



Comparison of MTSU 1st Destination Survey Procedures with NACE's Recommended Standards and Protocols

Executive Summary:

The recent publication of NACE's standards and protocols for first-destination surveys coincides with the Career Development Center's goal of benchmarking 1DS best practices. The following is a summary of the major differences between the two survey procedures:

1. NACE recommends a 6 month survey. MTSU has a 3 month survey.
 2. NACE recommends that Career Services be an integral part along with other entities on campus. The CDC is the sole entity supporting the survey.
 3. NACE recommends a knowledge rate where information is gained from a variety of resources. MTSU uses a response rate of students who respond only to the survey.
 4. NACE recommends a 65% knowledge rate. MTSU has a 14.7% response rate.
 5. NACE's use of a knowledge rate on first-destination surveys contains an inherent flaw. NACE recognizes that students can have multiple outcomes but that students should be reported only once under their primary area of activity. First-destination surveys, by definition, count only the *primary* outcome. If multiple outcomes are gained about students from sources other than the student (e.g., LinkedIn or faculty member), someone has to determine which is the primary outcome.
 6. NACE does not take into consideration whether the graduate is continuing in a position held prior to graduation. This is frequently the case for adult learners.
 7. For new positions, MTSU asks if it is related to the student's major. This determination should be made by the graduate him/herself.
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Introduction:

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) published its *Standards and Protocols for the Collection and Dissemination of Graduating Student Initial Career Outcomes Information for Undergraduates* in January 2014. As the preeminent national organization focused on the employment of the college educated, NACE felt it had a singular responsibility to the profession and the public to provide leadership on relevant issues and trends affecting the college-educated work force. NACE recognizes the diversity among higher education institutions in terms of mission and goals and the inherent difficulty of a simple one-size-fits-all approach. Consequently, the goal of this initiative is to establish some minimum standards and protocols. NACE also highlighted inherent limitations in focusing on first-destination outcomes in that the positive impact of a college education cannot be measured in simple terms of employment, earnings, or continued studies. (Excerpted from Introduction section of *First-Destination Standards/Protocols, 2014*)

Guiding Principles:

NACE has several guiding principles which have been in place since 2012. Three are worth mentioning because of their impact on MTSU's survey procedures:

1. NACE recommends that the career services office on campus have an integral role in the survey along with other institutional entities. At MTSU, the Career Development Center has the sole responsibility for this initiative without any support or resources from other institutional entities. It is the position of the

Career Development Center that it should play a minimal role in the survey (e.g., marketing it to students using the Center's services) as it is far beyond the scope, skills and resources of the Center.

2. Data may be collected from various legitimate sources (e.g., student survey responses; employer-, parent-, or faculty-provided information). This is highlighted further in the Standards and Protocols as a knowledge rate, instead of a response rate. A knowledge rate is a strategy for supplementing data from other sources without having to rely on graduates completing the survey. However, there is one inherent flaw in this approach. NACE states, "While in certain instances, graduates may be pursuing multiple activities (e.g., working part time and taking graduate courses), their status should only be reported once in their primary area of activity. What NACE does not address is who or how the decision will be made to categorize the outcomes of students with multiple outcomes. That is the purpose of first destination surveys, which is to have students to select their primary plan.
3. Data collection should be ongoing, with final summary analysis being completed by 6 months after the graduation date. The Career Development Center conducts a 3 month survey. A 6 month survey would have multiple surveys open continuously and would greatly increase the work required in producing the Summary Reports. The CDC believes that ongoing surveys of this magnitude would best be conducted out of Institutional Effectiveness.

The following is a side-by-side comparison of NACE's Standards and Protocols and MTSU's Survey Procedures:

Defining the Graduating Class

Level of Agreement (Full, Partial, None)	NACE	MTSU
Full	Graduating class includes degrees completed between July 1 and June 30.	August, December, and May graduating classes.
Full	Graduating class to include associate and bachelor degrees, full and part time, with and without permanent work authorization	All graduates bachelor and graduate degrees, full and part time, all work authorizations.
Partial	Career outcomes sortable by degree, major, and work authorization	Sortable by college, degree, major (not concentration). Primary plans broken out on majors with 8 or more responses. Salary averages reported by major and college for majors with 2 or more salaries.

Targeted Knowledge Rates

Level of Agreement (Full, Partial, None)	NACE	MTSU
None	Use of "knowledge rate" where reasonable and verifiable information is obtained from a variety of sources (i.e. LinkedIn, other online sources, fellow graduates, or parents). When reporting outcomes, percentages are based on 100% of students graduating. Thus "No Information Available" is one of the outcomes.	Use of a "response rate" from graduates' completion of the survey instrument only. Outcomes are based on 100% of those responding, not on 100% of graduating class.
None	Goal is highest possible rate but should strive for 65% knowledge rate.	Combined 14.7% response rate for 2012-2013.

Career Outcome Reporting Categories

Level of Agreement (Full, Partial, None)	NACE	MTSU
Partial	One primary plan organized into the following standardized categories. 1. Employed Full or Part Time a) Entrepreneur b) Temporary/Contract c) Freelance d) Post grad intern/fellowship e) All other work categories 2. Volunteer Service 3. Military Service 4. Continuing Education 5. Seeking Employment 6. Not Seeking 7. No Information Available	One primary plan organized into the following standardized categories. 1. Seeking Employment 2. Accepted New Position 3. Continuing in a position held prior to graduation 4. Starting/continuing own business or self-employed 5. Completing fellowship, service or volunteer 6. Military 7. Graduate or Professional School 8. Additional Coursework non-degree 9. Taking time off 10. Haven't Decided Yet 11. Other Full or part time is a subset question on several of these, where applicable.
Full	Full-time employment reports: 1. Organization 2. Job Title 3. Location 4. Annual base salary 5. Guaranteed first-year bonus amount if appropriate.	Most directly correlates to Accepted a New Position where we ask is it full or part time: 1. Organization 2. Job Title 3. Full or Part Time 4. Location 5. Salary 6. Addt'l Compensation 7. Start Date 8. Position related to Major 9. How position obtained 10. Other offers 11. Certifications or Licensure
Full	Employed Part Time reports: 1. Organization 2. Location 3. Job Title	Most directly correlates to Accepted a New Position listed above where we ask is it full or part time:
Full	Volunteer Service reports: 1. Organization 2. Location 3. Role or Title	Most directly correlates to Completing Fellowship, Service, or Volunteer Opportunity and reports: 1. Organization 2. Job Title 3. Full or Part Time 4. Location 5. Salary 6. Addt'l Compensation 7. Start Date 8. Position related to Major 9. How position obtained 10. Other offers 11. Certifications or Licensure
NA	Does not have a category for Continuing in a Position Held Prior to Graduation.	Continuing in a Position Held Prior to Graduation and reports: 1. Organization

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Job Title 3. Full or Part Time 4. Location 5. Salary 6. Addt'l Compensation 7. Start Date 8. Position related to Major 9. How position obtained 10. Other offers 11. Certifications or Licensure
Full	<p>Military reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service Branch 2. Rank 	<p>Military reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Branch 2. Rank 3. Job Title 4. Salary 5. Basic Training Location 6. Initial enlistment length of service
Full	<p>Continuing Education</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institution 2. Location 3. Program of Study 4. Degree to be earned 	<p>Graduate or Professional School</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institution 2. Degree 3. Major/Program of Study 4. Enrolled full or part time
Partial	<p>Additional Coursework not asked, Do ask if Seeking Continuing Education for those seeking, but not yet enrolled in a program of study.</p>	<p>Additional Coursework reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Type of courses and why 2. Institution
NA	<p>No additional questions asked about Seeking Employment</p>	<p>Seeking Employment reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Type of position sought 2. Targeted geographic location
NA	<p>No additional questions about Not Seeking</p>	<p>Do not ask Not Seeking. Instead:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking time off <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are the factors influencing your decision to take time off? 2. Haven't Decided Yet <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are the factors influencing your decision-making process. 3. Other <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Please describe the nature of your other plans.
Full	<p>Reports Entrepreneur as part of Employed Full and Part Time.</p>	<p>Starting or Continuing Own Business or Self Employed reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organization 2. Job Title 3. Full or Part Time 4. Location 5. Salary 6. Addt'l Compensation 7. Start Date 8. Position related to Major 9. How position obtained 10. Other offers 11. Certifications or Licensure

None	“No Information Available” category enables reporting of outcomes on 100% of graduating class.	Do not have “No Information Available” category so results are reported on those responding only.
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Career Outcomes Rate

Level of Agreement (Full, Partial, None)	NACE	MTSU
Partial	Uses “Career Outcome Rates” instead of “Placement Rates.”	Does not use a specific label but reports the percentage of students with “plans in place.”
Partial	Career Outcome Rates include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employed Full Time 2. Employed Part Time 3. Participating in a program of voluntary service 4. Serving in the US Armed Services 5. Enrolled in a program of continuing education 	“Plans in place” includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accepted New Position 2. Continuing in a position held prior to graduation 3. Starting/continuing own business or self-employed 4. Completing fellowship, service or volunteer 5. Military 6. Graduate or Professional School 7. Additional Coursework non-degree 8. Taking time off Basically everything except: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seeking Employment 2. Haven’t Decided Yet 3. Other

Timeline for Summary Data Collection and Reporting

Level of Agreement (Full, Partial, None)	NACE	MTSU
Partial	Target date for summarizing career outcomes is December 31. NACE recommends a 6 month survey period. That would put May survey period concluding in November.	Each graduation survey (August, December & May) is open for 3 months. A Summary Report is produced for each graduation and then one for the entire year.

NACE will request summary data from all its member institutions in order to track and share broad trends in hiring and continuing education. Participation is voluntary. However, this lays the groundwork for these recommended standards and protocols becoming the new national norm. MTSU will not be able to participate in NACE’s request for summary data because of key discrepancies outlined in this report.