

Off the Tenure Track: Exploring Alt-Ac University Careers

This Zoom workshop, hosted by the GSO and the Professional Development Committee, will focus on preparing for careers off the tenure track, emphasizing work that is still affiliated with the academy.

Graduate student professionalization tends to be intently focused on the academic job market, leaving students under-prepared to pursue alternative, and often more sustainable, career tracks for which they are equally qualified. This workshop aims to broaden the scope of media scholars' professionalization by starting a conversation about finding full-time positions off the tenure track.

The panelists represent diverse careers that bridge the gap between alt-ac careers outside the university and professor positions based in research and teaching. Maureen Ryan's position as deputy director of the Center for 21st Century Studies at UW-Milwaukee comprises overseeing the day-to-day life of the Center, as well as programming its yearly slate of lectures, conferences, and events. She is able to pursue her own research agenda in the summers. As media archivist with the Modern Culture and Media department at Brown University, Regina Longo teaches courses in archive theory and practice, in addition to managing MCM's film and video collections. Janani Subramanian works as the Public Programs Manager at UCLA's Hammer Museum, where she develops and oversees unique, social-justice oriented programs including workshops, lectures, panels, and film screenings.

The workshop will open with panelists' reflections on their own experiences from when they entered the job market through to their current position. Most of the session will focus on questions solicited from the workshop audience as well as the GSO community prior to the conference. We will discuss issues such as how to find these kinds of positions, how to tailor job materials and translate academic skills to other markets, and the experience of transitioning out of graduate school. We will also reflect on how SCMS can foster an academic community inclusive of members off the tenure track.

Countering the notion that anything off the tenure track is less desirable than the traditional professoriate, this workshop aims to prepare students for alternatives to an all-or-nothing mentality than often undergirds professional precarity. It will offer concrete ways to empower graduate students while advocating for their interests in the face of larger, market-wide realities.

Participant Bios

Regina Longo is an AV archivist, historian, and producer. She manages the MCM archives and teaches in Modern Culture and Media at Brown. She began her career at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and managed preservation for the Albanian National Film Archives. She taught at SUNY Purchase, UCSC, and UCSB, where she earned her PhD. From 2013-18 she was Associate Editor at Film Quarterly. She continues to consult for public history museums and volunteers her time to aid archives at risk globally

Maureen Ryan is the Deputy Director of the Center for 21st Century Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She earned her PhD from Northwestern University's Screen Cultures program in 2014. She is the author of *Lifestyle Media in American Culture: Gender, Class, and the Politics of Ordinarity* (Routledge, 2018), and the editor, with Jessalynn Keller, of *Emergent Feminisms: Complicating a Postfeminist Media Culture* (Routledge, 2018).

Janani Subramanian is the public programs manager at the UCLA Hammer Museum. She received her B.A. and B.S. from the University of Texas at Austin, and her M.A. and PhD in Critical Studies at the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts. Her research focused on race and science fiction media. After three years as an assistant professor at Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis, she moved back to Los Angeles and joined the Hammer Museum in 2015.

Co-Facilitators:

Catherine Clepper holds a Ph.D. from Northwestern's Screen Cultures program (2016). She has found fulfilling work in various academic staff positions including academic advisor (University of Washington, Seattle), program administrator (Institute for Comparative Modernities, Cornell University) and most recently Assistant Professor of Practice in the P3 Collaboratory for Pedagogy, Professional Development and Publicly-Engaged Scholarship at the University of Rutgers-Newark.

Cara Dickason is a Ph.D. candidate in Screen Cultures and a Mellon Cluster Fellow in Gender and Sexuality Studies at Northwestern University. Her research focuses on surveillance and spectatorship in women's television. She previously served as an instructor of English and composition at Trinity Washington University, Prince George's Community College, and the Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies. She is the current GSO representative to the SCMS Board.