

Between Ivory Towers and the Real World: Political Science and Practice

How relevant is political science for our societies today? Are political science academics increasingly focusing on self-perpetuating methodological and disciplinary debates without much relation to problems faced by policy-makers, politicians and the general public?

Following a recent debate sparked by Nicholas Kristof's New York Times op-ed "Professors, We Need You!", we will address questions about the role of political science today: Do political scientists participate (enough) in practice - and should they? Do they try to shape public discourse? Do they engage with the general public (through TED talks, podcasts and a variety of media outlets) and with policy-makers? Among other things we will also discuss: How much, if any, policy advice should political scientists do? Why is there so little normative theory in mainstream political science? Is the political science field 'practical', and should be practical?