Political Science Pays Off

Considering a major in political science? You interest may be spurred by the desire to understand politics, or the wish to make the world a better place, or your plans to attend law school, or by your understanding of the fundamental importance of power, justice, and law in shaping the kind of society we live in. But you are making a good choice financially as well.

The Hamilton Project ([http://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/career_earnings_by_college_major/](http://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/career_earnings_by_college_major/)) analyzed reams of US Census American Community Survey data to assess how people with different majors do financially. The graphs below show a few of the many comparisons from this data. The upshot is Political Science is a good investment.

20 years after earning the degree, the typical (median) political science major with no graduate degree earns $71,000 a year. Compare this with the typical criminology and criminal justice major, who earns $62,000, the typical communications major, who earns $57,000, or the typical psychology major who earns $46,000.

**Annual Earnings**

**MEDIAN ANNUAL EARNINGS OVER CAREER**

Add in those with graduate degrees, and political science majors do even better. The typical political science major (including those with graduate degrees) $85,000 per year, far and away better than the typical criminal justice major with a graduate degree who earns $64,000, or the typical psychology major with a graduate degree who earns $55,000.
But what about those who say you should pursue studies in natural science or business – something more technical or more practical? We would take issue with the claim that political science isn’t technical or practical but be that as it may, political science majors once again perform well. 20 years since start of career, the median political science major with no graduate degree earns seven thousand dollars more than the median business administration major, nine thousand dollars more than the median chemistry major, and fourteen thousand dollars more than the typical biology major.