**DCS Alternative Academia (Alt-Ac) Workshop Series**

The world of careers students can choose with a criminal justice related PhD, outside of academia, is growing. Currently, however, there is a gap in knowledge, resources and services that faculty mentors and their departments can provide to students who are interested in learning more about these alternative career spaces. As a result, many students must find ways to facilitate their own connections, scrap together information about available jobs from the litany of online portals, and learn to navigate a completely different hiring and negotiation process – one with which their faculty advisor may not have much experience. Students must do this while also navigating the pressures and stigma of making the decision to leave a university setting. For those who have navigated the move outside of academia and into “alternative academic” careers, these paths and jobs are not typically celebrated in the same ways as academia-oriented peers. This is likely not due to lack of support, rather it may be because there is no clear equivalent to the traditional research, teaching and service contract in the practicing world.

To address this gap in knowledge, support, and access, the DCS presents the Alt-Ac Workshop Series. The goal of this workshop series is to:

1. provide important information to help interested students learn more about if these alternative academic spaces are right for them;
2. build connections with practitioners with strong research backgrounds (including those with PhDs) across a variety of spaces, and;
3. provide resources, materials and a support group for students actively navigating these career spaces.

A survey was sent to DCS students to gauge interest in this workshop series. Of the 91 active DCS students who were sent the survey link, almost 25% of students signed up within the first three days. The survey is now complete and the Alt-AC group has started a listserv to contact all interested members.

To accomplish these goals, the Alt-AC group will host monthly meetings (also recorded for students to watch at their convenience) focusing one of three themes, (1) Meet-and-Greets; (2) How-To, and; (3) Roundtable Discussions. Below is a list of more specific content that will be included in the series, organized by these themes.

1. Meet-and Greets
   1. These meetings with include one or two guest speakers who are colleagues or peers of the organizers from local or state agencies, research organizations, consulting firms, or federal service (i.e. BJA and NIJ). The goal of these meetings it to provide information about the organization, the work that is done there, metrics for success, and how students can apply and navigate the hiring process.
   2. Students will be provided a short biography of the speakers prior to the meeting and can submit questions to be asked during the workshop, as well as during the question-and-answer section of the meeting.
   3. In addition to providing information about various career options, these meet-and-greets can provide point of entry into various spaces and direct connections to the field.
2. How-To
   1. Structure your PhD and advocate for skills and opportunities directly transferable to alternative career spaces
   2. Reorganize your CV to appeal to alt-ac spaces and translate this work into a two-page resume
   3. Talk about your current work and translate its applicability to alt-ac spaces
   4. Develop a job-talk for alt-ac organizations, and learn which agencies require them
   5. Navigate the speed of the market (organizations willing to accept ABD candidates) and negotiate a salary (including contingency pay, 401k contributions, moving/set up costs, and PTO)
3. Roundtable Discussions

These meetings will center around active participant concerns and will act as a support group and trouble-shooting session

This Workshop Series is an invaluable opportunity for DCS students to discover alt-ac career paths and helps fill gaps in knowledge and resources currently available in many PhD programs.