

Processing APSA eJobs with `muRL`

Ryan T. Moore*

Andrew Reeves†

July 20, 2009

The `muRL` package can scrape job listings posted on the American Political Science Association (APSA)'s website (called eJobs) and import them directly into a spreadsheet. This allows for easy integration into form letters created by `muRL` or any other mailmerge protocol the user chooses.

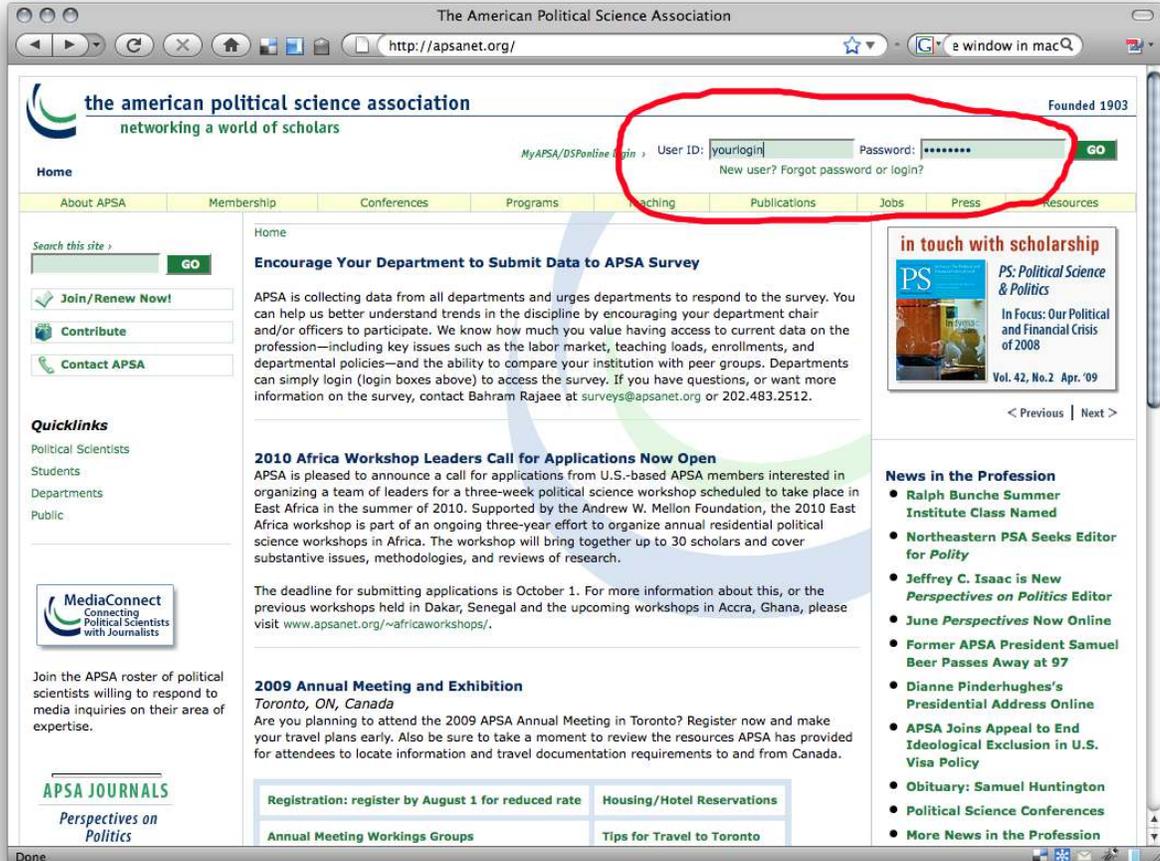
This document describes how to import eJobs from the APSA website. The process involves downloading the html files for the jobs to which you plan to apply, opening R and running `apsahtml2csv`, a function in the `muRL` package.

*Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Washington University in St. Louis, 241 Seigle Hall, Campus 1063, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis MO 63130; <http://rtm.wustl.edu>; rtm@wustl.edu; 314/935-3461.

†Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science; 232 Bay State Road, Boston University, Boston MA 02215; <http://people.bu.edu/areeves>; areeves@bu.edu; 617/353-5284.

1 Downloading eJobs

1. Go to <http://apsanet.org> and login. You must be a member of APSA in order to access eJobs.



2. Go to the eJobs link and click on it.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "APSA - American Political Science Association" with the URL "https://www.apsanet.org/myapsa/member.cfm". The page content includes:

- 2009 Conference For Chairs**: Registration for the 2009 Conference for Chairs is closed. Please join us next year! [More on the Conference for Chairs](#)
- Section Memberships**: [Political Methodology](#)
- Members Access Areas (Your current APSA membership allows you to access the following areas of website.)**
 - [eJobs- View](#) current job listings and upload your CV. (This link is circled in red in the original image)
 - [APSR: online edition](#)
 - [Perspectives on Politics: online edition](#)
 - [PS: Political Science & Politics: online edition](#)
 - [2008-09 Scholar Saver \(new\)](#): Catalogue of discounted journals, books, software, instructional material and videos for APSA members.
 - [Conference Papers: APSA Annual Meeting and Teaching and Learning](#)
 - [Directory of Political Science Faculty and Programs](#)
 - [Directory of Individual Members](#)
 - [Graduate Student Connection: APSA collection of resources for graduate students](#)
- Your APSA Purchases (Here are your APSA purchases made over the past year.)**

Description	Quantity	Invoice Number	Invoice Date	Cancel/Refund	Cost Applied
APSA portion of section dues	1	6893571	06/13/2008		\$ 3.00
S10 Polit Methodology	1	6893571	06/13/2008		\$ 26.00
Student Membership	1	6893571	06/13/2008		\$ 41.00

The browser's address bar at the bottom shows "https://www.apsanet.org/ejobs/startpage.cfm" and the website logo "www.apsanet.org" is visible in the bottom right corner.

3. At the eJobs interface, enter your search criteria. In the search below, we limit our search to assistant professor positions in Comparative Politics posted for all dates.

APSA - American Political Science Association
https://www.apsanet.org/ejobs/startpage.cfm

Place your cv or resume on the **eJobs CV/Resume Database**. Over 600 employers who list position openings on eJobs regularly search this database for candidates to recruit for their jobs.

[Add your resume](#)

Search for Job Listings

View jobs posted:
Or, [View all new jobs from the last 2 days](#)

Annual Meeting Attendance:

Title of Position:

Deadlines: / / Open Until Filled

Start Date:

Subfield:

Area of specialization:
Choose from this list or enter your own.

Salary Range:

Type of Institution:

Geographic Region:

Criteria:
The above criteria is:

[Search](#)

© Copyright 2009 American Political Science Association (APSA)
www.apsanet.org

4. The search returns the following results. We click on the search results for Shepherd University.

APSA - American Political Science Association
https://www.apsanet.org/ejobs/elisting/esearch-results.cfm

home

About APSA | Membership | Conferences | Programs | Teaching | Publications | Jobs | Press | Resources

Search this site >

E-Jobs > Search Results

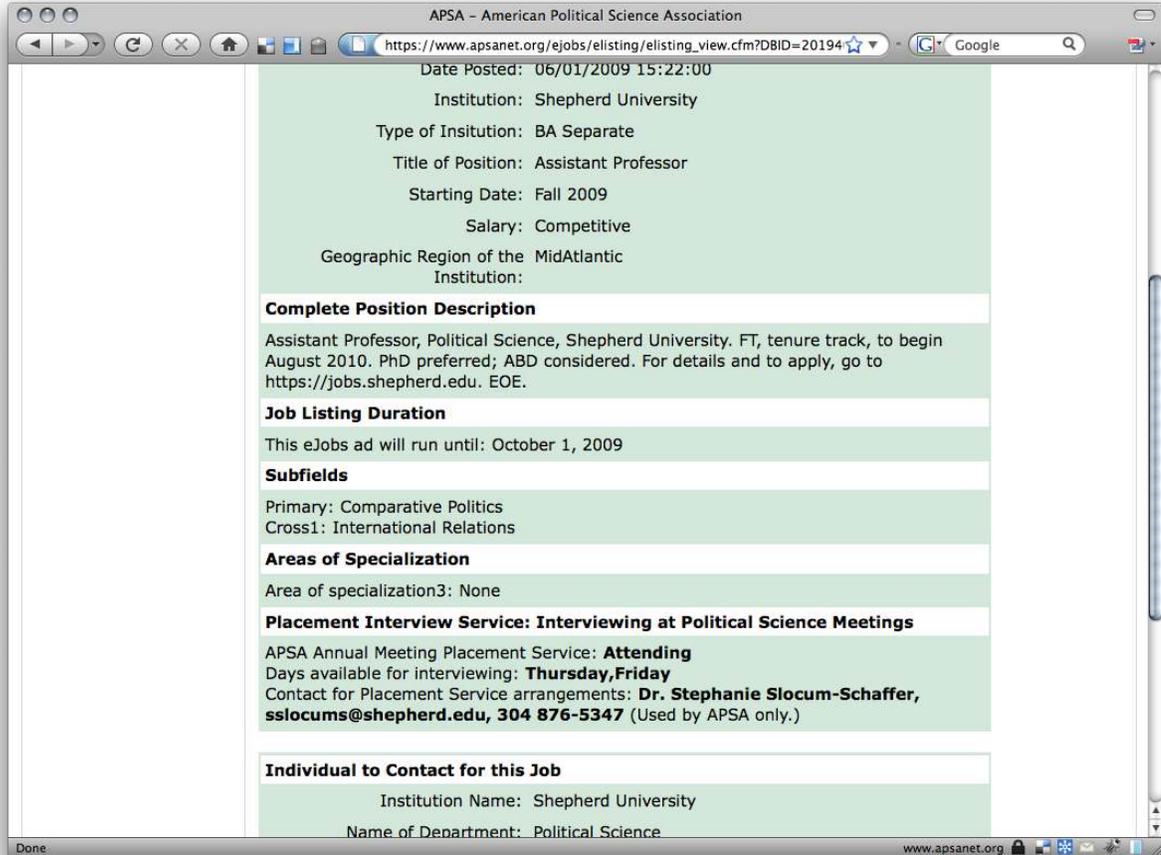
If you have questions be sure to visit our [FAQ list](#).

[Start a New Search](#) | [Refine This Search](#)

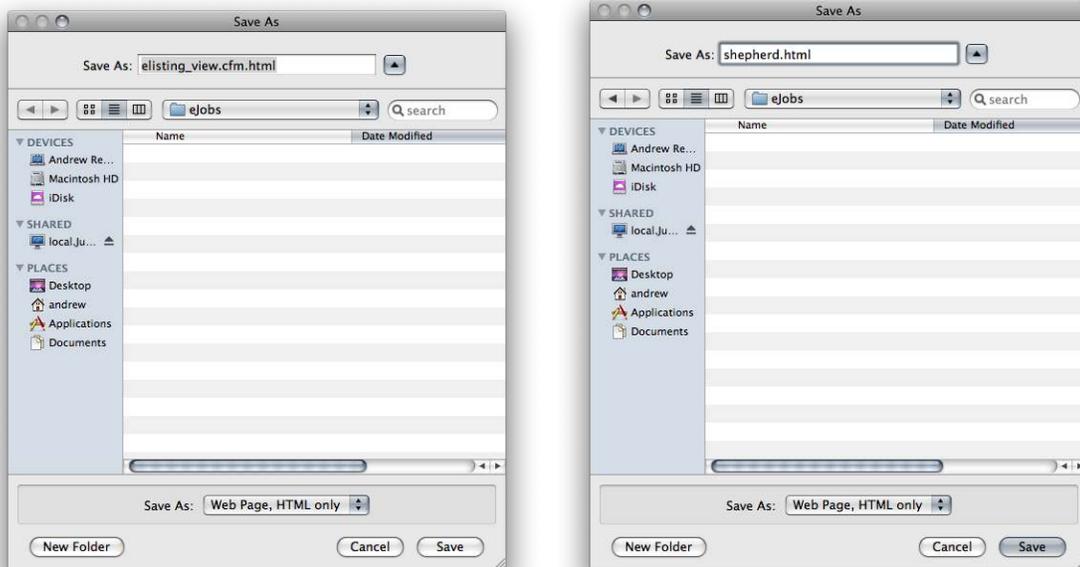
These Listings Match Your Search Criteria:

(ID)	Position Title and Institution	Date Posted	Salary Range	Subfields	Date Posted and Valid Through	Deadline
(14885)	Assistant Professor Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economicas	06/02/2009	Competitive	Comparative Politics , Methodology	06/02/2009 through 10/02/2009	08/09/2009
(14881)	Assistant Professor Shepherd University	06/01/2009	Competitive	Comparative Politics , International Relations	06/01/2009 through 10/01/2009	
(14871)	Assistant Professor Eckerd College	05/28/2009	Negotiable	International Relations , Comparative Politics	05/28/2009 through 10/28/2009	10/31/2009
(14859)	Assistant	05/14/2009	Competitive	Comparative Politics ,	05/14/2009 through	

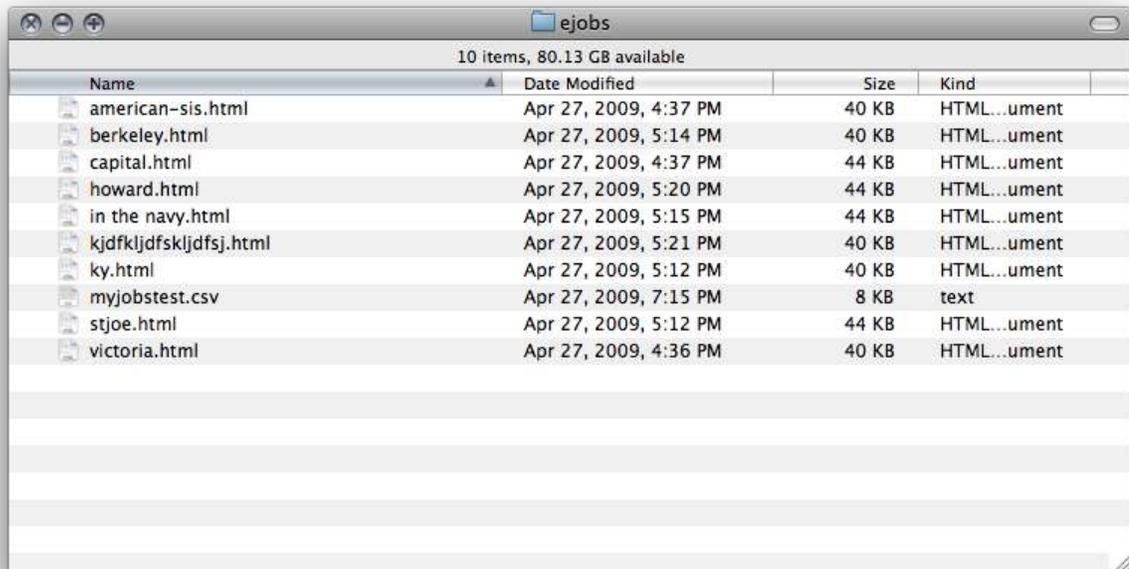
5. We decide that we would like to apply for the job at Shepherd and so we will import the listing into the jobs spreadsheet.



- Save the eJob as an html file. The file should be saved in a folder dedicated to all eJob listings for which the user wishes to import to the jobs spreadsheet. The user can name the file any unique name of their choosing. We recommend that the user maintain the .html file extension for each file.¹



- Repeat the previous step until you have downloaded all of the eJobs that you would like to import into the spreadsheet. Below is the folder containing all of the eJobs for which we plan to apply. Again, note that the user can specify any name although they should use a consistent file extension.



¹In `apsahtml2csv`, the function searches for .html and .htm files by default in the (user specified) jobs folder. See the help file for `apsahtml2csv` for further information.

2 Importing eJobs into muRL

Once you have downloaded eJobs onto your local machine in a specified folder, you can then use muRL to scrap these html files and create a spreadsheet. Once you have loaded the muRL package in R, you can use the `apshtml2csv` function to generate the spreadsheet. The function takes arguments for the location of the directory containing the saved eJob html files, the extensions of those files (*e.g.* .html or .htm) and the name and location of the spreadsheet (saved in comma separated format) to be generated from the files in the eJobs directory.²

The following code details the procedure for generating a spreadsheet called jobs.csv.

```
> library(murl)
> apshtml2csv(directory = "eJobs", file.name = "jobs.csv", file.ext = ".html")
```

The jobs.csv file is a spreadsheet containing the details of each job position downloaded into the eJobs directory by the user. The fields include the APSA listing ID, date the job was posted, type of institution, title of the position, start date, salary, region, name of institution, contact person, address, phone, and description of the job. *Note that there is no standard method of entering the contact person, so the user must make the appropriate adjustments.* For example, the name of the contact person may be entered as *Dr. Mary Smith, Mary Smith, Mary J. Smith, PhD, or Professor. M. Smith, .* We recommend creating additional fields of *title, fname, lname* and manually filling these fields based on the information in the *contact* field.

3 Creating a mailmerge

Once the ejobs spreadsheet has been created using `apshtml2csv`, we use muRL to create a T_EX file. Again, we manually add the title (*title*), first name (*fname*), and last name (*lname*) fields based on the *contact* field scraped from ejobs. The following lines of code generate the T_EX file which can be compiled to create the typeset letters.

```
> murl.ejobs <- read.murl("jobs.csv")
> write.murl(murl.ejobs)
Data stored as file 'mailmerge.tex'.
The current working directory is /Users/JohnnyF/Desktop
```

²See the help file for `apshtml2csv` for more information.