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## **New Report Outlines Path Forward on Job Placement Rates**

Oakland, CA – While students consistently rank the ability to get a good job as one of the most important factors in their college choices, too often this critical information is unavailable or misleading. [Of Metrics and Markets: Measuring Post-College Employment Success](#), a report released today by The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS), describes the many misleading conceptions of employment rates and proposes two specific, verifiable measurements that could better inform student choices.

“Higher education proves a powerful lever of upward mobility for many Americans, but leaves too many worse off than when they started, with substantial debt and little or no increased earnings power to pay it off,” said TICAS president **James Kvaal**. “Simply put, students are entitled to this foundational information as they make key decisions about where to invest time and money.”

The three entities tasked with oversight of the U.S. higher education system—accrediting agencies, state governments, and the federal government—each issue their own uncoordinated set of requirements governing the calculation and provision of employment metrics, and the resulting patchwork of data makes meaningful comparison across programs and colleges nearly impossible and leaves major questions about the accuracy and reliability of the available information. For example, one college in Texas reports that its vocational nursing certificate program has a job placement rate of 62 percent based on its state’s definition and 33 percent based on its accreditor’s definitions. Even worse, investigations have found that many institutions, such as Corinthian Colleges, have provided fraudulent and misleading job placement rates to students. Finally, even when metrics are comparable and accurate, students and others may have difficulties accessing them. In recent weeks, the Department of Education has removed data from the College Scorecard and is eliminating requirements that colleges share job placement rates with prospective students.

[Today’s report](#) documents these challenges and proposes two specific useful, verifiable employment metrics. First, it recommends federal, state, and accrediting agencies standardize the job placement rate—which measures the share of graduates employed in occupations for which they were trained—and that states collect the data needed to calculate verifiable rates at low cost. And second, it recommends the federal government calculate and publish a threshold earnings rate—which measures the share of graduates employed and earning above a certain amount—for all programs using a federal data match.

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*An independent, nonprofit organization, The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS) works to make higher education more available and affordable for people of all backgrounds. Our Project on Student Debt works to increase public understanding of student debt and the implications for our families, economy, and society. For more information see [www.ticas.org](http://www.ticas.org) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).*