



EXPLORING THE CAREER PATH OF BACHELOR OF ARTS MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE GRADUATES

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the career path of Political Science graduates in one of the higher education institutions in Pagadian City. This study used the quantitative research method, particularly descriptive statistics. This study focused on 2014-2023 graduates of the political science program. 33.33% of the Political Science graduates took and passed the civil service examination. 16.07% of the political science alumni enrolled in the said program because of their parents or relatives. 47.21% of participants reported that none had post-professional or work-related training programs. The study results showed that the professional examinations were passed, and the reasons for taking the course or pursuing a degree. Also, the training advanced studies attended after college and the employment data, including the current employment status, reasons for unemployment, current occupation, and initial gross earnings, were discussed. Also, SCC's contribution to personal and professional growth indicates a generally positive impact on various aspects of personal and professional development among the respondents, with all indicators receiving a "Good" rating. The Political Science graduates suggest improving the course curriculum based on their experiences and what they believe the institution should implement for future generations in the Political Science program. These suggestions are to improve curriculum and instruction, implement internships, and conduct civil service reviews. Lastly, the suggested study recommendations will benefit the teachers, the school, and future researchers.

Keywords: exploring, career path, political science graduates, tracer study

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world, where people have a more comprehensive range of industries and jobs than ever, career planning has become more critical than individual work decisions (Hassan et al., 2022). While a degree in political science can equip students with valuable transferable skills, finding job opportunities that require these skills can sometimes be challenging (Mallinson & Burns, 2019).

However, individual employability is influenced by career management competencies, which in turn impact well-being, graduate job attainment, and long-term professional success. Enhanced competencies among graduates can assist faculty in achieving strong employment outcomes and support industry partners who wish to employ graduates who can effectively self-manage their career paths amid flatter organizational structures and greater employee mobility (Jackson & Wilton, 2016).

Moreover, graduate education is crucial for developing research capabilities that advance educational theory and practice, improving socioeconomic conditions to become productive members of society, and ensuring graduates are highly employable in the workplace (Bueno, 2017). It also promotes career advancement, builds professional



networks and connections, leads a purpose-driven personal and professional life, and encourages theory-to-work-based practice (Sumande et al., 2022).

Furthermore, this can be a tool for teachers to improve their professional competence, as competent teachers are critical to long-term nation-building (Gepila Jr., 2020). As a result, tracer studies are required to assess the quality of delivery by graduate schools in advancing these objectives (Badiru & Wahome, 2016). When deciding on a career, people examine their relative abilities. Thus, trust in one's talents is likely essential in choosing between alternative professional options (Schulz & Thöni, 2016).

Therefore, graduate tracer studies are essential sources of information for academic program graduates at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Dela Cruz, 2022). It provides significant information for evaluating higher education outcomes, which may be used to improve educational institutions and ensure their quality (Tutor et al., 2021). These studies are also essential tools for evaluating and improving the outcomes of graduate education programs, as well as their marketability and sustainability (Woya, 2019).

The Philippines faces a significant unemployment issue, with 9.1 million individuals affected. There are 21.4% of the population is unemployed, defined as those without jobs or actively seeking work; this excludes homemakers, students, retirees, and disabled individuals, who are considered outside the labor force (Urrutia et al., 2017).

In addition, on a global scale, a conventional university's political science curriculum is mainly theoretical, emphasizing political ideas, history, and philosophy, focusing less on practical skills (Ahmad, 2021). Many political science majors doubt their employability due to a lack of practicality and abilities. As a result, competency-based approaches provide valuable mechanisms for measuring and assessing the usefulness of political science degrees and the ability to access and sustain multiple career routes over a lifetime for educational institutions, employers, and undergraduate students.

In addition, most BA Political Science graduates at Kalinga State University of the Philippines are engaged either permanently (57%) or temporarily (23%) in government (64%) or private (36%). Furthermore, most graduates have passed official tests such as the CS Professional Exam (20%), the CS Sub-Professional Exam (21%), AFP-ARMY (21%), and the LET (13%). In this case, the average employment ratio of BA Political Science graduates is 16 to 20, implying that out of every 20 graduates, 16 were employed (Tucay, 2016).

Furthermore, having a clear, well-planned career choice offers students excellent opportunities to succeed in the future (Hassan et al., 2022; Jackson & Walton, 2016; Ibrahim et al., 2015; Ombaba, 2014). Other studies, such as those by Mallinson and Burns (2019), Sumande et al. (2022), and Gepila Jr. (2020), focus on the importance of skills and interests in career choices. These researchers found that skills, interest, and knowledge play a significant role in attaining excellence at work. Additionally, the studies by Bueno (2017) and Woya (2019) focused on career employment, and both found that an individual's employment situation matters for his or her socioeconomic status.

However, research had yet to be conducted in one of the private institutions in Pagadian City on the career paths of political science graduates. The motivation for this research is to debunk stereotypes about Political Science, such as the idea that it offers little and that one must pursue a career in law or politics after graduating from college. Therefore, this study will shed light on the professional pathways of political science



graduates and assist career advisors in making well-informed decisions about their future jobs by offering them more targeted support.

This study integrates Social Cognitive Career Theory, developed by Lent, R., Brown, S., and Hackett, G. in 1994, and offers a comprehensive lens for understanding the multifaceted factors influencing political science graduates' career trajectories. This theory is a complex, extensively researched career-choice and performance theory. Relationships among several vital variables of SCCT, including self-efficacy, outcome expectations, perceived barriers, and their relationships to career choice, were investigated (Lindley, 2005). One comprehensive perspective for examining the career paths of political science graduates is the Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al., 2002).

The theory serves as the spine of the study, characterized by detailed insights into the complex processes behind the participants' career growth, motivations, and decision-making behaviors. This was done by closely examining their self-efficacy beliefs, involvement with social support networks, result expectations, and responses to environmental influences.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The study employs a descriptive quantitative research. Quantitative research encompasses a range of methods concerned with systematically investigating social phenomena using statistical or numerical data. Therefore, quantitative research involves measurement, and the phenomenon in this study was measured. Quantitative research gathers data using measurement, analyzes this data for trends and relationships, and verifies the measurements (Watson, 2015).

Research Environment

This study was conducted in one of the private higher education institutions in Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur, Philippines. The school offers a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science degree under the College of Teacher Education, Arts and Sciences. The tracer survey was conducted online through Google Forms to determine the participants' availability. The participants were contacted via social media accounts (Facebook and Messenger) as the researchers found it more convenient to establish rapport and gather valid answers from the verified participants.

Research Participants

Table 1

Research Participants

Program	Gender	Year Graduated	No. of Graduates
BA Political Science	Male	2014-2023	23
BA Political Science	Female	2014-2023	22
Overall			45

The study's participants were BA Political Science graduates from 2014 to 2023. With a ten-year emphasis on graduates from one institution of higher learning, the study offers a comprehensive analysis of political science graduates' career paths and outcomes. However, the total number of Political Science graduates from 2014 to 2024 is 45, of whom only 36 responded. In a nutshell, this research project provides insights into the career paths of political science graduates.



Research Instruments

This study used the Tracer Questionnaire and the Graduate Tracer Survey (GTS). The participants' responses served as preliminary data for analysis and interpretation—the instrument was designed to gather information based on the Graduate Tracer Survey. The information gathered was based on participants' responses to the specific questions that guided the researchers in collecting primary data on the career paths of political science graduates.

Data Gathering Techniques

The researchers first secured the Permit to Conduct the study from the Research Office, the School Dean, and the school's Vice President of Academic Affairs. The survey questionnaire was distributed to graduates via email, and for some respondents, it was conducted face-to-face or by phone, depending on their availability.

Statistical Treatment

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the study's data. Descriptive statistics are brief statements that summarize the fundamental characteristics of a study's data, such as the mean and standard deviation (Mishara et al., 2019). The weighted mean was used for data analysis. The results were interpreted using the following hypothetical weighted mean ranges: 1:00 – 1.:50 (*Very Poor*), 1:51- 2:50 (*Poor*), 2:50-3:50 (*Average*), 3:51- 4:50 (*Good*), 4:51- 5:00 (*Excellent*).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The professional examinations passed by the Political Science graduates at Saint Columban College are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Professional Examination(s) Passed

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Civil Service Examination	12	33.33%
2.	Licensure Examination for Teachers	10	27.78%
3.	Bar Examination	2	5.56%
4.	None	12	33.33%
	Overall	36	100%

The results indicate that 33.33% of the Political Science graduates took and passed the civil service examination. Meanwhile, 27.78% of the graduates took and passed the teacher licensure examination. Not many may have passed the Bar examination, but others are still in law school or have their own unstated reasons for not taking any professional examination. This means that the graduates of Political Science programs prefer to take professional examinations, specifically the civil service examination. Additionally, the study of Rasul et al. (2021) affirms that civil service plays a significant role in public management practice, organizational performance, and task clarity. Furthermore, eligibility plays a vital role in the life of every postgraduate student. Professionalism is essential in social and work-related disciplines, including public administration and organizational studies (Evans, 2016).

The reasons for taking the program in Political Science or pursuing the degree are presented in Table 3.



Table 3

Reasons for taking this course (s) or pursuing a degree

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1	Influence of Parents or Relatives	18	16.07%
2	Strong passion for a profession	15	13.39%
3	Area related to the course	13	11.61%
4	Status or the prestige of the profession	12	10.71%
5	Prospect of career advancement	11	9.82%
6	Inspired by a role model	9	8.04%
7	Availability of course offering and chosen institution	9	8.04%
8	Other	6	5.35%
9	Good grades in high school	4	3.57%
10	Affordable for the family	4	3.57%
11	Opportunity for employment abroad	4	3.57%
12	Prospect for immediate employment	3	2.67%
13	Peer Pressure	2	1.78%
14	Prospect of attractive compensation	2	1.78%
Overall		112	

Table 3 above shows the reasons for taking this course (s) or pursuing a degree. It shows that 16.07% of the political science alumni enrolled in the said program because of their parents or relatives. Also, 13.39% of the participants enrolled because of it aligns with their passion for the profession. The research by Kazi and Akhla (2017) supports the idea that parents' educational level greatly influences students' career choices, particularly their future careers. Additionally, the study by Gati and Kulcsár (2021) states that career decisions shape an individual's role. The findings in Table 2 show that family is the most dominant factor in career-making. Furthermore, career exploration, motivation, and achievement are the professional trajectories that shape career decisions (Badrolhisam et al., 2019).

Training or Advanced Studies Attended. Training refers to programs or activities made available to develop knowledge, skills, or competencies for individuals or groups to improve their performance and enhance personal and professional development. Meanwhile, advanced studies are educational programs or courses that delve into specialized topics beyond the basic or introductory level of knowledge.

The list of all professional or work-related training programs participants have attended is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

List of Post-Professional or Work-Related Training Programs

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1	None	17	47.21%
2	Juris Doctor	14	38.89%
3	Teaching Profession	2	5.56%
4	Taking master's degree	2	5.56%
5	Paralegal	1	2.78%
Overall		36	100%



Table 4 shows the list of professional or work-related training programs of the graduates. 47.21% of the participants claimed that none of them had the post-professional or work-related training programs. While 38.89% reported that they have Juris Doctor. According to Albrecht et al. (2015), degrees or training programs relevant to the workplace are essential for personal growth. This is crucial for advancing the position or for the worker to reach various life goals. This indicates that completing such courses and professional training enhances graduates' capacities and skills (Erdem & Alci, 2018). The Juris Doctor (JD) program in the Philippines is a professional graduate law degree that prioritizes local legal situations while adhering to international norms. The JD program offers a more extensive curriculum than the typical Bachelor of Laws (LLB), encompassing international law, ASEAN legal systems, and Philippine laws.

Factors to pursue advanced studies are presented in Table 5. This table lists the factors that led some participants to undertake advanced studies after college.

Table 5

Factors to Pursue Advanced Studies

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	For professional Development	23	63.89%
2.	For promotion	1	2.78%
3.	Others	3	8.33%
4.	None	9	25.00%
	Overall	36	100%

The table above shows the results of the factors that made the participants pursue the advanced studies. Of the 36 responses, 63.89% were due to professional development purposes, which is considered the highest factor. Moreover, the lowest is for the unstated reasons, with a percentage of 2.78%. According to James et al. (2015), professional development focuses on improving equality, ensuring quality assurance, and leveraging optimal technology for academic excellence.

Employment Data. This section provides a comprehensive overview of graduates' employment status, including reasons for unemployment, current employment status, present occupations, companies/organizations being employed, place of work, first Job after college, reasons for staying on the Job, first Job's relevance to the degree obtained in college, reasons for accepting and changing the Job, duration of the first Job, means of finding the first Job, job level positions, and the initial gross.

Table 6 presents the participants' employment status after graduation. This table counts the participants' present employment status during this study.

Table 6

Present Employment Status

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	27	75
2.	No	8	22.2
3.	Never employed	1	2.8
	Overall	36	100

Table 6 illustrates the current employment status of 36 people: 27 (75%) are employed, 8 (22.2%) are not currently employed but have worked previously, and 1 (2.8%) has never been employed. This information offers a concise overview of the employment distribution within the surveyed group. The total number of respondents is 36, with the



percentages summing to 100%. According to DOLE (2023), 48.8 million Filipinos are employed, as the country's employment rate rose by 1.6 percentage points, from 93.6% in February 2022 to 95.2% in February 2023. The table implies that most BA Political Science graduates at Saint Columban College from batch 2014-2023 are employed.

Table 7 presents the reasons for unemployment and indicates the participants' employment status.

Table 7

Reasons for Unemployment

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Advance training or Further study	2	13.33%
2.	Family concern and decided not to find a job	2	13.33%
3.	Health-related reason (s)	1	6.67%
4.	Lack of experience	1	6.67%
5.	No job opportunity	1	6.67%
6.	Did not look for a job	3	20%
7.	Looking for better opportunities	1	6.67%
8.	Went farming.	1	6.67%
9.	Others	3	20%
	Overall	15	

Table 7 shows the reasons for unemployment. It shows that 13.33% of the graduates are unemployed because they have advanced training for further study, and another 13.33% reported family concerns. The data indicate that several factors contribute to unemployment among the examined population, ranging from personal choices to external factors such as health and job availability.

Table 8

Present Employment Status

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Regular or permanent	13	44
2.	Temporary	2	8
3.	Casual	1	4
4.	Contractual	6	24
5.	Self-employed	5	20
	Overall	27	100

Table 8 indicates the participants' present employment status. The data presented shows the distribution of employment kinds among respondents, categorizing them as regular or permanent, temporary, casual, contractual, or self-employed. Among those polled, 44% indicated regular or permanent employment, indicating a highly steady job market for a sizable population. According to Ahmed (2020), being a permanent employee has several advantages. In addition to a consistent wage and work stability, permanent employees receive benefits such as health insurance, retirement savings plans, and paid time off. While the advantages of being a permanent employee vary by organization, having steady work provides peace of mind that contract or freelancing roles do not.



Table 9

Present Occupation

No.	Indicators	Frequency
1.	Officials of Government and Special-Interest Organizations, Corporate Executives, Managers, Managing Proprietors, and Supervisors	7
2.	Professionals	11
3.	Clerks	4
4.	Special Occupation	5
	Overall	27

Table 9 lists the participants' present occupations during the study. The data indicate the distribution of current occupations among respondents in various categories. Professionals had the highest frequency (11 individuals), indicating a significant presence of people working in specialized industries that require unique expertise. According to Wang and Houston (2023), many professionals are positively attracted to the teaching profession. As a result, the perceptions of the profession may need to accurately reflect the actual challenges and rewards experienced by teachers.

Table 10

Name of Company or Organization where employed

No.	Indicators	Frequency
1.	Provincial Governor's Office	1
2.	Manago Law office	1
3.	Dialed In Ph/ Chinabank Corporate Center, Samar Loop, Cebu City, Cebu	1
4.	Pareto AI, California USA	1
5.	Mang Juan Trading Corporation	1
6.	Local Government Unit Mahayag	1
7.	JH Cerilles State College, Mati, San Miguel, Zamboanga del Sur	1
8.	Commission on Elections	1
9.	PLGU- Zamboanga del Sur, Santo Niño, Pagadian City	1
10.	Jally Ventures Inc.	1
11.	Ringon Law Office, Dao, Pagadian City	1
12.	Escalante Law Office, Lacuna Bldg., Rizal Ave., Balangasan Dist., Pagadian City	1
13.	City	1
14.	Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Dao, Pagadian City	1
15.	EBA Outsourcing	1
16.	ESR Construction & Development Corporation, Tiguma, Pagadian City	1
17.	ESR Corp.	1
18.	SCC Pagadian	1
19.	Provincial Government of Zamboanga del Sur	1
20.	Did not disclose	8
	Overall	27

Table 10 presents the names of the companies or organizations of the employed participants. This table indicates the types of organizations where the participants are currently employed. The distribution of persons' employment across sectors and organizations. The data provides insight into the assessed population's occupational environment, emphasizing the prevalence of government entities and private companies among the stated employment sectors. According to Faggio and Overman's (2014) research, public-sector employment had no impact on total private-sector employment. As a result, increases in public-sector employment tended to increase total employment one-to-one.



Table 11

The Major Line of Business of the company is Presently Employed.

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Agriculture, Hunting, and Forestry	2	7.40%
2.	Public Administration and defense; Compulsory defense	12	44.40%
3.	Real estate, Renting, and Business activities	6	22.20%
4.	Hotels and Restaurants	1	3.70%
5.	Wholesale and retail trade	2	7.40%
6.	Construction	2	7.40%
7.	Extraterritorial Organizations and Bodies	1	3.70%
8.	Health and Social Work	1	3.70%
9.	Education	1	3.70%
	Overall	27	100%

Table 11 presents the company's central line of business, where participants are employed. This table covers a wide variety of private sector and public sector industries. The table shows the major lines of business of the companies where graduates currently work, along with their frequencies and percentages. Individuals' satisfaction has a favorable impact on their work behaviors (Janeb, et al., 2021). The data demonstrates the vast range of industries in which participants work, particularly emphasizing public Administration and defense. Job satisfaction can influence employee motivation and productivity (Tentama, et al., 2019).

Table 12

Place of Work

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Local	25	92.60%
2.	Abroad	2	7.40%
	Overall	27	100%

The graduates' place of work is presented in Table 12. This table categorizes participants' workplaces by whether they work locally or abroad. The distribution of individuals' workplaces is grouped by frequency and proportion. Most respondents (92.63%) indicated their employment location as local, indicating that most people work in their nation or region. In contrast, 7.4% of the sample stated that their place of employment is abroad, implying that a minority of people work outside their own country or region. Overall, the results show that most of the studied population works locally, with a significant but smaller proportion working abroad. Due to the pandemic and geopolitical concerns, fewer people are choosing to work abroad (Nuwer, 2023).

Table 13 presents the participants' first jobs after college. This table indicates the number of participants whose current job is their first or second after college.

Table 13.

First Job after college

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	10	28.60%
2.	No	25	71.40%
	Overall	35	100%

The data sheds light on the employment trajectories of individuals post-college, highlighting both those who secured their first Job directly after graduation and those who entered the workforce through other means. The quality of jobs for the underemployed has



deteriorated, with today's recent graduates increasingly accepting low-wage jobs or working part-time (Abel et al., 2014). This trend indicates a growing disparity between graduates' qualifications and the availability of suitable job opportunities. Many graduates find themselves in positions that need to fully utilize their skills and education, leading to job dissatisfaction and limited career growth.

Table 14 lists the reasons why the participants stay on the Job.

Table 14

Reasons for staying on the job

No.	Indicators	Frequency
1.	Salaries and benefits	14
2.	Career challenge	12
3.	Related to special skill	5
4.	Related to course or program of study	10
5.	Proximity to residence	6
6.	Peer Pressure	1
7.	Family influence	3
8.	Others	2
	Overall	53

Salaries and benefits are the most popular motivations for employees to stay at their current positions, accounting for 14 frequencies. Career challenges connected to specific abilities and relevance to one's course or program of study are closely followed by 12 and 10 individuals, suggesting the importance of professional development and alignment with an educational background in job satisfaction. Participants with higher monthly wages were likelier to report job satisfaction than those with lower monthly salaries (Elsahoryi et al., 2022).

The first Job's relevance to the degree obtained in college is presented in Table 15. The table presents the relevance of the political science degree to the first Job the participants took after college

Table 15

First job's relevance to the degree obtained in college

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	18	66.6%
2.	No	9	33.3%
	Overall	27	100%

The data sheds light on how closely people's first employment aligns with their educational backgrounds, highlighting both the alignment and potential incompatibilities between academic training and professional goals. Understanding the job market is critical for young and future leaders seeking their first Job out of college (Gourani, 2024).

The reasons for accepting the Job are presented in Table 16. The table lists why the participants accepted the Job offers they received.

Table 16

Reasons for Accepting the Job

No.	Indicators	Frequency
1.	Salaries and benefits	9
2.	Career challenge	12
3.	Related to special skills	9
4.	Proximity to residence	5
5.	Others	4
	Overall	39



Among the reasons mentioned, career difficulties appear as the most popular motivator, with 12 frequencies stating that they took their jobs because of the potential for professional advancement. Furthermore, nine (9) frequencies each identify pay and benefits and relevance to unique abilities, emphasizing the importance of financial concerns and alignment with one's expertise in job acceptance. Those unable to work cheerfully will experience boredom, discouragement, and unwillingness to work, reducing the quality of their jobs and lives (Saetang, 2024).

Reasons for changing jobs are presented in Table 17. This table indicates the reasons why participants are changing jobs. The table presents a series of reasons why the participants are changing jobs.

Table 17
Reasons for changing the Job

No.	Indicators	Frequency
1.	Salaries and benefits	15
2.	Career challenge	8
3.	Related to special skill	7
4.	Proximity to residence	2
5.	Others	5
	Overall	37

The salaries and benefits are the most popular incentive among the given reasons, with 15 frequencies stating that they changed jobs because of income and benefits. Additionally, eight (8) frequencies noted job problems connected to abilities, emphasizing the need to pursue new professional growth and development possibilities. The 5 others indicate 1 frequency for work from home set-up, 1 frequency for peer pressure, and 3 frequencies for family influence. According to De Carbo (2023), a lack of advancement opportunities is a significant factor in why individuals leave their positions. Employers evaluate job performance regarding attitudes, values, skills, abilities, and knowledge (Tayco et al., 2022).

The duration of the First Job is presented in Table 18. This table indicates the duration of the participants' first job.

Table 18
Duration of the First Job

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than a month	16	50%
2.	7 to 11 months	7	22%
3.	1 year to less than 2 years	5	15.6%
4.	4 years and above	2	6.2%
5.	Others	2	6.2%
	Overall	32	100%

50% of the sample reported that their first job lasted less than a month, indicating a substantial number of short-term jobs. Job seekers' views underreact to heterogeneity in job search, distorting search behavior and increasing long-term unemployment (Mueller, 2021). According to the study by Kamaruddin et al. (2018), the essential elements that favorably influence the happiness of working in the plantation industry are employer and government regulations related to plantation workers, as well as the financial profitability of the industry.



Table 19 presents the means of finding the first job. This table indicates how the participants found their first job.

Table 19
Means of Finding First Job

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	As walk-in applicant	5	14.3%
2.	Recommended by someone	20	57%
3.	Information from friends	1	2.9%
4.	Arranged by the school's job placement officer	1	2.9%
5.	Family business	1	2.9%
6.	Others	7	20%
	Overall	35	100%

Considering all factors, the data sheds insight into people's approaches to getting their first job, highlighting the importance of personal relationships and networking in hiring. The findings imply that the majority of graduates use the same means to find a job. Therefore, having friends or peers significantly impacts finding a job. According to Patel and Plowman (2022), a stronger link exists between having a best buddy at work and crucial outcomes such as employees' likelihood to recommend their workplace, intention to leave, and overall satisfaction with their employment.

Table 20 indicates the duration of the participants' job searches.

Table 20
Duration of Finding First Job

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1	1 to 6 months	6	17.14%
2	7 to 11 months	5	14.30%
3.	1 year to less than 2 years	14	40.00%
4	2 years to less than 3 years	4	11.42%
5.	3 years to less than 4 years	3	8.57%
6.	4 years and above	3	8.57%
	Overall	35	100%

The duration it took individuals to find their first job, categorized by frequency and percentage. 17.14% of the participants reported taking 1 to 6 months to secure their first job. According to Tomlinson's (2017) study, graduate employability has significant implications for graduates' career management and strategizing, including developing resources to enhance their transitions and progression in the labor market. Modern job seekers typically take an average of 5 months to find work (Schmall, 2021).

Table 21 presents the job-level position (First Job) of the participants at their first job.

Table 21
Job level position (First Job)

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Rank or clerical	17	48.60%
2.	Professional, Technical or Supervisory	11	31.40%
3.	Managerial or Executive	5	14.20%
4	Sale Agent	1	2.90%
5.	Contractual	1	2.90%
	Overall	35	100%

The participants job level positions in their first jobs, displayed in frequency and percentages. Most respondents (48.60%) stated that their first work was in a rank or clerical



position, implying entry-level or administrative employment. Most firms have similar management and staff structures, which can be distinguished by job responsibilities, seniority, knowledge, skills, title, salary, and decision-making authority (Herrity, 2024). Job satisfaction refers to employees' impressions of their working environment, relationships with colleagues, wages, and prospects for advancement (Belias & Koustelios, 2014).

Table 22 presents the participants' job-level positions (Current Job).

Table 22

Job level position (Current Job)

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Rank or clerical	8	29.62%
2.	Professional, Technical or Supervisory	9	33.33%
3.	Managerial or Executive	7	25.92%
4.	Writer	1	3.70%
5.	Contractual	1	3.70%
	Overall	27	100%

The job levels participants currently hold are sorted by frequency and proportion. Among the respondents, 29.62% characterized their current job as rank or clerical, meaning it was entry-level or administrative. 33.33% of respondents described their current jobs as professional, technical, or supervisory, showing a substantial proportion of persons in specialized or higher-level occupations. Competence and job satisfaction have a good and significant impact on teacher performance; however, organizational culture has a positive but minor effect on job satisfaction (Arifin, 2015).

Table 23 presents the initial gross monthly earnings from the participant's first job after college.

Table 23

Initial Gross Income Monthly Earnings In The First Job After College

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Below P 5,000.00	2	5.71%
2.	P 5,000.000 to less than P 10,000.00	5	14.29%
3.	P 10,000.00 to less than P 15,000.00	9	25.71%
4.	P 15,000.00 to less than P 20,000.00	7	20.00%
5.	P 20,000.00 to less than P 25,000.00	1	2.86%
6.	P 25,000.00 and above	11	31.43%
	Overall	35	100%

Table 23 displays data on individuals' initial gross monthly earnings in their first employment after college, expressed in frequencies and percentages. 31.43% reported earning P25,000 or more per month, indicating a sizable proportion of people with relatively high starting salaries. The primary component that needs to be addressed and re-evaluated is improving dietitians' job satisfaction and status to get the best possible healthcare results (Elsahoryi, 2022).

Table 24 shows the curriculum's relevance to participants' first jobs.

Table 24

The Curriculum Relevance To The Participant's First Job

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	19	54.30%
2.	No	16	45.70%
	Overall	35	100%



More than half of the respondents stated that their curriculum was relevant to their first employment, showing that many respondents saw a connection between their educational background and the requirements of their first job. According to Hack-Polay's (2020) study, there is a substantial interaction between the level of qualification and the overstatement of numerical abilities, and graduates often lack essential basic competencies such as numeracy, which significantly impacts job performance.

The competencies learned in college relevant to the first job are presented in Table 25. This table lists the competencies participants learned in college that are relevant to their first job.

Table 25

The Competencies Learned During College That Are Relevant To The First Job

No.	Indicators	Frequency
1.	Communication skills	29
2.	Human relation skills	26
3.	Entrepreneurial skills	8
4.	Problem-solving skills	24
5.	Critical thinking skills	25
6.	Active listening	1
7.	All of the above-mentioned skills	1
	Overall	114

Communication abilities are listed as the most important, with 29 frequencies emphasizing their importance in professional contexts for effective interaction and idea transmission. Workplace flexibility can result in less physical contact, limiting employees' ability to aid others (Ter et al., 2020). The findings underscore the multiple skills learned during college that help people prepare for their first jobs. According to Baird and Parayitam (2019), educational institutions should focus on improving these skills in the classroom by stressing teamwork.

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which emphasizes the interaction of self-efficacy, outcome expectancies, personal aspirations, and environmental variables, offers a thorough framework for comprehending the career pathways of Political Science graduates. Graduates' perseverance and career decisions are influenced by their self-efficacy—the belief in their abilities—and their outcome expectations, which are their views about the possible consequences of confident career choices (Lam & Santos, 2018).

Contribution of SCC to Personal and Professional Growth

The data presented in Table 26 evaluates various aspects of personal and professional growth in the context of an educational program or institution, likely referred to as SCC.

Understanding the impact of educational programs on personal and professional growth is crucial for assessing their effectiveness and guiding future improvements. The data presented in Table 26 provides a detailed evaluation of how SCC (Saint Columban College) contributes to the development of its participants. This evaluation encompasses various aspects, such as skill enhancement, career progression, and personal development. By analyzing these outcomes, stakeholders can make informed decisions to enhance program quality and ensure alignment with participant needs.

Table 26 presents SCC's Contribution to Personal and Professional Growth. This table indicates SCC's contribution to the participants' Personal and Professional Growth.



Table 26

SCC Contribution to Personal and Professional Growth

No.	Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Cultivating the values of wisdom, justice, and charity	4.194	0.749	Good
2	Manifesting Critical Thinking Skills Through Scientific Investigation	4.083	0.77	Good
3	Manifesting Problem-Solving Skills Through Scientific Investigation	3.972	0.774	Good
4	Articulating thoughts in cohesive and understandable terms	4.139	0.723	Good
5	Deepening social commitment to help improve the quality of life in the community and environment	4.306	0.668	Good
6	Achieving Excellence	4.25	0.77	Good
7	Cultivating peaceful environment	4.25	0.77	Good
8	Taking care of Mother Earth	4.167	0.878	Good
9	Serving Humanity	4.306	0.71	Good
10	Being a Conscientious Lifelong learner	4.361	0.723	Good
11	Being a Person on Dialogue	4.167	0.811	Good
12	Being a Good Steward	4.25	0.732	Good
13	Being a Service-Oriented Citizen	4.278	0.701	Good
	Overall	4.209	0.51	Good

Hypothetical Mean Range: 1.00 – 1.50 – Very Poor; 1.51 – 2.50 – Poor; 2.51–3.50 – Average, 3.51–4.50– Good; and 4.51 – 5.00 – Excellent.

The data from the table on "SCC Contribution to Personal and Professional Growth" indicates a generally positive impact on various aspects of personal and professional development among the respondents, with all indicators receiving a "Good" rating. The overall mean score is 4.209 with a standard deviation of 0.51, suggesting consistent positive feedback across all areas.

The highest-rated indicator is "Being a Conscientious Lifelong Learner" with a mean score of 4.361 and a standard deviation of 0.723. This suggests that respondents value and benefit from SCC's continuous learning and self-improvement opportunities. The lowest-rated indicator is "Manifesting Problem-Solving Skills Through Scientific Investigation," with a mean score of 3.972 and a standard deviation of 0.774. The data shows that SCC effectively fosters personal and professional growth across various skills and values, emphasizing lifelong learning and social responsibility. Using the graduate as the unit of analysis, the program exceeds the qualified registry standards while meeting the high-quality requisites. Teachers who enter through the path that requires no education have a significantly more significant impact on student progress. (Sass, 2015).

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) helps explain how these educational experiences at SCC contribute to students' self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals, enhancing their overall development (Gordon, 2022). This implies that SCC's focus on virtues like wisdom, justice, and charity, combined with developing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, adequately equips students for various career pathways. To ensure that their graduates are well-rounded individuals ready to succeed in the workplace and make valuable contributions to society, educational institutions should take advantage of these insights by emphasizing holistic development and giving students plenty of opportunities to participate in activities that develop their personal and professional competencies (Shek et al., 2020).



Suggestions from BA Political Science graduates to further improve the course curriculum

The Political Science graduates suggest improving the course curriculum based on their experiences and what they believe the institution should implement for future generations in the Political Science program. The categories that emerged from the study are *improve curriculum and instruction, implement internships, and conduct civil service reviews*.

Improve Curriculum and Instructions. Given the rapidly evolving landscape of the Political Science program, it is necessary to improve the curriculum and teaching practices.

"The school should provide experiential learning opportunities such as internships, study abroad programs, and community engagement initiatives, enabling PolSci students to put theoretical knowledge into practice and acquire hands-on experience in real-world settings. -P4

"Focus more on the Social Sciences program/subject, not on laws, since not all Pol-Sci Students want to proceed to law school." - P9

"Have enough software tools for reading & writing materials (resources, grammar checking, reference checking, plagiarism checking, AI checking)." - P11

"Integrate current events: Regularly update course material to include recent political developments and controversies, enabling students to apply theoretical concepts to real-world situations." - P15.

Implement Internships and Conduct Civil Service Reviews. Allowing Political Science students to participate in internships and civil service reviews provides them with valuable experience they can apply in real-world settings after they graduate from college.

"I would like to suggest that Political Science students should have an internship or Job Training (OJT) in order for them to have exposure to the real world or have some insight into what their life could be after they graduate from college." - P18.

"For non-board courses, please offer the students a preparation or review course for the Civil Service examination. Kay, it's very hard to find jobs these days without a license, gayud, and kani ang wla namo nakita during our college days. We are slapped by the truth, nga mas maayo ug ning take mig course nga naay board exams to secure our license. [For non-board courses, please offer the students a preparation or review course for the Civil Service examination. Because it is tough to find a job without a license, we did not see this during our college days. The truth slaps us that it is better, and we take a course with board exams to secure our license.]" - P28

The BA Political Science graduates' comments emphasize the need to continually develop the curriculum and instructional techniques to equip students with relevant,



practical skills for success across various sectors. Key recommendations include incorporating experiential learning opportunities, updating course content to address emerging political issues, encouraging collaboration with practitioners, integrating current events into the curriculum, and offering specialized tracks within the program tailored to students' interests and career goals.

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which emphasizes self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals in career development, aligns with the recommendations of BA Political Science graduates to enhance the course curriculum. Graduates emphasize the need to boost self-efficacy and ensure that outcome expectations align with practical applications, calling for a dynamic curriculum that incorporates modern political concerns and promotes critical thinking. The SCCT's emphasis on experiential learning, enhancing self-efficacy, and elucidating outcome expectations through practical experience is supported by the implementation of internships and civil service reviews (Anjum, 2020).

These suggestions emphasize that educational institutions should regularly update their curricula to reflect contemporary political challenges and trends, equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills. Study abroad options, internships, and community service projects can help students prepare for the workforce by bridging the gap between theory and practice. Partnerships with think tanks, non-profits, and government agencies can provide networking opportunities and mentorship to help students transition into the workforce more smoothly (Binder et al., 2015).

Moreover, helping students customize their education to their career goals can boost their competitiveness in the labor market and likelihood of success in the workplace. This can be achieved by providing specialized tracks and civil service review courses (Hanif, 2016). Furthermore, by aligning academic curricula with industry demands, educational institutions can ensure graduates possess the skills and knowledge employers require. Work-based learning effectively strengthens graduate employability by bridging the gap between theory and practice (Silva, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The political science program is diverse in terms of employability. Indeed, political science is not just for law school but also for government work, teaching, clerical work, and even special occupations. In addition, the educational backgrounds of the political science graduates from 2014 to 2023 at Saint Columban College were so strong that many participants passed the civil service exam and licensure examination for teachers. Moreover, based on the findings that political science graduates can pursue various advanced degrees and Training, this research suggests several career paths are available to students and graduates of Political Science. Lastly, the institution has played a significant role in developing students' skills and professionalism, as these participants have demonstrated alignment with the SCC Goals, Core Values, and attributes.

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