

KRISTEN FOSTER-MARKS

SUMMARY

Learning design and technical education professional with a multidisciplinary background spanning higher education, software engineering, developer experience, and workplace learning. Experienced in designing evidence-based curricula, hands-on technical learning experiences, and research-informed interventions for adult learners, with academic training and teaching experience in English language learning and composition.

EDUCATION

Colorado State University *M.A. in English*
Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language

AUG 2011 – MAY 2013 **FORT COLLINS, CO**

University of Missouri *B.A. in Psychology*
Minor in English

AUG 2004 – MAY 2008 **Columbia, MO**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Technical Curriculum Developer | DATADOG

JUN 2025 – PRESENT

- Designs and develops scenario-based technical courses and workshops on cloud observability, software delivery, and product analytics
- Defines, monitors, analyzes, and reports on course success metrics
- Partners with engineering, product management, support, and product marketing teams to translate complex platform capabilities into practical learning experiences.
- Leads curriculum strategy for Datadog's Product Analytics suite
- Builds interactive learning environments and lab infrastructure that support scalable, reliable training experiences.
- Applies learning science principles to improve training effectiveness and learner confidence.
- Mentors teammates on technical content design, workshop development, and instructional quality standards while contributing to cross-functional curriculum planning.

Head of Developer Experience | DEPOT

OCT 2024 – APR 2025

- Designed and conducted research on Developer Experience and software engineering productivity.

- Thoughtfully selected research methods to gather developer feedback and translate findings into product and organizational recommendations.
- Managed an internal program that equipped software engineers to write more effective technical articles.

Principal Developer Experience Engineer | PLURALSIGHT
Developer Success Lab

JAN 2024 – AUG 2024

- Collaborated on empirical research projects examining Developer Experience, team practices, and developer well-being.
- Translated original research findings into educational materials, workshops, interventions, and curricula for software teams.
- Designed learning experiences to promote evidence-based behavior change in workplace settings.
- Led community programming that connected the lab's research with practitioners through facilitated discussions, workshops, and other public-facing learning activities.

Technical Upskilling Lead, Tech Center of Excellence | PLURALSIGHT

AUG 2022 – JAN 2024

- Designed and facilitated technical learning experiences on topics including software observability, web accessibility, and cloud computing.
- Conducted needs analyses with engineering teams to identify strategic upskilling priorities.
- Collaborated with subject matter experts to develop curricula aligned with organizational and technical initiatives.
- Collected and analyzed learner and program data to evaluate effectiveness and improve future learning initiatives.
- Regularly delivered internal talks and workshops on topics ranging from *Rhetoric for Software Professionals*, to *Gaining Confidence as a Speaker*

Senior Software Engineer | PLURALSIGHT

FEB 2022 – AUG 2022

- Developed customer-facing software features and mentored less-experienced software developers.

Director of Engineering | PLURALSIGHT

JAN 2021 – FEB 2022

- Led an engineering team responsible for customer-focused feature development, technical delivery, and team processes.
- Coached six software engineers and three interns, emphasizing professional growth and continuous learning.

Backend Python Developer | PLURALSIGHT

DEC 2019 – JAN 2021

- Developed internal APIs and software packages using Python, Django, Django REST Framework, and PyTest.

Lead Application Developer | ZAYO GROUP

JUL 2017 – NOV 2019

- Led a software team developing, refactoring, and maintaining full-stack web applications.

Full Stack Web Development Instructor | GALVANIZE

SEP 2016 – MAR 2017

- Designed and delivered instruction in full-stack web development, including JavaScript, Node/Express, PostgreSQL, Angular, React, and Git.

Composition & Academic Writing Instructor | COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

AUG 2012 – APR 2016

- Taught Academic Writing to native and non-native English speakers
- Designed, developed, and delivered curriculum for a variety of class types, learning objectives, and proficiency levels
- Conducted classroom-based research in beliefs about second language learning, applying findings to improve students' learning
- Served as ESL Specialist in the CSU Writing Center, developing materials for ESL writers and training writing tutors to support non-native English speakers

Lead English Instructor | READING STAR Gwangju, South Korea

AUG 2010 – JUL 2011

- Taught English as a Foreign Language to elementary school children in an after-school program (hagwon)
- Trained and mentored new teachers
- Proposed, developed, and taught an original screenwriting course to the school's honors-level writing students

English Instructor | READING TOWN Changwon, South Korea

AUG 2008 – JUL 2009

- Taught English as a Foreign Language to elementary school children in an after-school program (hagwon)

SELECTED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Getting Started with Product Analytics [↗](#)
- Getting Started with Observability in Google Cloud with Datadog [↗](#)
- Code Review Anxiety Workbook [↗](#)
- Generative AI Adoption Toolkit [↗](#)
- The Rhetorical Situation for Software Engineers [↗](#)
- Learning-Themed Retrospective for Strengthening Learning Culture & Reducing Learning Debt [↗](#)

CONFERENCES, PODCASTS & WEBINARS

- The Science of Developer Experience [Engineering Unblocked 2025](#)
- How do we measure Developer Experience? [Day Two DevOps 2025](#)
- Helping your engineers find time to learn and upskill [LeadDev Webinar 2024](#)
- Science-backed ways to advance your tech career [Tech Skills Day 2024](#)
- “I Didn't Grow Up Speaking Code”: GitHub Copilot as a Programming as a Second Language Tool [Monki Gras London 2024](#)

- Using a learning-themed retrospective to strengthen your team's learning culture and reduce learning debt [LeadDev New York 2023](#)
- How a year in engineering leadership has made me a better individual contributor [StaffPlus San Francisco 2022](#)
- The definition of "done" [Perspectives in Leadership Podcast 2022](#)
- Applications of Foreign Language Learning to Coding [Pluralsight 2022](#)
- Learning to code and embracing failure [All Hands on Tech Podcast 2021](#)

RESEARCH, WRITING & INTERVIEWS

Developer Success Lab

- “My code is shit”: Negative automatic thoughts and outcomes of a behavioral experiment for code review anxiety
- Microinclusions: a small way to increase sense of belonging and fit on tech teams
- Think big, then scrutinize: evaluating thought leadership with scientific methods

LeadDev

- “Trial by fire” is destroying your incident response
- Upskilling teams at scale with Learnathons
- Improve your learning culture with retrospectives
- Using rhetorical situations to improve internal communication

Pluralsight

- How Pluralsight made waves in website accessibility
- Close technical skills gaps with a principal learning engineer
- Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Insights Series
 - What SLA can teach us about learning to code: Part 1
 - What SLA can teach us about learning to code: Part 2
 - SLA Insights Part 3: Noticing & Attitudes
 - SLA Insights Part 4: Affect & Anxiety
- **The New Stack** - How to Find and Solve Engineering Bottlenecks
- **eWeek** - How Businesses Can Hone Tech Skills Outside of Academia
- **Jaxenter** - Women in Tech: “Remember to ask for a lot of help...”
- **eWeek** - Inspiring Women in Tech
- **BuiltIn Austin** - The Art of the Upskill: How Pluralsight Promotes Professional Development from Within