religious college, we used religious, if liberal arts, we used liberal arts and so forth. This resulted in 9 categories. However, for many colleges this was more complicated as they may self-identify in multiple ways (e.g., a religious liberal arts college, or a college founded by Presbyterians). The variable we created is their self-categorization as best as we could identify. We intentionally did not use an outside or other organizational scheme (R1 etc). Some colleges changed greatly over time, changing their name and their programs. We did our best to correctly categorize these with one primary identifier but accept this variable can be coded or interpreted in different ways. For our use we treated all State, 4 and 6 year colleges not identified as religious or LAC as the same in Table 1.

1. 4-Year- all other four- or six-year colleges not categorized elsewhere
2. Arts/Music
3. HBCU- Historically Black Colleges and Universities
4. International – all non-US Colleges and Universities
5. LAC – Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities
6. Military
7. Religious
8. Research- All institutions labeling themselves as a Research University. This is not to be necessarily confused PhD granting institutions. This variable is their self categorization as best as we could identify.
9. State- all Public State Universities, not considered a Research University(4/6 year)

*Public or Private UG*

All colleges and universities with the exception of military made a single and clear identification of being “public” or “private”. There are two variables for this category *Private\_vs\_Public\_only -* this distinguishes only those that state they are public or private (N=2354) and includes only US institutions, and has more missing than the raw variable because it treats all international (478) and true missing (221) as missing. *PublicorPrivateundergradRaw –* these are the raw text entries of this measure and include the values of International, Military, Private, and Public(N=2838).

*Career Length, Time to Promotion.*

We used the year one graduated as the benchmark for these measures. For example, the current year (2023) minus the year graduated, lets say 2000, would be a length of 23 years (*CareerLength*). We used a similar approach for promotions. To calculate avg length of career, we took the avg retirement age of 67 (NSF) minus the NSF survey of earned doctorates median age of a PhD graduate (31.5), to derive the average career length of 35.5 years.

*CareerAssociateYears* is the years one has been at the rank of associate professor and is only calculated for those currently at the Associate rank. *CareerAssociate* is dichotomous where those at the rank of 10 years or more = 1, else 0.

*Average hires per year*

There are many considerations when attempting to estimate the average number of hires per year with the current data. For example, we could divide the total number of graduates who currently hold a TT job by 62 years as this is the current career length of the longest serving faculty member. However, this would skew the results toward people who stayed in the academy the longest versus give a reasonable yearly average. Table 3 includes all the placements today regardless of their length of career, but for the last column we choose to use only the last 35 years of hires as this is the average career length of TT faculty reported in the NSF faculty survey. This accounts for 86% of the sample.

**Choice on Statistical Package and Type of Analyses**

Our primary goal is to educate potential students. Our secondary goal is to inform the discipline. We typically used SAS and R. However, after consulting with undergraduates interested in grad school, we went with SPSS as the lowest common denominator so that interested students could more easily use the data and extend the analyses themselves. Mainly we found few undergraduates at our institution used SAS or R, but the majority were familiar with SPSS.

A similar logic was used when choosing the types of methods. Mainly the paper is descriptive and correlational, but one could use any number of more complex analyses, graphs, and tools to display the relationships we found or explore others in greater context, such as effects over time. We opted for the most simple, easy to interpret and straightforward presentation most accessible to undergraduates looking to apply to a graduate program. Again, we invite others to complicate the data or analyses as much as they wish.

**The Opportunity Cost of Not Finding a TT position**

A simple exercise illustrates how not finding a TT position will have lifelong consequences for most graduates. Let’s assume it typically takes graduates 7 years of graduate school (NSF 2021), and at least 2 years more to find a TT job, if they find one at all, and this includes only those who choose to continue looking. Compared to students who after their undergraduate degree make $65-$75,000 a year, which is consistent with students with similar skills and characteristics to those in our pool of graduate students, consider that they would earn > $820,000 in revenue and >$82,000 for retirement in those 9 years (allowing for low raises and a reasonable retirement contribution). If those potential students earned nothing else the rest of their lives and spent every penny they earned in those 9 years, they would still have about $265,000 more in base retirement 30 years later assuming very safe investments (4% annual growth). Quite realistically, the salary of those who went to work instead of pursuing a PhD after a comparable 9 years, would be much closer to that of a professor, if not more. And they would not spend every penny they earned but would have assets, such as a house. Adjusting for modest raises and no major promotions, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the US Census, salaries would range between $115,000-$140,000, depending on field (U.S. Census Bureau 2022). Most political scientists won’t ever make that amount, much less start there after their 7+2 years in grad school. Of those who do eventually earn $140,000 or more, they would do so well after tenure. According to the 2022 American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Faculty Compensation Survey (Tiede 2022), professors at PhD-granting institutions make $145,000 after around 12 years, which is on average almost $60,000 a year more than their counterparts in liberal arts colleges and 4-6-year state schools. If these factors remain consistent, then at the minimum, it would take 15-21 years to do as well as the average comparable person who did not pursue a PhD at 9 years; and this is only for the fortunate few who we call successful in academia and find a TT position. For those that do not, it is quite likely they will never fully recover, at least financially. And that is exactly what a recent report indicated (Cooper 2022). Indeed, while on average those with a PhD earn more than those with a Masters, that is not the case for most of the social sciences (CCA 2021).

**Life Satisfaction**

The focus of the paper is that the modal student comes to the PhD with a specific employment goal in mind- a tenure track position - and we identify how realistic those goals are by the program they choose or have available to them. A natural extension is to ask the quality-of-life question. How is someone’s life affected when they do or do not meet those goals? Hesli and Lee (2013) find that political scientists in top-ranked departments and private institutions have higher levels of satisfaction while those at institutions with higher undergraduate teaching loads have lower satisfaction. They found no differences between men and women. Morrison et al. (2011) find that those with the highest salary are the most satisfied while those with the lowest salaries are the least satisfied. Main, Prenovitz and Ehrenberg (2019) on the hand found that PhDs in the non-profit sector report a higher rate of job satisfaction compared to PhDs in tenure-track faculty positions, but that was not true of those in for profit industry or government. We could find no systematic studies of the life satisfaction of those that failed to achieve their goals, or those that left the profession after tenure. There are however a growing number of anecdotal stories of each kind, perhaps most recently was Jamie Bolker’s poignant and painful story about losing his tenure track position, published in the Chronicle (October 15, 2024).

**Table S1- Additional Descriptives**



**Table S2: Full Placements for all 122 Political Science PhD Programs as of May 2023: includes all non-Political Science PhD’s in TT positions and those who graduated from International Universities).**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| University Name | Number |  Percent |
| Harvard University | 235 | 7.7 |
| University of California Berkeley | 184 | 6.0 |
| Princeton University | 143 | 4.7 |
| University of Michigan Ann Arbor | 134 | 4.4 |
| Stanford University | 130 | 4.2 |
| Yale University | 122 | 4.0 |
| University of Chicago | 116 | 3.8 |
| Columbia University | 114 | 3.7 |
| University of California Los Angeles | 82 | 2.7 |
| Massachusetts Institute of Technology | 74 | 2.4 |
| University of California San Diego | 73 | 2.4 |
| Ohio State University Columbus | 71 | 2.3 |
| Duke University | 61 | 2.0 |
| Cornell University | 59 | 1.9 |
| Washington University in St Louis | 59 | 1.9 |
| University of Wisconsin Madison | 56 | 1.8 |
| University of Rochester | 54 | 1.8 |
| University of Minnesota Twin Cities | 53 | 1.7 |
| New York University | 47 | 1.5 |
| University of North Carolina Chapel Hill | 46 | 1.5 |
| Northwestern University | 45 | 1.5 |
| Michigan State University East Lansing | 39 | 1.3 |
| University of Texas Austin | 37 | 1.2 |
| Johns Hopkins University | 36 | 1.2 |
| Indiana University Bloomington | 34 | 1.1 |
| University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign | 33 | 1.1 |
| Emory University | 30 | 1.0 |
| University of Iowa Iowa City | 30 | 1.0 |
| University of Pennsylvania | 30 | 1.0 |
| University of Washington Seattle | 28 | .9 |
| University of Oxford (United Kingdom) | 27 | .9 |
| Florida State University Tallahassee | 26 | .8 |
| University of Maryland College Park | 25 | .8 |
| California Institute of Technology | 23 | .8 |
| University of California Davis | 23 | .8 |
| University of Virginia | 23 | .8 |
| State University of New York Stony Brook | 22 | .7 |
| Rutgers University New Brunswick | 21 | .7 |
| Georgetown University | 20 | .7 |
| Texas A&M University College Station | 19 | .6 |
| University of Pittsburgh | 18 | .6 |
| Pennsylvania State University University Park | 17 | .6 |
| Rice University | 17 | .6 |
| University of Notre Dame | 17 | .6 |
| University of Toronto (Canada) | 17 | .6 |
| State University of New York Binghamton | 16 | .5 |
| Brown University | 14 | .5 |
| University of California Irvine | 14 | .5 |
| University of Colorado Boulder | 14 | .5 |
| University of Arizona Tucson | 12 | .4 |
| University of Georgia Athens | 12 | .4 |
| Arizona State University Tempe | 11 | .4 |
| University of Southern California | 11 | .4 |
| Vanderbilt University | 11 | .4 |
| New School for Social Research | 10 | .3 |
| Syracuse University | 10 | .3 |
| University of California Santa Barbara | 10 | .3 |
| University of Florida Gainesville | 9 | .3 |
| City University of New York | 8 | .3 |
| Claremont Graduate University | 8 | .3 |
| University of Houston | 8 | .3 |
| University of Oklahoma Norman | 8 | .3 |
| University of Oregon Eugene | 8 | .3 |
| Boston University | 7 | .2 |
| George Mason University Fairfax | 7 | .2 |
| George Washington University | 7 | .2 |
| London School of Economics and Political Science (UK) | 7 | .2 |
| University at Buffalo State University of New York | 7 | .2 |
| University of California Riverside | 7 | .2 |
| University of Cambridge (United Kingdom) | 7 | .2 |
| University of Kentucky Lexington | 7 | .2 |
| Boston College | 6 | .2 |
| Purdue University West Lafayette | 6 | .2 |
| Tufts University | 6 | .2 |
| University of Dallas | 6 | .2 |
| University of Massachusetts Amherst | 6 | .2 |
| American University | 5 | .2 |
| Brandeis University | 5 | .2 |
| Carnegie Mellon University | 5 | .2 |
| Clark Atlanta University | 5 | .2 |
| University of British Columbia (Canada) | 5 | .2 |
| University of Hawaii Manoa | 5 | .2 |
| University of New Mexico Albuquerque | 5 | .2 |
| University of South Carolina Columbia | 5 | .2 |
| University of Wisconsin Milwaukee | 5 | .2 |
| Unknown | 4 | .1 |
| Howard University | 4 | .1 |
| Louisiana State University Baton Rouge | 4 | .1 |
| State University of New York Albany | 4 | .1 |
| University of Denver | 4 | .1 |
| University of Kansas Lawrence | 4 | .1 |
| University of Missouri Columbia | 4 | .1 |
| University of North Texas Denton | 4 | .1 |
| Washington State University Pullman | 4 | .1 |
| European University Institute Florence (Italy) | 3 | .1 |
| University of Colorado Denver | 3 | .1 |
| University of Connecticut Storrs | 3 | .1 |
| University of Miami | 3 | .1 |
| University of Nebraska Lincoln | 3 | .1 |
| University of Sussex (United Kingdom) | 3 | .1 |
| York University (Canada) | 3 | .1 |
| Australian National University (Australia) | 2 | .1 |
| Catholic University of America | 2 | .1 |
| Fordham University | 2 | .1 |
| Free University of Berlin (Germany) | 2 | .1 |
| Georgia State University Atlanta | 2 | .1 |
| Kent State University | 2 | .1 |
| Lund University (Sweden) | 2 | .1 |
| Miami University Ohio | 2 | .1 |
| North Carolina State University Raleigh | 2 | .1 |
| Northeastern University | 2 | .1 |
| Northern Illinois University DeKalb | 2 | .1 |
| Pardee RAND Graduate School | 2 | .1 |
| School of Advanced Social Sciences (France) EHESS | 2 | .1 |
| University of Alabama Tuscaloosa | 2 | .1 |
| University of Arkansas Fayetteville | 2 | .1 |
| University of California Merced | 2 | .1 |
| University of Cincinnati | 2 | .1 |
| University of Kent (United Kingdom) | 2 | .1 |
| University of New Orleans | 2 | .1 |
| University of Tennessee Knoxville | 2 | .1 |
| University of Zurich (Switzerland) | 2 | .1 |
| Aberystwyth University (United Kingdom) | 1 | .0 |
| Baylor University | 1 | .0 |
| Bielefeld University (Germany) | 1 | .0 |
| Bilkent University (Turkey) | 1 | .0 |
| Case Western Reserve University | 1 | .0 |
| Cleveland State University | 1 | .0 |
| Colorado State University Fort Collins | 1 | .0 |
| Florida International University Miami | 1 | .0 |
| Georgia Institute of Technology | 1 | .0 |
| Graduate Inst.of Int & Development Studies (Swiss) | 1 | .0 |
| Hebrew University Jerusalem (Israel) | 1 | .0 |
| Idaho State University Pocatello | 1 | .0 |
| Jacobs University Bremen (Germany) | 1 | .0 |
| Jawaharlal Nehru University (India) | 1 | .0 |
| KU Leuven (Belgium) | 1 | .0 |
| Lancaster University (United Kingdom) | 1 | .0 |
| Loughborough University (United Kingdom) | 1 | .0 |
| Loyola University Chicago | 1 | .0 |
| Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (Germany) | 1 | .0 |
| McGill University (Canada) | 1 | .0 |
| Northern Arizona University Flagstaff | 1 | .0 |
| Norwegian University of Science and Technology | 1 | .0 |
| Paris Descartes University (France) | 1 | .0 |
| Pompeu Fabra University (Spain) | 1 | .0 |
| Portland State University | 1 | .0 |
| Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute | 1 | .0 |
| Royal Grammar School Newcastle upon Tyne | 1 | .0 |
| Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (Australia) | 1 | .0 |
| Ruhr University Bochum (Germany) | 1 | .0 |
| Saint Louis University | 1 | .0 |
| Sciences Po Lyon (France) | 1 | .0 |
| Scuola Normale Superiore (Italy) | 1 | .0 |
| Southern Illinois University Carbondale | 1 | .0 |
| Southern University A&M | 1 | .0 |
| State University of New York Syracuse | 1 | .0 |
| Temple University | 1 | .0 |
| Texas Tech University Lubbock | 1 | .0 |
| Tuebingen University (Germany) | 1 | .0 |
| Tulane University | 1 | .0 |
| Universite Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium) | 1 | .0 |
| University College London (United Kingdom) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Amsterdam (Netherlands) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Bristol (United Kingdom) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Bucharest (Romania) | 1 | .0 |
| University of California Santa Cruz | 1 | .0 |
| University of Cologne (France) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Delhi (India) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Essex (United Kingdom) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Geneva (Switzerland) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Haifa (Israel) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Konstanz (Germany) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Melbourne (Australia) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Naples (Italy) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Nebraska Omaha | 1 | .0 |
| University of Nijmegen (Netherlands) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Provence Aix-Marseille (France) | 1 | .0 |
| University of South Dakota Vermillion | 1 | .0 |
| University of Utah | 1 | .0 |
| University of Vechta (Germany) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Warsaw (Poland) | 1 | .0 |
| University of Western Ontario (Canada) | 1 | .0 |
| Uppsala University (Sweden) | 1 | .0 |
| Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | 1 | .0 |
| West Virginia University Morgantown | 1 | .0 |
| Hillsdale College | 0 | .0 |
| University of Delaware Newark | 0 | .0 |
| University of Idaho | 0 | .0 |
| University of Illinois Chicago | 0 | .0 |
| University of Mississippi Oxford | 0 | .0 |
| University of Missouri St. Louis | 0 | .0 |
| University of Nevada Las Vegas | 0 | .0 |
| University of Nevada Reno | 0 | .0 |
| University of Texas Dallas | 0 | .0 |
| Wayne State University Detroit | 0 | .0 |
| Western Michigan University Kalamazoo | 0 | .0 |
| Total | 3059 | 100% |

**Table S3: Placements Men and Women Comparison (US and PS Degree)**



**Table S4: Departments without Placements at a PhD-granting Political Science Department post 2012**

**Table S5 – Graduates Placed in TT Positions at PhD-granting Institutions (Post 2012)**

**Table S6: Market Share of Placements Comparison – all time to 2012 vs 2013 forward**

The 49 programs with no placements are not shown below and are presented in Table S4.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **University Name** |  **Percent 2013>** | **Percent <2013** | **Market Share Increase** |
| NYU | 3.83 | 1.08 | 2.75 |
| Princeton  | 6.13 | 4.22 | 1.91 |
| UC San Diego | 3.83 | 2.37 | 1.46 |
| Penn State | 1.38 | 0.41 | 0.97 |
| UT Austin | 1.99 | 1.03 | 0.96 |
| U Penn | 1.68 | 0.77 | 0.91 |
| Emory | 1.84 | 0.93 | 0.91 |
| Brown University | 1.07 | 0.26 | 0.81 |
| SUNY Stony Brook | 1.38 | 0.67 | 0.71 |
| Wash U St Louis | 2.60 | 1.95 | 0.65 |
| University of Florida  | 0.77 | 0.21 | 0.56 |
| MIT | 2.91 | 2.37 | 0.54 |
| Georgetown  | 1.07 | 0.57 | 0.51 |
| UNC Chapel Hill | 2.14 | 1.65 | 0.50 |
| George Washington  | 0.61 | 0.15 | 0.46 |
| Vanderbilt | 0.77 | 0.31 | 0.46 |
| UW Seattle | 1.23 | 0.77 | 0.45 |
| University of Georgia | 0.61 | 0.26 | 0.36 |
| University of Virginia | 1.07 | 0.72 | 0.35 |
| Stanford | 4.44 | 4.11 | 0.33 |
| Boston University | 0.31 | 0.00 | 0.31 |
| University of Alabama | 0.31 | 0.00 | 0.31 |
| UC Merced | 0.31 | 0.00 | 0.31 |
| U Mass | 0.46 | 0.15 | 0.31 |
| University of Colorado  | 0.61 | 0.31 | 0.30 |
| Northwestern | 1.53 | 1.23 | 0.30 |
| Ohio State | 2.76 | 2.47 | 0.29 |
| UC Riverside | 0.46 | 0.21 | 0.25 |
| Rice University | 0.77 | 0.57 | 0.20 |
| Baylor University | 0.15 | 0.00 | 0.15 |
| George Mason  | 0.15 | 0.00 | 0.15 |
| South Dakota | 0.15 | 0.00 | 0.15 |
| Notre Dame | 0.77 | 0.62 | 0.15 |
| Pitt | 0.77 | 0.62 | 0.15 |
| University of Maryland  | 0.92 | 0.77 | 0.15 |
| Columbia | 4.13 | 4.01 | 0.12 |
| University of Cincinnati | 0.15 | 0.05 | 0.10 |
| Boston College | 0.31 | 0.21 | 0.10 |
| University of Oklahoma  | 0.31 | 0.21 | 0.10 |
| Texas A&M | 0.77 | 0.67 | 0.10 |
| Yale  | 4.29 | 4.22 | 0.07 |
| Clark Atlanta | 0.15 | 0.10 | 0.05 |
| Michigan  | 4.75 | 4.73 | 0.02 |
| Louisiana State  | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.00 |
| University of Kansas  | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.00 |
| University of Missouri  | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.00 |
| USC | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.00 |
| Washington State  | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.00 |
| University of Houston | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.00 |
| UC Irvine | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.00 |
| University of Nebraska | 0.15 | 0.21 | -0.05 |
| New Mexico | 0.15 | 0.21 | -0.05 |
| Syracuse  | 0.31 | 0.36 | -0.05 |
| UC Santa Barbara | 0.31 | 0.36 | -0.05 |
| Arizona State  | 0.15 | 0.31 | -0.16 |
| Michigan State  | 1.23 | 1.49 | -0.27 |
| University of Iowa | 0.92 | 1.23 | -0.32 |
| University of Minnesota | 1.68 | 2.01 | -0.32 |
| Rochester | 1.84 | 2.16 | -0.32 |
| Florida State | 0.61 | 0.98 | -0.36 |
| Duke  | 1.99 | 2.37 | -0.37 |
| SUNY Binghamton | 0.31 | 0.72 | -0.41 |
| Rutgers  | 0.31 | 0.82 | -0.52 |
| UC Davis | 0.46 | 0.98 | -0.52 |
| Illinois Urbana-Champaign | 0.77 | 1.29 | -0.52 |
| Cal Tech | 0.31 | 0.93 | -0.62 |
| Cornell  | 1.68 | 2.31 | -0.63 |
| Indiana University  | 0.46 | 1.23 | -0.77 |
| University of Wisconsin | 1.38 | 2.21 | -0.83 |
| Johns Hopkins  | 0.46 | 1.34 | -0.88 |
| UC Los Angeles | 1.84 | 3.14 | -1.30 |
| Harvard  | 7.20 | 8.89 | -1.70 |
| Chicago | 2.76 | 4.58 | -1.82 |
| UC Berkeley | 4.59 | 6.79 | -2.19 |

**Table S7 – Placements Comparison Between Men and Women (Last 10 Years)**

Here we offer a limited analysis of sex differences post 2012. We strongly caution the reader to not overinterpret the table below as it represents a smaller snapshot in time, and it is just as likely differences are a product of the sampling distribution. Only future years will be able to determine if trends are present. Many of the top programs had a roughly equal split of placements by sex in the last 10 years, but there were some differences- again, only if these trends hold true for future years. For example, a majority of UNC, Stanford and Iowa’s placements were women in the last 10 years. On the other hand, Rochester placed no women in the last 10 years; while Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Penn State and Texas A&M placed mostly men from 2012-2023.



**Table S8 –Movement All US Faculty**



**Table S9 – Faculty Movement Minus Top-10 Placing Departments (~50% of the population)**



**Table S10.** **Regression Results: Pedigree is the Best Predictor of Placement**



R Squared = .22 / Adjusted R Squared = .21

**Table S11. Avg Citations by Department (only those with < 1/3 missingness calculated)**

**Table S12– Department Placement Metrics and Quotes**

The following Google Sheet link contains placement statements made by each of the 122 PhD granting departments as of Nov 2024, if they have one, and what data they share on their placements.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16NYcfxjwHH42zcHDZO3OguwmssZngZqkqwcFBMViftc/edit?usp=sharing>

**Figure S1. Faculty Movement Minus Top-10 Placing Departments**



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