

**Career and Educational Opportunities of
University of Toronto Health Studies Graduates**

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Purpose

The job description for the Health Studies Career Research Assistant was outlined to include the responsibility for raising awareness amongst Health Studies students of possible careers and further education opportunities available in the Health Studies field.

Specific tasks were to include: Researching and producing an inventory of career and education opportunities including relevant graduate programs and careers available to students with a bachelor's degree in Health Studies, as well as developing a contact list of alumni interested in being involved with the Health Studies program (e.g. job shadowing opportunities).

Project objectives included:

1. Form contacts with Health Studies alumni
2. Compile information on relevant opportunities available with a Bachelors degree in Health Studies
3. Create a list of potential occupations that Health Studies students can pursue after graduation
4. Establish the most appropriate way to publicize the findings among current Health Studies students

Background

One of the objectives of the project outlined at the initial meeting with Prof. Dennis Magill, Managing Director of the Centre for Urban Heath Initiatives; Prof. Lorne Tepperman, Health Studies Program Director; work-study students; and the staff at the Center

for Urban Health Initiatives highlighted the need to form contacts with Health Studies alumni. Since the Health Studies program is relatively new, it currently has only four cohorts of graduates for a total of 39 alumni. Despite a relatively small number of students, information is incomplete regarding the experiences of such graduates following their completion of the program. The collection of data on alumni was determined to be beneficial in ascertaining the various graduate programs and occupations that students with a bachelor's degree in Health Studies could consider upon graduation. Furthermore, establishing relations with alumni was proposed to be valuable by providing various opportunities for Health Studies students to participate in job-shadowing programs, information sessions, and placements. Finally, alumni were seen as a potential source of support for the program by providing funding through donations.

The second objective of the project was to compile information on relevant opportunities available with a Bachelors degree in Health Studies—both graduate programs and careers—through various other means, including the use of libraries and the Internet.

From the outset, it was established that the findings would be presented to current students and made available through the Health Studies website. Based on such discussions, a work plan was devised outlining the tasks necessary to gather information on the following topics:

- 1) Health Studies alumni (the various graduate programs they are currently enrolled in or the occupational posts they hold)
- 2) Relevant graduate programs across Canada

3) Relevant job opportunities

4) Information dissemination (the most appropriate way to publicize our findings among current Health Studies students)

The data were to be collected through interviews with Health Studies students, alumni, and professors/instructors, resources available at the University of Toronto Career Centre, information on programs offered through the websites of other universities, and reports from the Ministry of Colleges and Employment and Immigration Canada available at Robarts Library.

Results

Alumni Interviews

A total of 24 of the 39 Health Studies alumni were contacted and interviewed (see Appendix A for interview questionnaire). The main findings of the interviews are organized in the chart that follows (see Figure 1). The interview results show that there have been four cohorts of graduates since 2003. All of the graduates completed a major in Health Studies, except for one who was enrolled in the specialist program. About half of the alumni combined health studies with a major in science such as human biology, physiology, psychology and zoology. The other half combined it with a social science or humanities major such as sociology, bioethics, history, anthropology, and political science. The majority of the alumni found out about the Health Studies program when ‘browsing’ through the course calendar. Others heard about it from announcements given in their first year lectures, program fairs, friends, and counselors at the University College Registrar’s office.

The main purpose of the interviews was to learn about alumni's experiences following their graduation from Health Studies. Of the 24 alumni reached, four are currently working, fourteen are currently studying, and six are doing both. The majority of those who have pursued graduate studies are enrolled in a public health related masters program such as epidemiology and health administration. Other graduate programs include occupational health, occupational therapy, sport psychology, and neuroscience. Three of the alumni are at OISE working on a Masters in Education, one is currently attending medical school, and one is completing a Masters in Management and Professional Accounting at the Rotman School of Business. Of the alumni who are currently working, the more recent graduates hold administrative positions in hospitals and data analyst positions for health facilities. Early graduates, who have undergone further training and education, are working as a nurse, a massage therapist, a hospital assistant director and as a teacher. All of the alumni expressed that their undergraduate education in Health Studies provided them with invaluable skills for their current work and/or study. Many of the graduate students stated that the research skills they acquired from the Health Studies program prepared them well for graduate studies and put them ahead of other students in their program who did not have the same background. Because most of the alumni are currently studying, only three agreed to allow current Health Studies students to job-shadow them. It is likely that more will be willing to participate in a job-shadowing program in the future, once they have more established careers.

The second portion of the interview asked the alumni whether they had participated in placement opportunities offered through some of the Health Studies courses (such as UNI200 and UNI400) and their experiences in them. The interviews suggested that all

the students who participated in the placements found the experience to be invaluable. However, many also found that the placements need to be better structured and organized. More specifically, it was concluded that the professor, placement coordinator, and host institution need to clearly establish the tasks expected of the student. For information about this section of the interview, refer to the Health Studies Placement Report (Iurillo, et al., 2007).

Fig. 1 – Health Studies Alumni Interview Results

Grad Year	Major/Spec	Other programs of study	Way by which program was made known	Working/ Studying	Occupation	School/Program of Study	Job-shadow?	Web Photo?	Future Contact?
2003	Major	Major: Biology/ Minor: Sociology	Through similar health-related program at UTSC	Working and studying	Nurse		Yes	Yes	Yes
2003	Major	Major: Sociology	Course Calendar	Working	Registered Nurse		No (Maternity Leave)	Yes	Yes
2003	Major	Major: Human Biology	Sociology course lecture	Working and studying	Mt. Sinai Hospital Assistant Director		Yes	Yes	Yes
2004	Major	Major: Sociology	Sociology lecture	Working and studying	Data Analyst	UBC/ masters in health administration	No	yes	yes
2004	Major	Major: Political Science		Studying		U of Western Ontario/Epidemiology		Yes	Yes
2004	Major	Major: Sociology	Course Calendar	Studying		U of T/ Occupational Therapy		Yes	Yes
2004	Major	Major: Bioethics		Working and studying	Massage Therapist, Curriculum developer at department of education at private college for Massage Therapists (CMTO)	M. Ed. OISE/ Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning	Yes	Yes	Yes
2004	Major	Minor: History, Minor: Anthropology	Lecture for another course	Working	Elementary school teacher		No	Yes	Yes
2005	Major	Major: Sociology	Program displays fair	Studying		U of T OISE/ masters in childhood education	No	yes	Yes

2005				Studying		Emory University/ masters in public health			
2005	Major	Major: Human Biology	Course Calendar	Working and studying	Student accountant (Coop) at Ernst and Young	U of T Rotman/ Masters in management and professional accounting	no	no	Yes
Grad Year	Major/Spec	Other programs of study	Way by which program was made known	Working/ Studying	Occupation	School/Program of Study	Job- shadow?	Web Photo?	Future Contact?
2005	Major	Major: Sociology	Registrar at UC told her	Studying		MAC/ masters in occupational health	no	yes	Yes
2005	Specialist		Class announcement	Working	Administrative work at Sick Kids		no	no	Yes
2005	Major	Major: Political Science, Minor: anthropology	Course Calendar	Studying		U of T OISE/ bachelors in education	no	yes	Yes
2005	Major	Major: Physiology	Course Calendar	Studying		Watson School in Cold Spring Harbor/PhD in neuroscience	No	No	Yes
2006	Major	Major: Physiology	Course Calendar	Studying		Queens/Medical School	no	yes	Yes
2006	Major	Major: Psychology	Book with list of POSTs	Studying		U of T/ Masters in sport psychology	No	yes	Yes
2006	Major	Major: Bioethics	From a friend who was in it	Studying		U of T/ school of continuing studies	no	no	Yes
2006				Studying		McGill/ masters in occupational health			
2006	Major	Major: Life Science	Course Calendar	Studying		Western/ masters in epidemiology	no	yes	Yes
2006	Major	Major: Life Science	Course Calendar	Working and studying	Hospital for Sick Children Data Analyst		Perhaps	Yes	Yes
2006	Major	Major: Life Science	Course Calendar	Studying		U of T/Public Health		Yes	Yes
2006	Major	Major: Human Biology	Course Calendar	Studying		U of T/ Public Health		Yes	Yes
2006	Major	Major: Biology Minor: Zoology	Course Calendar	Working	Legal Secretary		No	Yes	Yes

Alumni Profiles

The interviews with the alumni concluded with a question inquiring as to whether respondents would be willing to submit profiles of themselves to display on the Health Studies program website. While most agreed, only nine could be subsequently contacted for their profiles. Since all of the alumni stated that they would welcome future contact from the Health Studies program, it is recommended that the program continue to contact those who agreed to have their profiles submitted.

Abi Sriharan

“I am the Assistant Director of the Peter A. Silverman Centre for International Health (PASCiH), based at the Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto. At the PASCiH Ms. Sriharan is responsible for developing International Partnerships and programs in medical education, eHealth and Professional development programs. I am also appointed as the Fellow in International Continuing Medical Education at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine, Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development. I completed my undergraduate degree from the University of Toronto, with double majors in health studies and human biology. I recently completed a Masters degree at the University of Oxford, and currently reading for my doctoral degree. I have received numerous awards in recognition of my academic, research and community service achievements, including the 2006 Global Alliance for Medical Education's "Innovations in Global Medical Education and Professional Development award.”

Chris Shutsa

“I received an H.BSc. from the University of Toronto, completing a specialist in Human Biology (Health and Disease), a major in Health Studies, and a minor in Physiology. I am currently employed at Millennium Research Group (MRG) as a Senior Analyst and Team Leader. MRG is a medical market research company based in Toronto that is focused on researching and forecasting medical device markets around the world.”

Jennifer Ramsdale

“I graduated from the University of Toronto in 2004 with a double major in Health Studies and Bioethics. I now work in the department of education at a private college for Massage Therapists doing curriculum development and teaching a class on Clinical Decision-making. I have also worked with the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario in developing their new charter on professionalism. Many of my career choices relate to promoting Massage Therapies’ place as a regulated health profession in Ontario as well as describing the ethical responsibilities therapists have as providers of health care. I am currently both working and studying; I am a practicing Massage Therapist and have recently begun my M.Ed. at OISE in their Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning department.”

Sume Ndumbe-Eyoh

“I am currently in the Masters of Health Sciences program (Health Promotion/Global Health) at the University of Toronto. After graduation in May 2006, I spent the summer as program coordinator of a student outreach program at the Centre for Social Justice, and remains involved with the organization. As an international student, I found that University College and the Health Studies Program were great places to explore my interests in health issues from non-medical perspectives through the flexibility in courses offered. Health Studies was in many ways my introduction to complex world of public health which is a truly exciting field.”

Kathryn Decker

“I graduated from the Health Studies program in 2005. Currently, I am enrolled in a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program at McMaster University in Hamilton. My career aspirations include working in pediatric occupational therapy and possibly another Masters in Health Administration. My degree in Health Studies has proved invaluable to me in my current studies, as many health professionals are moving away from the medical model and taking a more holistic approach to treatments and interventions. Health Studies grads are uniquely prepared upon graduation for many areas, the health professions most certainly being one of them!”

Nooshin Khobiz

“I graduated from U of T with a double major in Health Studies and Life Sciences, and I am currently a Masters student in Population Epidemiology at the University of Western Ontario. Looking back, I realize that Health Studies provided me with the tools and motivation necessary to pursue graduate studies, and to eventually conduct research in public health. The experiences and knowledge I've gained as a Health Studies student will stay with me for a lifetime.”

Christine Heinola

“After graduating from the health studies program at the University of Toronto, I immediately began my employment at Clinidata Corporation, the company that provides the Telehealth Ontario service for the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. After two years, I was accepted to the Master of Health Administration program at the University of British Columbia, where I commute from Toronto to Vancouver on a monthly basis. The research and analytical skills that I developed in the health studies undergraduate program, as well as my work-related experience, were invaluable in pursuing my goal of becoming an effective manager in the health care field.”

Cedric Manlhiot

“My main interest is clinical research, especially the analysis of medical outcomes after treatment and/or surgery. My current work entails analyzing medical databases in order to answer specific clinical questions and to prepare results from these analyses for publication in medical journals. I also work on clinical trials that test the efficacy and safety of new drugs for paediatric populations. After I have gained sufficient experience, I plan to obtain a Masters/PhD degree in clinical epidemiology and become a clinical trial investigator. As for current Health Studies students, the best advice I can give is to take advantage of the links the program has with research institutes. The research experience you can gain is worth a lot after graduation.”

Howard An

“I graduated from U of T with Majors in Physiology and Health Studies in 2006. I'm currently a medical student at Queen's University, Class of 2010. I find many of the principles I learned in Health Studies very pertinent and very applicable to my current program. Health Studies is an excellent PoST that offers students a great deal of opportunity especially if you are interested in research. Through the program I was able to set up projects at the Hospital for Sick Children and to experience, firsthand, research in health sociology. I would definitely encourage anybody in the program to take advantage of the connections and contacts that the Health Studies program provides, be it through brown bag lunches or its unique seminar courses.”

Potential Graduate Programs for Health Studies Students

The second objective of the project was to create list of potential graduate programs across Canada that Health Studies students could consider upon graduation. As health-related careers are the most likely path for Health Studies students, the following list consists only of health-related programs across Canada (See Fig. 2). As Health Studies is an interdisciplinary program that provides a foundational background covering a broad range of health-related topics, some occupations require further education and training. Health professional programs have not been included in the list.

Fig. 2 – Potential Graduate Programs for Health Studies Graduates
(Compiled from information provided by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada at <http://oraweb.aucc.ca/>)

Discipline	Province	University	Credential	Program Name	Level
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	AB	University of Alberta	Diploma	Postgraduate Diploma in Health Services Administration	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	BC	The University of British Columbia	Degree	Master of Health Administration (MHA)	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	BC	Royal Roads University	Degree	MA in Leadership	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	BC	Trinity Western University	Degree	MA in Leadership	Master's degree

Discipline	Province	University	Credential	Program Name	Level
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	MBA/Master of Health Services Administration	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	Master of Health Services Administration (International)	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	Master of Health Services Administration	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	Bachelor of Laws/Master of Health Services Administration	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	Master of Nursing/Master of Health Services Administration	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	ON	Lakehead University	Diploma	Graduate Diploma in Health Services and Policy Research	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	ON	University of Ottawa	Degree	Master of Health Administration	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	ON	University of Toronto	Degree	MSc in Health Administration	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	ON	University of Toronto	Degree	MHSc in Health Administration/ MSW in Social Work	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	ON	University of Toronto	Degree	Master of Nursing/MHSc Health Administration	Master's degree
Health/Health Care Administration/Management	QC	Concordia University	Certificate	Graduate Certificate in Management of Health Care Organizations	Graduate level certificate/diploma

Discipline	Province	University	Credential	Program Name	Level
Health Services Administration	AB	Athabasca University	Degree	Master of Health Studies	Master's degree
Health Services Administration	NL	Memorial University of Newfoundland	Degree	MSc (Med) in Medicine (Applied Health Services research)	Master's degree
Health Services Administration	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	Master of Applied Health Services Research	Master's degree
Health Services Administration	ON	McMaster University	Diploma	Graduate diploma in Health Services and Policy Research	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Health Services Administration	ON	York University	Diploma	Graduate diploma in Health Services and Policy Research	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Health Information/Medical Records Administration/Administrator	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	Master of Health Informatics	Master's degree
Epidemiology	BC	The University of British Columbia	Degree	Master of Health Science (MHSc)	Master's degree
Epidemiology	BC	The University of British Columbia	Degree	MSc in Health Care and Epidemiology	Master's degree

Discipline	Province	University	Credential	Program Name	Level
Epidemiology	NL	Memorial University of Newfoundland	Degree	MSc (Med) in Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology)	Master's degree
Epidemiology	NL	Memorial University of Newfoundland	Diploma	Graduate Diploma in Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology)	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Epidemiology	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	MSc in Community Health and Epidemiology	Master's degree
Epidemiology	ON	University of Ottawa	Degree	MSc in Epidemiology and Community Medicine	Master's degree
Epidemiology	ON	Queen's University	Degree	MSc in Epidemiology	Master's degree
Epidemiology	ON	University of Toronto	Degree	MSc in Clinical Epidemiology and Health Care Research	Master's degree
Epidemiology	ON	The University of Western Ontario	Degree	MSc in Epidemiology and Biostatistics	Master's degree
Epidemiology	QC	McGill University	Degree	MSc in Epidemiology and Biostatistics	Master's degree
Epidemiology	QC	McGill University	Diploma	Graduate Diploma in Epidemiology and Biostatistics	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Epidemiology	SK	University of Saskatchewan	Degree	MSc in Community Health and Epidemiology	Master's degree

Discipline	Province	University	Credential	Program Name	Level
Public Health, General (MPH, DPH)	AB	University of Alberta	Degree	Master of Public Health Sciences	Master's degree
Public Health, General (MPH, DPH)	BC	Simon Fraser University	Degree	MSc in Population and Public Health	Master's degree
Public Health, General (MPH, DPH)	ON	Lakehead University	Degree	Master of Public Health	Master's degree
Public Health, General (MPH, DPH)	ON	University of Toronto	Degree	MSc in Public Health Science	Master's degree
Public Health, General (MPH, DPH)	ON	University of Toronto	Degree	MHSc in Public Health Sciences	Master's degree
Public Health, General (MPH, DPH)	ON	University of Waterloo	Degree	Master of Public Health	Master's degree
Public Health, General (MPH, DPH)	SK	University of Saskatchewan	Degree	MPH Master of Public Health	Master's degree
Public Health Education and Promotion	AB	University of Alberta	Degree	MSc in Health Promotion	Master's degree
Public Health Education and Promotion	AB	University of Alberta	Diploma	Postgraduate Diploma in Health Promotion	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Public Health Education and Promotion	AB	University of Alberta	Degree	MSc Health Promotion Studies	Master's degree
Public Health Education and Promotion	NS	Dalhousie University	Degree	MA in Health Promotion	Master's degree
Public Health Education and Promotion	ON	University of Windsor	Degree	MSc in Nursing	Master's degree

Discipline	Province	University	Credential	Program Name	Level
Public Policy Analysis	BC	Simon Fraser University	Degree	MPP Master of Public Policy	Master's degree
Public Policy Analysis	BC	University of Victoria	Degree	MA in Policy and Practice in Health and Social Services	Master's degree
Public Policy Analysis	ON	McMaster University	Diploma	Graduate Diploma in Health Services and Policy Research	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Public Policy Analysis	ON	University of Ottawa	Diploma	Graduate Diploma in Health Services and Policies Research	Graduate level certificate/diploma
Public Policy Analysis	ON	York University	Diploma	Graduate diploma in Health Services and Policy Research	Graduate level certificate/diploma

As Health Studies is an interdisciplinary program that provides a foundational background covering a broad range of health-related topics, some of the above require further education and training.

The Association of Schools of Public Health website (<http://www.asph.org/>) is recommended as an additional resource for Health Studies students, providing further information on the field of public health, the kinds of careers available, the types of training required, and schools in the United States that offer public health programs.

Occupation List

The project's third objective was to create a list of potential occupations that Health Studies students can pursue after graduation. An inventory of career opportunities available with a bachelor's degree in Health Studies was created through the use of resources at the Career Centre Library. "Career Cluster" sheets and the "Public/Community Health 315" binder in the "Health (300s)" section of the library were found to be especially informative. The latter was particularly useful in providing information on potential jobs, working conditions, educational requirements, related occupations and educational programs, work prospects, and necessary personal characteristics for those considering such careers. The Internet was also utilized to survey other universities' websites listing potential careers for the benefit of their own students in Health Studies programs. The data from the various sources were then compiled to form a list of possible occupations, assessed to be of particular relevance to University of Toronto Health Studies students. The list is by no means exhaustive, as it was created with the intention of providing students with general categories of occupations and possible directions of pursuit.

Fig. 3 – Potential Occupations for Health Studies Graduates

• Community Health Educator	• Health Information/Medical Records Administrator*	• Medicine*
• Community Program Coordinator	• Health Policy Consultant*	• Nurse*
• Community Support Worker	• Health Project Coordinator	• Nutritionist*
• Community Wellness Supporter	• Health Promotion Specialist*	• Occupational Health and Safety Officer*
• Counselor	• Health Researcher/Research Assistant	• Occupational Therapist*
• Data Analyst	• Health & Safety Coordinator	• Outreach Worker
• Demographer*	• Health Service Administrator	• Pharmacist*
• Developmental Therapist*	• Health Science Administrator	• Physician*
• Entrepreneurial positions in Health and Wellness	• Hospital Assistant Director	• Physiotherapist*
• Environmental Health Inspector	• Industrial Hygienist*	• Psychiatrist*
• Epidemiologist*	• Information Specialist*	• Psychologist*
• Family Service Worker	• International Health Care System Analyst*	• Psychotherapist*
• Genetic Counselor*	• Lawyer Specializing in Health Issues*	• Public Administrator
• Gerontologist*	• Journalist/Reporter*	• Public Health Educator
• Health Care Administrator	• Junior Administrative Position	• Public Health Planner/Analyst
• Health Economist*	• Liaison/Policy Officer*	• Public Policy Maker/Analyst
• Health Educator/Teacher	• Massage Therapist*	• Social Service Worker
• Health and Human Resources Director/Manager	• Medical Officer	• Urban Planner

*As Health Studies is an interdisciplinary program that provides a foundational background covering a broad range of health-related topics, some of the above require further education and training.

Information Dissemination

The final objective of the project was to establish the most appropriate way to publicize the findings among current Health Studies students. Thus, a survey was created to determine whether displaying the results of the project on the Health Studies program website would be the best method to disseminate the results. The purpose was to ascertain whether Health Studies students visit the program website. A total of eight Health Studies students (five of whom are third year students) were asked the following questions:

1. How frequently do you access the Health Studies website?
2. When did you last access the website?
3. What do you/did you access the website for?
4. Do you have any suggestions regarding how to disseminate Health Studies information (i.e. bulletin boards, flyers)

The interview results indicated the frequency students visited the program website which, ranged from once a week to once every semester. However, the majority of students appear to visit the website once a month. All of the students access the website either during the summer or sometime during the first few months of school. Students primarily visit the website for information on Health Studies courses, program requirements, updates on events, information about program partners, and about the program in general. In conclusion, the website seems to be a good method for publicizing information. If regularly updated, students may access

it more regularly. The students also suggested email and class announcements as effective ways to disseminate Health Studies information.

Information for Inclusion on Program Website

Along with the alumni profiles, the lists of potential occupations and graduate programs that Health Studies students can pursue will be displayed on the Health Studies website. In addition, a chart of the current occupations and graduate programs of alumni will be posted.

Fig. 4 – Current Occupations of Health Studies Alumni

Occupation
Administrative Position at Sick Kids
Data Analyst
Elementary school teacher
Hospital for Sick Children Data Analyst
Legal Secretary
Massage Therapist, Curriculum developer at department of education at private college for Massage Therapists (CMTO)
Mt. Sinai Hospital Assistant Director
Registered Nurse
Student accountant at Ernst and Young

Fig. 5 – Current Programs of Study of Health Studies Alumni

School/Program of Study
Emory University/ Masters in Public Health
MAC/ Masters in Occupational Health
McGill/ Masters in Occupational Health
Queens/Medical School
UBC/ Masters in Health Administration
U of Western Ontario/Epidemiology
U of T/ Occupational Therapy
U of T OISE/ M. Ed in Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning
U of T OISE/ Masters in Childhood Education
U of T OISE/ Bachelors in Education
U of T/ Masters in Sport Psychology
U of T/Public Health
U of T Rotman/ Masters in Management and Professional Accounting
U of T/ School of Continuing Studies
Watson School in Cold Spring Harbor/PhD in Neuroscience
Western/ Masters in Epidemiology

Conclusion/Recommendations

This project successfully created useful tools for the Health Studies student body, which included an inventory of career and education opportunities available with a bachelor's degree in Health Studies. Furthermore, there was success in developing a contact list of alumni. The alumni were contacted, information on their experiences subsequent to graduation was documented, and alumni profiles were collected. The task of establishing relations with alumni was thus accomplished, and it is likely that the support of such Health Studies graduates for the program can be expanded in the future.

It is recommended that more frequent contact be made with Health Studies alumni to garner their support for the program. Many of the alumni interviewed were in fact pleased to have received calls and expressed appreciation that the program was interested in their experiences. The alumni are a source of a wide range of valuable information for current Health Studies students regarding educational and career opportunities.

Information on graduate programs should be reviewed regularly as new programs are introduced throughout Canada. The health field and associated educational programs are dynamic. Publicizing new information on disciplines and programs that are relevant to Health Studies students would be important to the program and useful to students. In addition, it may be beneficial to create relations with various graduate programs both within the University of Toronto and at other universities in order to ascertain

their program requirements and program relevance. Thus, it is recommended that the program liaise with Health Studies programs at Ryerson and York to explore the possibility of linking with them for joint initiatives.

The aforementioned tasks (contacting alumni and updating information on graduate programs) should be allocated as responsibilities of the Health Studies Student Union (HSSU). Recent Health Studies graduates can be contacted each year using the questionnaire that was developed for this report (See Appendix), and earlier alumni can be contacted every two years. The HSSU and the Health Studies program director can also collaborate to organize a career forum or alumni fair at which students are given the opportunity to interact with alumni (and possibly others in the health-related field) who can share their experiences in the program while also providing advice on potential graduate programs and/or careers. The presence of the Health Studies Program at such a career fair would likely increase awareness of the program and provide an appropriate setting at which to publicize the information collected in this report. It is recommended that such a fair be held at least once every two years.

By acquiring valuable information from alumni, continually compiling the most recent data on relevant graduate programs offered across Canada, and investigating potential careers that may be of particular interest to graduates, the Health Studies program can seek to further enhance students' learning experiences and provide additional support and guidance.

Appendix: Health Studies Alumni Survey

Introduction: Hi, my name is _____; I am a _____ year student enrolled in the Health Studies program at the University of Toronto. May I please speak to Mr./Ms. _____?

(Once alumnus has answered phone): Hi, Mr./Ms. _____. The reason I'm calling you is that we are currently seeking to improve the Health Studies program for current and future students, and we were wondering if you could provide us with some valuable input since you are a member of the health studies alumni. If you could spare some time to answer a few questions regarding your experiences while enrolled in the program and your current situation after graduating, we would greatly appreciate it. Do you have some time now?

If now is not a convenient time, is it possible for me to call back at a later time that is more appropriate for you?

Health Studies

1. When did you graduate?
2. What attracted you to the Health Studies program? How did you hear about it?
3. Did you complete a major or specialist in the Health Studies program?
4. If you completed a major in Health Studies, what other major did you combine your studies with? Which major do you feel is more applicable to your current job/ program of study?
5. If you were a specialist in the Health Studies program, do you think that your sole focus on Health Studies equipped you with the necessary skills and background education for your current job/area of study?

Current situation

6. Are you currently working or studying? If employed, what is your current occupation?
If in school, what is your program of study?
7. Did you find that when you applied for jobs/schools, those receiving your applications understood the term "Health Studies"?
What did they imply it to mean?

8. Are there any particular skills or areas of knowledge that you acquired through the Health Studies program that benefited you when applying for your current occupation/ program of study?
If yes, do you find that those skills/areas of knowledge are still currently of use in your work?
9. If currently studying, do you hope to pursue a future career related to health?
10. The Health Studies program is currently working to develop a service learning /field placement program for our students.
Would you be interested in having a student participate in a field placement or job-shadowing program under you?

Placement Program

The Health Studies program offers placement options for students enrolled in UNI200 and UNI400.

11. Did you participate in the UNI200/UNI400 placement option? (If no, go to question 18)
12. If so, where were you placed?
13. Given greater options, where would you have liked to have been placed?
14. Can you tell me what kind of experience you had with the placement? (For example: what did you enjoy most/least? The advantages/ disadvantages?)
15. If you were to change anything with the placement option, what would you do differently? How could the placement option be improved?
16. How were you graded, academically, for the placement?
17. Do you feel that the placement option gives an advantage/disadvantage to Health Studies students?
18. Do you think the placement option could aid you professionally? (For example: if you were not sure what you were looking for – would it help you find work or lead to post-graduate opportunities?)

19. Why did you *not* participate in the placement option?

20. In retrospect, would you have liked to participate in the placement option?

Wrapping up

22. Do you have any suggestions for improving the Health Studies program, such as any additional features to the program that you think would further benefit students when they graduate?

23. Would you mind if we display a profile and photo of you on the health studies program website?

24. Would you mind if we contacted you in the future?

25. Do you have any questions?

Thank you very much for your time. We really appreciate your feedback!

Works Cited

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