

Life Within the Beltway: A Career Beyond the Ivory Tower

Shawn Bird

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State Department's Office
of Opinion Research



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3431 Posvar Hall

12:30 – 2:00 pm

Abstract: The dirty, little secret most of your professors never share with you as you make your way through your graduate studies is that there are a vast array of career choices outside of academia. Many of which, I would argue, can be very rewarding, stimulating, well-compensated, family-friendly, and perhaps most important of all, impactful. Working for the U.S. government (or whichever government you call your own) can be a great way to put your area studies knowledge, linguistic skills, proficiency in different methodological approaches, or analytical dexterity to the test. It's a lot like university life, except for the endless stream of bluebooks, non-stop writing of grant proposals, or tedious department meetings (well, actually, we have those too). In my 12th year at the State Department and in the Intelligence Community, I can share with you an insider perspective of the vast ways in which very smart and skilled people are applying what they learned in graduate school in a career in the U.S. government.

Biography: Shawn L. Bird is the Acting Deputy Director for the State Department's Office of Opinion Research. He is in his 12th year at State, the first eight as an analyst of public opinion in Latin America and the last four in management. Prior to his work in the intelligence community, he taught at Tufts University. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Florida and a Master's Degree in the same from the University of Colorado.

Lunch will be provided compliments of Career Services – please RSVP by Sept. 15th to beb38@pitt.edu

This event is co-sponsored by Career Services for the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. The Ridgway Center is part of Pitt's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and the University Center for International Studies. This event is free and open to all GSPIA students and faculty.