

## **Collecting and Reporting Job Placement Data**

### **Why is this information so important to CEPH?**

The US Department of Education (USDE) considers graduation and job placement rates to be important indicators of quality; thus, as a recognized accreditor, CEPH is required to track job placement rates from its accredited schools and programs. USDE requires accreditors to provide evidence that they collect these rates every year and take action when reported rates do not meet the published minimum threshold.

### **When is the best time to collect job placement data?**

CEPH understands that it is easiest to collect job placement information at the time of graduation and that response rates decline as time passes. However, the criteria state that graduates have up to one year to secure employment or pursue further education; collecting job placement information in a shorter timeframe may not provide an accurate picture of graduates' abilities to secure employment.

CEPH recommends that you use the one-year timeframe to your advantage so that graduates have the maximum amount of time to report a successful outcome. The criteria define an acceptable response rate of at least 30%.

Also, note that CEPH does not require that data collection occur through traditional/formal survey methods or that data be collected at a single point in time. Some schools and programs prefer to collect information throughout students' final semester and during the first year post-graduation, updating data as each individual secures employment or proceeds to another education/training program. Such an approach allows schools and programs to present more accurate data, as some students secure employment or admission to further education before graduating and some take some time after graduation to do so.

### **Our graduates experience "survey fatigue." How do we overcome this tendency to ignore communications from the university?**

CEPH recognizes how difficult it can be to stay in touch with graduates and to collect this kind of information. Consider the following points when communicating with alumni:

- Contact should come directly from the school/program, ideally from the department/concentration/specific degree program that the student completed, rather than from a university-based alumni association. Schools and programs report much higher response rates with personalized, decentralized data collection
- Social media can be extremely useful for maintaining connections with students and alumni. Research helpful hints and best practices for using social media
- Note that nearly all students have, and use, web-based e-mail addresses in addition to their university e-mail accounts. Past concerns about maintaining valid contact information for students are less relevant, as schools and programs may collect these addresses while students are still enrolled
- Emphasize that a variety of constituents, including the government, prospective students and the public, are very interested in understanding employment rates as one important indicator of the

value of a public health degree, and the need to report this information will likely continue to increase

- Build a relationship with alumni by including statements such as
  - The value of your degree is related to our accreditation status, and reporting student outcomes is important to maintaining accreditation
  - We want to maintain a relationship with our graduates and create a two-way street for dialogue and program improvement. For example, we hope that your organization may be able to serve as a practice site for future students or as a collaborator in faculty research and service
  - We look forward to staying in touch regarding continuing education opportunities
  - We hope that you may be able to serve as a guest lecturer on an area of expertise
  - We would like to build connections with our alumni so that current students can learn about specific employment sectors and positions

### **Can you provide an example timeline for collecting employment data?**

March 2013 – departments/concentrations begin collecting information for students planning to graduate in May 2013, as students secure employment or admission to additional education and training programs

May 2013 – students graduate

May 2014 – survey administered (if using a single point-in-time data collection approach, rather than ongoing data collection)

August 2014 – data collection complete (if using a single point-in-time data collection approach, rather than ongoing data collection)

September 2014 – begin data analysis

December 2014 – submit annual report to CEPH with data and accompanying narrative, if needed