

PUBLIC POLICY BA: RETURN ON INVESMENT

Does getting a BA in Public Policy at UCR Pay Off?

Source: Preston Cooper, FREOPP, 2024. <https://freopp.org/roi-undergraduate/>. Based on U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard "data on student completion, debt and repayment, earnings, and more."

Return on Investment (ROI) is defined as "... the increase in lifetime earnings that a student can expect when they enroll in a certain degree program, minus the costs of tuition and fees, books and supplies, and lost earnings while enrolled."

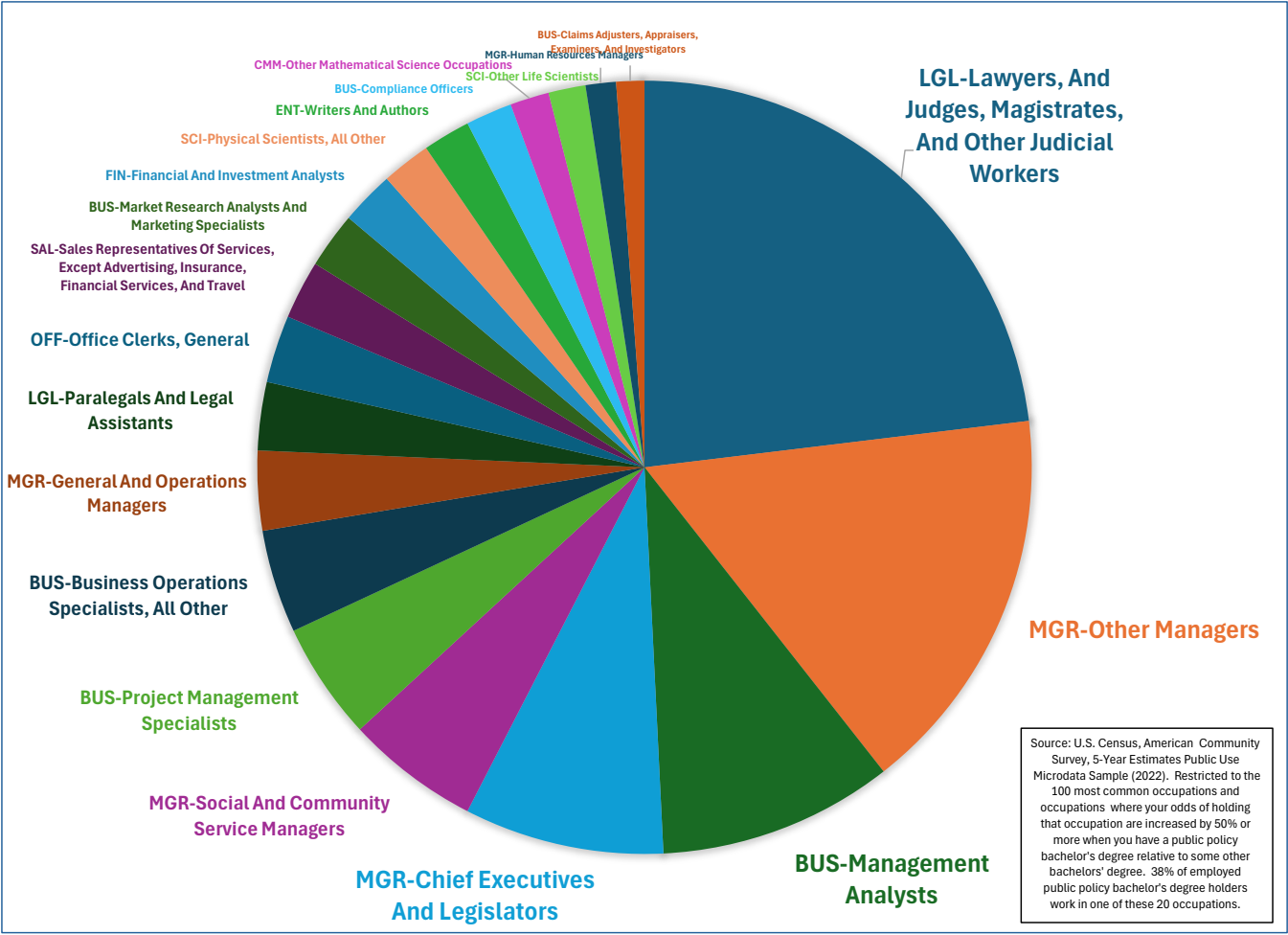
"To determine ROI, I calculate the present discounted value of the lifetime earnings of the median graduate of a higher education program. Next, I subtract the present discounted value of the typical graduate's lifetime counterfactual earnings, including their counterfactual earnings while enrolled in school. I then subtract the present discounted cost of tuition, required fees, books, and supplies. I initially assume that the typical student graduates from their program on time and spends the rest of their career working..."

Return on Investment for UCR Public Policy Majors = \$463,643.

That is, choosing to go to college, major in Public Policy at UCR, and graduate on-time is equivalent to receiving a check for \$463,643 (while not going to college).

UCR Public Policy's return on investment is estimated to be above UCR Economics (\$371,811), UCR Political Science (\$351,390), and UCR Sociology (\$292,613).

MOST COMMON OCCUPATIONS HELD BY THOSE WITH PUBLIC POLICY BACHELOR'S DEGREES



JOB OPENINGS AND WAGES IN THESE OCCUPATIONS

Occupation	National Job Posts in Past 12 Months	Average Annual Wage (National)
LGL-Lawyers, And Judges, Magistrates, And Other Judicial Workers	166,163	\$166,524
MGR-Other Managers	57,554	\$146,000
BUS-Management Analysts	338,978	\$99,500
MGR-Chief Executives And Legislators	130,563	\$239,200
MGR-Social And Community Service Managers	31,596	\$89,000
BUS-Project Management Specialists	154	\$104,600
BUS-Business Operations Specialists, All Other	518,789	\$77,100
MGR-General And Operations Managers	199,328	\$132,500
LGL-Paralegals And Legal Assistants	74,538	\$68,300
OFF-Office Clerks, General	130,088	\$47,500
SAL-Sales Representatives Of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, And Travel	623,594	\$75,800
BUS-Market Research Analysts And Marketing Specialists	110,464	\$78,000
FIN-Financial And Investment Analysts	118,601	\$100,500
SCI-Physical Scientists, All Other	2,286	\$105,500
ENT-Writers And Authors	26,662	\$88,400
BUS-Compliance Officers	40,129	\$84,400
CMM-Other Mathematical Science Occupations	237	\$114,600
SCI-Other Life Scientists	648	\$130,300
MGR-Human Resources Managers	43,814	\$149,900
BUS-Claims Adjusters, Appraisers, Examiners, And Investigators	35,598	\$84,500
Total / Weighted Average	2,649,784	\$100,014
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metro Area		
Total Employment in These Occupations = 126,081		
Average Annual Job Openings in These Occupations = 12,700		
Employment Growth in Next 10 Years in These Occupations = 10.6%		

Source: Hanover Research (2025) based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and JobsEQ.