

4.4 ADVISING AND CAREER COUNSELING. THERE SHALL BE AVAILABLE A CLEARLY EXPLAINED AND ACCESSIBLE ACADEMIC ADVISING SYSTEM FOR STUDENTS, AS WELL AS READILY AVAILABLE CAREER AND PLACEMENT ADVICE.

4.4.a. Description of the school's advising services for students in all degree programs, including sample materials such as student handbooks. Include an explanation of how faculty are selected for and oriented to their advising responsibilities.

Undergraduate programs: GW uses DegreeMap, an online advising and degree auditing system, to help advise students. DegreeMap is available to both students and faculty. Students in the EXNS BS programs are assigned a faculty advisor based on their track. The Office of Student Affairs provides professional and academic advice to students in the BS Public Health program. Also, the program director for the Bachelor of Science in Public Health provides professional advisement for those students.

Masters programs: Departmental faculty program directors, along with other faculty affiliated with each track, provide academic advisement in selecting appropriate elective courses and identifying a practicum experience relevant to career goals. Students also are assigned a Culminating Experience Advisor. Department chairs select program directors and practicum directors. The majority of faculty will serve as advisors for the culminating experience. Student advisement is generally limited to a small subset of faculty who provide consistency via advising many students.

Doctoral programs: The doctoral students receive advisement from the program director and/or a faculty member designated by the program director, in addition to their thesis supervisor and thesis committee. Selection and orientation of advisors is the responsibility of doctoral program directors.

Handbooks/website links relevant to faculty advising:

<http://publichealth.GW.edu/pdf/Handbook.pdf> and <http://publichealth.GW.edu/academics/advising>

For DrPH:

http://publichealth.gwu.edu/pdf/DrPH_Handbook_2014.pdf
, http://publichealth.gwu.edu/pdf/drph_faq.pdf

4.4.b. Description of the school's career counseling services for students in all degree programs. Include an explanation of efforts to tailor services to specific needs in the school's student population.

The SPH offers a wide variety of Career Services to undergraduate and graduate students, as well as alumni. Extended services include hosting events, coordinating applicable programming, and providing one-on-one counseling for students and graduates. We also partner with hiring organizations to facilitate opportunities for students to interact with employers and industry leaders through both the SPH and the broader GW community, in order to ensure that the information received is relevant and timely.

Public Health and Health Services Career Fair

SPH hosts an annual Public Health and Health Services Career Fair every spring. This fair is open to all GW students and alumni. Representatives from government, non-profit and private sectors attend and meet with students to discuss their organizational needs and accept resumes. We promote the annual career fair in both the student and the alumni newsletters, as well as through the SPH website and social media including LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. The event is also highlighted on the GW Calendar of Events. On average, more than 40 employers register for the Career Fair, and over 200 students attend each year.

Career Panels

The SPH hosts GW alumni from diverse professional backgrounds on panels addressing a variety of topics to provide opportunities for alumni to share their experiences around transitioning from an academic life to a professional career. We include diverse alumni in the fields of consulting, government and non-profit agencies, pharmaceuticals, and others. These panels are hosted twice annually (In fall and spring), and are coordinated by both faculty/departments and/or student associations in addition to SPH Career Services. GW Career Services also hosts broader career panels for all students/alumni across the University and the SPH Career Services office advertises these to the SPH community.

Career Counseling

SPH Career Services and the GW Center for Career Services (<http://careerservices.GW.edu/>) have dedicated staff available to undergraduate and graduate students for one-on-one career counseling. Undergraduates utilize the services of the GW Career Center for career coaching, assessments, and employment support. The GW Center for Career Services offers career fairs and other events for all students. Graduate students meet directly with the SPH Career Services Counselor. Both residential and online students have access for individual coaching; they may visit in person, via email, phone, or Adobe Connect (<http://publichealth.GW.edu/services/career-center/counseling>). The SPH Career Services department maintains a jobs database, documents library, and hosts events for the graduate students.

Most commonly, services used by our students include:

Undergraduate Students

- Career Discovery Assessment Tools
- Resume/Cover Letter Critique
- Job Search Resources
- (<http://careerservices.GW.edu/services>)

Graduate Students

- Resume/Cover Letter Revision
 - Job Description Analysis
 - Job Search Strategy Discussions
 - Interview Preparation
 - Offer/Salary Negotiation
- (<http://publichealth.GW.edu/services/career-center/counseling>)

Online Resources

The SPH provides a variety of resources to assist students and alumni in identifying and making use of career opportunities. These include:

- Access to the *GWork for Public Health* database to search for open jobs, internships and fellowships (<https://publichealth-gwu-csm.symplicity.com>).
- Weekly *SPH Student Newsletter* updates students via email of school wide activities, upcoming events and deadlines, and other notable information. Career Services has proven to be one of the most viewed sections of the newsletter and contains a Q&A section to allow students to ask questions anonymously.
- The *SPH Career Center Website* features links to templates, resources, job banks, professional associations, Careers in Public Health overviews, and more. (<http://publichealth.GW.edu/services/career-center>).
- *LinkedIn*- The broader GW Public Health Network is the umbrella group for our current students and alumni. Underneath this network are specialty subgroups including; BPHSN and MPH@GW, among others. Subgroups can be created for departments and student organizations based on their agreement to manage these networks and produce relevant public health discussion on a regular basis, to better effect impact of engagement.

Many alumni events are hosted by SPH and/or GW. Alumni events focused on career support and career networking are hosted often for our students and alumni. For examples of events, go to **ERF 4.4.b: Alumni Events**.

4.4.c. Information about student satisfaction with advising and career counseling services.

Student satisfaction is paramount to the SPH Student Services team. To date, the only quantifiable information available has been collected through graduation surveys administered university-wide. The table below is summary data from SPH students from the past three years on questions regarding career services from the Graduate Student Graduation Survey. The response rate varies between 70-80% of graduating students. The complete GW Graduate Survey results are available in **ERF 2.7.b**.

Table 4.4.c.: GW Graduation Survey Response Summary

Question	2012	2013	2014
Usage and evaluation of guidance re; career options and plans (1-5 ¹)			
Other faculty or staff in department or program	3.3	3.4	3.3
Your advisor	3.1	3.3	3.2
Your school's career center	2.8	3.0	2.7
GW alumni	3.3	3.2	3.2
GW's career center	2.8	2.7	2.7
Have you received advice on how to search for a job?	44% no ²	37% no	41% no
Have you received advice on how to prepare a resume/CV?	37% no	34% no	32% no
Have you received advice on how to prepare for an interview?	52% no	49% no	52% no
Level of satisfaction with advice about career options within academia	0% diss ³	2% diss	0% diss
Level of satisfaction with advice about career options outside academia	0% diss	5% dis	4% diss

¹5 = excellent; 1 = poor

²no = did not receive advice

³diss = somewhat or very dissatisfied

The results from the graduation survey indicate a need for improvement. Possibly, our midcareer students have not sought advice on basic issues such as how to search for a job, prepare a resume, or prepare for an interview. However, we would like to see a higher average level of satisfaction, at least a 3.5 rating, with advisors', faculty members', and the SPHs' provision of career guidance. Of note, the SPH does not have a career center, but rather a career consultant. Prior to March 2013, we had two staff members dedicated to career services: one for alumni and one for current students. Both employees left the University this past year, so that we were understaffed in this area for several months. In February 2015, the SPH hired the current Career Consultant.

We are currently engaged in various needs assessments to ascertain the most efficient and effective ways to serve our students and alumni. We are also working more collaboratively with the GW Center for Career Services and engaging faculty to provide more career advice. SPH hosts periodic roundtable sessions with the PHSA to learn more about student expectations and how we can meet them. The leadership of the Office of Student Affairs meets regularly with Faculty and Practicum Advisors to discuss best practices and to share information to gauge students' satisfaction with career services. Student intake surveys, current student satisfaction surveys, and post-graduation surveys will be conducted

regularly to gather information. Events include participant evaluations to gather feedback for future events.

4.4.d. Description of the procedures by which students may communicate their concerns to school officials, including information about how these procedures are publicized and about the aggregate number of complaints and/or student grievances submitted for each of the last three years.

Informally, students are always invited to speak directly with program directors, chairs, or the academic dean about any relevant concerns.

Through the PHSA, students are represented on the SPH Executive Advisory Committee where they report concerns and activities every month. Students are also represented on most of SPH's Standing Committees including; Curriculum Committee; Graduate Student Admissions Committee; and Research Committee as well as the Ad Hoc Committees such as Practice and the Student Affairs Advisory Board. The SPH Student Affairs Advisory Board includes representation from students, faculty, and staff and provides a forum for in depth discussion of any issue of concern to students.

If a student is concerned about a grade, the SPH Grade Appeal process is described in the Student Handbook: <http://publichealth.GW.edu/pdf/Handbook.pdf>. In brief, grade appeals are primarily resolved by course faculty. Students who are dissatisfied may take a grade appeal first to the relevant Department Chair and then, if unresolved, to a faculty review committee, who hears the case and makes a recommendation to the Dean, who has final authority.

If a student has a concern that has not been satisfactorily handled at the School level, he/she can elevate the complaint to the university level through a grievance process outlined in the Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities (page 5); <http://my.GW.edu/files/policies/Guide%20to%20Student%20Rights%202011-2012.pdf>. This guide is available online to all students of GW. An Associate Dean of Students for Student Administrative Services oversees the grievance process for the university. We have not had any student grievances filed against the SPH in the past three years.

4.4.e. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met and an analysis of the school's strengths, weaknesses and plans relating to this criterion.

This criterion is met, with commentary.

Strengths:

- The SPH provides a strong system of academic advisors to support students in degree programs at all levels via provision of consistent and timely advice throughout their programs.
- The SPH provides an easily accessible platform for students and alumni for career support.

- The SPH has provided strong partnerships with employers and faculty and the University to support our students.
- SPH has provided a number of opportunities and channels for student participation and feedback and identification and resolution of problems that are experienced by students.
- Hired an Assistant Dean for Student Services.

Weaknesses:

- While there are areas of strength (BS and MHA programs), overall, the career advising is not highly rated by students.
- Career advice has been overly dependent on the effort of limited staff.
- Student career advising was disrupted by turnover among career counselors this past year.

Future Plans:

- Transition career advising data to Symplicity so that we can maintain records of student meetings, track reasons for appointments, and collect offer/hire and compensation information.
- Create student surveys to be administered at critical points in time to capture attitudes and service area strengths and weaknesses. The University surveys, while useful, are not timely and lack detail and specificity about individual efforts (e.g., we have not collected information about our Career Fair.)
- Roundtable sessions with students are being conducted to brainstorm and provide a platform for them to present ideas to improve our efforts.
- Solicit feedback from faculty regarding their greatest needs for advisement and career support as well as their capacity to help in specific areas.
- Increase engagement of our alumni in career mentoring.
- Partnerships will continue to expand to include other units within the University.