CCPD Advising Lunch, Winter 2013: Questions from Advisors

The following questions were submitted during the winter quarter advising lunch on 1/22/13 and answered here by CCPD staff. If you have further questions, we are always happy to hear from you: career@kzoo.edu; 337-7183.

As Academic Advisors, we have a lot to cover with our advisees and are unlikely to have anything close to the knowledge/familiarity with resources of a career counselor--so what is our role? What are the 2 most important things we should do?

- Refer advisees to www.kzoo.edu/career and encourage them to plan now for next summer: recommend that underclassmen apply for summer externships and internships, and that seniors make an appointment if they haven’t secured post-graduate plans;
- Distribute the new “My Career” folders with checklists of helpful suggestions for students in each of their four years.

What are students most unaware of that you wish they were aware of?
That it is never too early to begin thinking about your career development. We have success stories of students who made networking contacts at a CCPD event their first year, and have since received an externship and/or internship through those early contacts, gaining valuable skills and experience that will open doors after graduation.

If I have a personal contact not associated with K, should I arrange the meeting with student and contact person or should the meeting be arranged through the CCPD?
Given your personal connection with an individual off-campus, it may work best if you reach out to your contact and inquire if they would be open to answering a student question or helping the student think about career exploration. You might recommend that your student review our guide to interviewing before meeting with your contact: https://reason.kzoo.edu/ccd/resources/interviewing/

How will the new K-Plan Commonplace interact with the work of the CCPD?
CCPD career counselors are excited to work with students to make use of the information contained in their K-Plan Commonplace. Having all four pillars of the K-Plan documented in a single place will facilitate students’ résumé
development as well as stimulate their thinking about how best to present themselves and their unique experiences and abilities to potential employers and graduate school recruiters. While CCPD staff will not have direct access to a student’s K-Plan Commonplace, we will encourage students to share a copy as part of their career counseling appointment.

One of the scenarios presented at the advising lunch involved an international student named Ingo who was looking for an employer who would sponsor a visa so he could work in the US. What happened with Ingo’s visa?
As part of the hiring process, Compuware agreed to help Ingo obtain an H1-B visa, and he is now happily employed there.

You showed us your subscription to Going Global, the international database to help international students stay in USA. Does it work the other way - help American students find jobs in Europe?
Yes, the website and database (accessible through K-Connect or learn more at: https://reason.kzoo.edu/ccd/resources/goingglobal/) contains a number of Country Guides that give information on job searching in different countries, including many European countries. The Country Guides give information such as job search sites, professional organizations, examples of résumés or CVs, interviewing tips and visa information. Going Global also has a jobs and internships database, searchable by country, field and type of job.

Are recent K-graduates still eligible for CCPD services? If so, how recent?
Kalamazoo College graduates are welcome to utilize CCPD services. In fact, during the summer we reach out to recent graduates to remind them that our services are still available to help them launch their ‘Life After K’. While our resources for alumni may best serve those seeking their first postgraduate professional experience and/or graduate program, we are always willing to provide career services to graduates of Kalamazoo College.

Does the CCPD (or some other entity of the College) track the career paths (e.g. job histories) of K-College graduates? When students/parents ask me, “What have K College grads done with their degrees in I.A.S. or Political Science?” my answers are anecdotal since I have no hard data to say, for example, ‘30% have gone on to get a J.D. and work in the legal field.” In short, what tracking is done of our graduates, or must departments do this on their own?
For over a decade, the CCPD (or its predecessors) has conducted a survey of seniors about to graduate. Compiled results of these surveys are available on our website, but not in a format that would answer a question such as “What do IAS majors typically do after graduation?” We’ve recently switched to a model of surveying students from June (of their senior year) through December (after they graduate) to allow more time for our youngest alumni to finalize their first destinations. Where we used to get a 70-80% response rate, we heard from 84% for the Class of 2012 with this new model of keeping the survey open through December. We publish the results on our website, and the 2012 results will be available in February 2013.

The CCPD is working with Paul Sotherland and Anne Dueweke to transition our department's “Life After K Survey” to an institution-wide First Destination survey. The CCPD will continue to support the effort and run reports of the data, but are hopeful that this broader institutional survey will be more relevant and useful to all academic departments. Most importantly, we are hoping that we’ll increase our student completion rate to at least 90%. We’ll continue to work with young alumni (as we always do) through the calendar year of their graduation, in order to increase the numbers of graduates who have plans to report through this survey.

It's important to note that the current survey gathers information only on the first destinations of new graduates. The CCPD does not track alumni career paths past this first post-graduate destination. Data on graduate school completion or career advancement is not currently compiled in a systematic way at the College.