Creating a Resource for PhDs On Careers Beyond the Faculty Track
http://guides.lib.unc.edu/altac

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Objectives
- Create a resource guide for PhD students about alternative academic (altac) careers in time for campus events.
- Raise awareness of altac issues and the Altac Project at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Why Here & Now?
- Significant decline in tenure track faculty positions, nationally (e.g. 30% in the humanities since 2007-2008).¹²
- UNC leads in national altac conversation.
- Growth of UNC’s Altac Project over 2014-2015.
- Pilot UNC fellowship for PhD students to explore alternative careers Summer, 2015 (Richard Bland Fellowship Professional Pathways Program)
- Two-day campus altac event (April, 2015).

Project Tasks
- Research and explain history of the altac concept and capture the national conversation.
- Create easy-to-use LibGuide with resources for exploring altac careers from traditional and not-so-traditional sources.

Beta Testing
- Members of target audience involved in development.
- Draft LibGuide unveiled for 2-day altac event attended by over 100 students & faculty!
- During event, attendees began tweeting the guide, sharing how it was useful to them, and suggesting additional resources incorporated into the LibGuide.

Making the LibGuide

Plan
- Decide design guidelines & resource selection criteria.
- Solicit early conceptual input from Altac Working Group co-convenors

Develop
- Search UNC catalog, databases & Google (limit to .edu domains).
- Screen 130+ items with RefWorks.

Create
- Set up a LibGuide shell.
- Place items by discipline & format.

Review
- Share draft at UNC altac event.
- Test on desktop & mobile displays.

Update/Revise
- Add resources & revise on copied, private guide to replace first-draft.

Unique Challenges
- Keeping it current while national conversation is exploding: Guide includes live searches of online and interactive resources such as The Chronicle.
- Audience is UNC and beyond: Separate instructions for licensed resources.
- Meet just-in-time needs: Released draft guide in time for events and to involve key campus figures and intended users early. URL sent to student workshop participants; users accessed guide during event, tweeted it, linked it to Altac Project website.

• Update and revise after draft published: Edited private copy (vs. hidden pages) for previewing.
• Unclear where to locate guide on libraries website: Will publicize across libraries, via LAUNC-CH poster and library news story.
• Whether to include jobs boards: Resounding yes from students and doctoral program advisors, who gave us additional discipline-specific links.

Conclusion
This LibGuide concerns an emerging issue for a diverse audience. Very early input saved time and involved users in development and promotion, resulting in a stronger tool. Feedback was positive: event attendees tweeted out the guide and suggested additional resources.

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