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Reacquainting the Academic Bureaucracy of Social Science with Its Subjects

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ABSTRACT In this essay, we will first explain the common scholarly arguments and societal reforms that brought about bureaucratic specialization in both academia and the federal bureaucracy. Next, we will discuss criticisms of bureaucratic specialization. We will then explain flaws in David Ricci's (1984) proposed solutions to this conundrum. We will conclude by offering four alternative remedies bent on reconnecting political scientists, government agents, and citizens to one another. The first remedy suggests broad acceptance of multiple research and methodological approaches to social science inquiry. The second solution asks social science scholars to forge reciprocal links with citizens. The third suggestion specifically argues that public administration, as one of the most practical of the social sciences, can serve as a lodestar for reconnecting citizens with academia. Finally, we explain the duty that citizens have to learn about social science and citizenship.