On behalf of our Director, Heather Trulock and my colleagues in the External Programs, Internships and Career Services (EPICS) office, I want to welcome you to the MS Health Communication program. As you begin your education, I am sure that lingering in the back of your mind is the question - How will this degree enable me to either advance my career in my current organization or land a new opportunity? A reasonable question or area of concern and one that collaboratively we will help you answer.

The purpose of this note is to provide you with information about how I will support you over the course of your academic program, upcoming programming, as well as other Career Services support available to you through Northwestern University. As the liaison for the MS Health Communication and the EPICS office, my role is to provide coaching support, online instruction, and programming as well as engage employers to provide internships, practicum projects and/or full time employment opportunities.

The work that we will do together over the course of your degree program will be collaborative in nature. I will assist you in articulating your value proposition for employers, creation of career documents (resume, cover letters), networking, interview preparation, internship and/or job search, and salary negotiation.

SOCONNECT

SoConnect is the School of Communication’s career management system. This database allows you to:

- Search for and apply to SoC-specific internships, full-time jobs, and freelance opportunities
- Register your internship experience for credit
- Request and view career coaching appointments with EPICS staff
- Upload multiple resumes, cover letters, and other documents
- Set automatic notifications to announce when new postings hit the database
- Save settings for job searches to be used again at the click of a button
- View career resources in the document library

Log in to SoConnect using your NetID and password. Also view our SoConnect Student Guide for help in navigating SoConnect.

* Note: If SoConnect instructs you to apply via the website for an organization, send us an email at epics@northwestern.edu when you apply!

COACHING APPOINTMENTS

I am aware that many of you are working full time and my office hours are designed to accommodate your schedule. Appointments can be arranged through SoConnect, our online career management system. Once logged-in, click on Make Appointment under the I want to… menu.

In the event my posted hours don’t mesh with your availability, please let me know and I will work to meet your needs.
PROGRAMMING

Throughout the course of the year, EPICS and the Center for Communication and Health will host events with your career aspirations in mind. Monthly, I will be hosting a lunch and learn workshop focusing on one aspect of the job search. Our Fall Quarter topics will include: Creating a Career Vision—Where Do You Want to go and How Will You Get There, Key Elements for a Job Search and Send Me Your Resume—common problems encountered when writing a resume.

Winter quarter plans include a workshop on how to search for internships and the EPICS office in conjunction with Medill Career Services will be hosting the annual Career Fair on January 27, 2016. Please note that a large majority of employers attending the fair will be organizations searching for communications, marketing, and journalistic talent, however, there will be healthcare focused employers in attendance as well.

Spring quarter will bring our 2nd annual Speed Networking event to the Center, which brings recruiters, hiring managers and health communication experts as well as students together for an evening of conversation. Additional details will be provided as we get closer to individual events.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning, as the name implies, provides students with the opportunity to connect theory to practice whether under the supervision of an industry professional or through industry sponsored practicum project. The MSHC program in recognition of its diverse student body offers two avenues for students to gain real-world experience and industry connections in their field of interest.

INTERNSHIPS. The Internship option is open to all MSHC students however, it is required for: Students with fewer than 5 years of substantive professional exempt level experience (defined as non-clerical staff roles, management or executive) and/or students who have graduated from a baccalaureate program within the last 18 months.

PRACTICUM PROJECT participants will possess 5 or more years of substantive executive, administrative (non-clerical) or professional salaried work experience. I would encourage you to begin thinking about which experiential learning opportunity will best meets your needs.

ADDITIONAL CAREER SERVICES SUPPORT

Although EPICS is the primary office for Career Services support for the School of Communication, we work very closely with our colleagues in Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA). As a Northwestern University student, you are welcome to take advantage of the broader services provided by NCA. For instance, NCA is hosting a Fall Internship and Job Fair on September 29 – 30, 2015 on the Evanston campus. A wide array of employers will be present recruiting for a variety of academic majors. A listing of employers for both days of the fair can be found here. In addition, Laura Myers, Assistant Director, Student Career Advising is a dedicated resource for School of Communication students.

Look for additional updates from me and EPICS as the school year progresses. I look forward to working with you this year!

Go ‘Cats!!
Kimberley Cornwell, Assistant Director -EPICS