INFO Job Outcomes Proposal

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Question
How well are INFO majors/minors finding jobs related to their field?

Additional Questions
- How well are students finding employment or getting accepted into graduate programs in/related to their field of study?
- What field are we most prominently in (department question)?
- What jobs for INFO majors might not exist yet that could soon become a reality?

Motivation and Background
The study of Information is not just a collection of data points - it is fundamentally interested in the relationships between information, people, and technology. The CU Department of Information Science defines this field as "the study of the relationships between people, places and technology and how they are intertwined." As soon-to-be INFO graduates ourselves, we often wonder what a degree in Information Science can do for us. We also wondered how COVID-19 changed the job market. From any given internet search, it's clear that no job posting is asking specifically for an Information Science degree. We are that "related field" option. Dr. Jed Brubaker, a member of the Information Science Founding Faculty at CU, once told Raghav that the degree we have is for jobs that have not yet been created, something that is reflected in the ways that Information schools have had to adapt from existing fields - such as Library Science - as computing has become more pervasive. We believe that now is the time to assess where the graduates have ended up and, with the guidance of the department, figure out potential shortcomings that the degree program has.

Ethical and Social Implications
The project will help students figure out what fields might serve best with this major/minor. Additionally, if done correctly, we will be able to help out the department with much-needed data. Unintended but welcomed circumstances may be that we find that graduates weren't properly prepared in how to present themselves as Information Scientists. Not knowing how to present themselves can refer to resumes building, interview skills and project showcasing.

Related Work
There are a number of other Information schools that are already well-established, including UW Information, UC Berkeley Information, UC Irvine Information, and University of Michigan School of Information (UMSI). UMSI in particular has quite a lot of [employment data](#) available on recent UMSI graduates, with much of the existing work showing that the majority of recent UMSI graduates accepted positions in "technology, consulting, healthcare and libraries."

Method

What steps are you taking to pursue your project question? Depending on the project type, you might be engaging in the following methods:

Design

We will brainstorm survey questions that are the most likely to give us the best chance of answering the questions that we have. We will also collaborate with the INFO department to address and answer any questions that they may have. Interview questions will follow similar formats to the ones that we have learned about and put together through this major. Additionally, we are comparing our findings to current employment data regarding this major that we will pull.

Build

We will be launching our survey through Qualtrics - their analysis features will save us time and allow us to tell the story from the data we gather more accurately.

Limitations/Tradeoffs

Most of our survey building will stay in a Google document for easier access and editing. Limitations to this include not being able to actively see the final flow of the survey, but we believe that keeping the process in the Google doc as long as possible will work better for us, as the ARPAC committee will find it easier to provide comments/feedback.

Risk Factors

In narrowing down the project to only INFO majors and minors, we are limiting our reach and respondents. This is where we will be very interested in what the department can do for us. If they are able to help us with the deployment of the survey, we would have access to several years of graduates versus us having to rely on reaching out to them directly through online platforms such as LinkedIn. We are also banking on these respondents allowing us to interview them. Two of the team members have taken survey design courses, and we believe that the knowledge we've gained there will help us ensure that we have enough people responding, and when the time comes, that the interview process will give us rich information.

Getting Feedback

Since the department is greatly invested in this subject, we will most likely be working closely with them, and they can be seen as our advisors through this project. However, we do want to make sure we are still the leaders in this research and are able to move it in the direction we prefer.

Team and Project Management

We have shared our class schedules with one another and created a text chat for communication. We present possible deadlines and vote on what works best for us and our personal schedules.

Project Markers/Deadlines

Markers that we had set for ourselves include having the survey data regarding current students analyzed by the end of October. We have to work closely with the department so having alumni results by mid November seems attainable. Below you will find a week by week breakdown of proposed deadlines. As mentioned above we know that they are subject to change since we are working with many outside factors.

- Week of October 17th: Share a final rough draft of survey questions with the ARPAC committee.
- Week of October 24th: Make final edits to survey questions that include feedback from the ARPAC committee. Load questions into the Qualtrics format.
- Week of October 31st: Proposed Launch Survey. We hope by this week we are also able to receive the results from the current students survey that Abe Handler launched.
- Week of November 7th: Wait for survey results. Begin final paper structure.
- Week of November 14th: We might extend the survey to another week depending on respondents.

Synthesis Reflection

We believe our survey and interview skills acquired through our time here will show through our entire process. What better way to highlight these skills than to help ourselves and the department answer the important questions?