



# MYTHBUSTERS

**1** It can take months to get a job offer from the federal government and even longer to get a security clearance.

**FACT** DCTC scholars are required to serve in the Department of Defense (DoD) civilian workforce upon graduation. DCTC facilitates job placement for all our scholars, beginning with an internship during the summer between the junior and senior year. DCTC also facilitates the security clearance process as DoD mission requirements dictate. As a DCTC scholar, you will not have to apply for a position through USAJobs.

**2** As a DoD civilian, I will be expected to maintain physical fitness standards and wear uniforms similar to the military.

**FACT** An important element of the DCTC Culture of Care is to support students in their mental and physical wellness. The DCTC curriculum teaches scholars to build a self-reflection practice into their daily routine to increase resilience and well-being. As a DoD civilian, you will not have a physical fitness requirement. With regard to dress code, DCTC scholars are expected to wear business casual in the workplace, at internships, and during site visits.

**3** As a DoD civilian, I will be expected to deploy overseas alongside U.S. military members.

**FACT** As a DoD civilian, you may have the opportunity to serve overseas in a non-combat role to support deployed forces. However, such temporary assignments are not mandatory.

**4** Political drama on Capitol Hill makes life difficult for the DoD civilian workforce.

**FACT** The daily reality of civilian employees is far removed from the media's portrayal of politics. The DoD is a nonpartisan institution. It is the responsibility of the Secretary of Defense and senior civilian defense leaders to minimize political pressures so the workforce can focus on the mission of ensuring national security. The DCTC course will teach you about democratic principles including civilian control of the military, the federal budget process, and the program-specific impacts on national defense when annual appropriations law-making is delayed.

**5** I am ineligible for a security clearance if I smoked marijuana in the past or have sought mental health treatment.

**FACT** The Federal Government is a drug-free workplace and federal employees are barred from using marijuana even in states that have legalized it. Past activities with drugs and alcohol are among the required disclosures for a security clearance. Honesty and thoroughness are very important factors in the clearance process. Past marijuana use is not a determinative factor. Other factors include frequency, recency, and a demonstration that future use is unlikely. Seeking or receiving mental health care for personal wellness is not a determinative factor. We encourage you to complete the Digital Clearance Readiness Assessment to evaluate your readiness to undergo a background investigation: <https://www.indigobyavue.com/dod-emerging-tech/public/backgroundReadiness>.

For additional questions, ask your DCTC University Program Director.

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