

Deb Donig, Ph.D.

Lecturer, UC Berkeley School of Information
Former Assistant Professor, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

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RESEARCH EXPERTISE

Sociotechnical systems, responsible technology workforce development, AI ethics and governance, algorithmic bias and extremism, human rights and technology, organizational studies of technological development, public interest technology.

EDUCATION

Ph.D., English

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

M.A., English

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

M.A., English

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

2010

B.A., English (History Minor)

University of California, Davis

2005

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Lecturer

UC Berkeley School of Information, Graduate Program in Data Science

2022–present

Assistant Professor

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

2019–2024

Postdoctoral Lecturer

UCLA English Department

2017–2018

Teaching Associate

UCLA

2010–2017

Instructor

Digital Media Academy, Stanford University

2010

Teaching Associate

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

2008–2010

MAJOR FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AND AWARDS

All Tech Is Human Siegel Endowed Fellow in Responsible Technology

2024–2025

Belfer Endowed Fellow

Center for Technology and Society, ADL

2023–present

Principal Investigator — “Ethical Technology: The Future of Work”

National Science Foundation (NSF) Research Grant

2021–2023

Principal Investigator — “Ethical Technology”

Cal Poly Strategic Research Initiative Grant Award

2020–2021

“2021 Thought Leader”

Cal Poly Magazine

2021

Fellowship

Cal Poly Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

2020–2021

Faculty Research Award — “At Metaphor’s Edge”	2020
Diversity Cluster Hire Seed Funding Award <i>Cal Poly</i>	2019
Berger Endowed Inaugural Fellowship in Holocaust Studies <i>UCLA</i>	2016–2017
Skirball Fellowship Award <i>UCLA</i>	2016–2017
Dissertation Year Fellowship Award <i>UCLA</i>	2016–2017
Bluma Appel Research Travel Grant	2016
Dissertation Research Fellowship <i>UCLA Department of English</i>	2015–2016
Irving and Jean Stone Endowed Fellowship Award <i>UCLA</i>	2015–2016
Roter Research Grant	2015
Grace M. Hunt Archival Research Grant	2015
Center for Expressive Technologies Innovation Grant <i>Cal Poly</i>	2020, 2021, 2023

SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

“Ethics, Infrastructure, and the Social License to Operate: AI’s Climate Impact” <i>Forthcoming in Greening the Built Environment: Systems Thinking for Sustainability, Cambridge University Press</i> <i>(ed. Julie Albright)</i>	Forthcoming
“AI Governance in Higher Education” <i>Forthcoming in IAPP Textbook on AI Governance (ed. Kevin Fumai and Colin Caleb)</i>	Forthcoming
“Open Questions: Evaluating the Impact of Open Source Large Language Models on Hate Speech Propagation in Online Forums” <i>Under review, Journal of Responsible Innovation</i>	Under review
“The Facts of Reconciliation: Fictions of Truth in the South African TRC” <i>Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa</i>	Nov 2024
“Textimony: The Grammar of Atrocity” <i>Journal of Comparative Literature</i>	Mar 2024
“The Technology of Interpretation” <i>Textual Practice</i>	Jul 2020
“Factuality on Trial: Kurt Vonnegut Jr.’s Mother Night, the Eichmann Trope, and Hannah Arendt’s Authenticity Error” <i>Textual Practice</i>	Dec 2017
“Seeing Double in Indra Sinha’s Animal’s People: Local Toxins, Global Toxicity, and the Universal Bhopal” <i>Journal of Postcolonial Writing</i>	Jan 2017
“The Loss of Voice and the Voice of Loss: Memory, Reconstruction, and Reconciliation in South African Literature” <i>Trauma, Resistance, and Reconstruction in Post-1994 South African Writing (eds. Jaspal K. Singh and Rajendra Chetty), Peter Lang Publishing</i>	2010

BOOK MANUSCRIPT

“The Tech We Choose: The Rise of the Responsible Technology Workforce” <i>Examines the emergence of professionals tasked with embedding human values into technological systems, tracing workforce evolution from the post-2016 “techlash” through current institutionalization.</i>	In progress
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SELECTED PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

[The Responsible Tech Skills Paradox: The Stalemate Between Hiring and the Candidate Pool](#)

All Tech Is Human

[From Principles to Frameworks to Professionalization: The Responsible Tech Job Skills That Matter Most in 2025](#)

All Tech Is Human

[The “One Big Beautiful Bill” Threatens a Decade of AI Accountability](#)

All Tech Is Human

[The State of Responsible, Ethical, and Public Interest Tech Jobs: What’s Really Behind These Job Postings](#)

All Tech Is Human

[Responsible Tech Certificates: A Worthwhile Expense?](#)

All Tech Is Human

[A Vanishing Act: What We Can Learn From Google’s Decision to “Disappear” Its Principles Page](#)

All Tech Is Human

[Navigating the Complex Field of Responsible Tech](#)

All Tech Is Human

[Reclaiming the Waters of Democracy](#)

New America’s Public Interest Technology Academic Network

[Professor Deb Donig: Ethics, Human Rights, and Human Technology Interaction](#)

“Confessions of a Cyberpsychologist” (Video)

[Navigating Ethics in Technology](#)

“Humanize IT” (Video)

SELECTED PRESS COVERAGE

[Why the US Senate Has Voted Down Trump’s AI Moratorium 99-1](#)

Technology Magazine

[MIT Tech Review: The State of Responsible Technology featuring Professor Deb Donig](#)

MIT Technology Review

[Document Detectives Use Smudges and Bloodstains to Investigate the Past](#)

Smithsonian Magazine

[Two CLA Professors Receive National Science Foundation Grant to Assess the Profession of Ethical Technology](#)

Cal Poly News

[Ethics and Human Rights in Tech with Deb Donig](#)

Podcast Interview

[The Rise of Tech Ethics](#)

Protocol

[Tech Stands Up: Deb Donig on Defining “The Good”, Building Diverse Teams, SciFi and Utopia](#)

Tech Stands Up Podcast

[2021 Thought Leaders: English Professor Deb Donig](#)

Cal Poly Magazine

[Spotlight: Cal Poly’s Ethical Technology Initiative](#)

New America

[Cal Poly Coalition Aims to Make the University a National Leader in Research, Training in Ethical Technology](#)

Cal Poly News

TEACHING

UC Berkeley School of Information

Behind the Data: Humans and Values (DataSci 231) <i>Graduate</i>	Fall 2022–present
The Future of Work: Responsible Data Science Career Practicum <i>Undergraduate</i>	Summer 2024
<i>Cal Poly San Luis Obispo</i>	
Technically Human: Science Fiction and the Ethics of Technology <i>Undergraduate</i>	Spring 2020–present
Reading the World: Where’s the Evidence? <i>Undergraduate</i>	Spring 2023
Introduction to Literary Studies <i>Undergraduate</i>	Winter 2023
The Hyphenated American: Ethnic American Literature and Media <i>Undergraduate</i>	Fall 2022
How to Do Literary Theory <i>Graduate</i>	Fall 2021
Conflicts of Memory: History and Remembrance in the Wake of Atrocity <i>Graduate</i>	Winter 2021
Distant Suffering: Human Rights and Global Anglophone Literatures <i>Undergraduate</i>	Winter 2020
Afrotopia: African Literature and Fictions of Africa <i>Undergraduate</i>	Fall 2019

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

2018

“Postwar Brotherhood: Memory and Meaning in The Chosen” <i>Keynote Speaker, Fountain Theater</i>	Apr 2018
“Women in Academia: Women and Youth Supporting Each Other” <i>Panelist, UCLA</i>	May 2018

2021

“Ethical Technology: The New Workforce” <i>Guest Lecturer, USC</i>	Nov 2021
“Coded Bias: Screening and Q&A with Director Shalini Kantayya” <i>Panelist, Cal Poly</i>	May 2021
“Technology, Democracy, and Ethics” <i>Panelist, Cal Poly</i>	Apr 2021
“Tech, Intersectionally Examined: Inequality in the Tech Workforce” <i>Panelist, Cal Poly</i>	Feb 2021

2022

“A Panel on Futures in Tech” <i>Moderator, School of Information, UC Berkeley</i>	Nov 2022
“Inclusion in Tech” <i>Speaker, Public Interest Technology University Network, Annual Meeting</i>	Nov 2022
“The Future of Tech is Human” <i>Keynote, Common Experience, Texas State University</i>	Oct 2022
“Tech + Human Values” <i>Speaker, Google</i>	Sep 2022

“Audio Storytelling in the Humanities” <i>Speaker, Princeton University</i>	Apr 2022
“Ethics and Human Rights in Tech with Deb Donig” <i>Guest Interviewee, “Before It Happened” Podcast</i>	Apr 2022
“Ethical Technology and the Holocaust” <i>Guest Interviewee, “The Jewish History Matters” Podcast</i>	Mar 2022
“STEM and Humanities Collaboration in Building an Ethical and Equitable Vision for Biotechnology” <i>Speaker, Envisioning AI and Ethics in Biomedical Research Microlab, NIH</i>	Mar 2022
“Ethical Technology as the Future of Work” <i>Speaker, Conference on the Future of Work at the Human Technology Frontier, NSF</i>	Jan 2022
2023	
“Artificial Intelligence: The Confluence of Technology and Creativity Speaker Series” <i>Speaker, Cuesta College</i>	Sep 2023
“The Future of Work at the Human / Technology Frontier” <i>Panelist, NSF PI Meeting, Northwestern University</i>	Aug 2023
“The Future of the Data Science Workforce” <i>Moderator, School of Information, UC Berkeley</i>	Apr 2023
“A Panel on the Data Science Job Market” <i>Moderator, School of Information, UC Berkeley</i>	Apr 2023
“Figures of the Law” <i>Speaker, Nuremberg Principles Conference in International Law and Human Rights, Catholic University</i>	Mar 2023
“The Future of Tech is Human” <i>Speaker, Global Young Entrepreneurs Society Annual Meeting</i>	Mar 2023
“Who Counts?” <i>Speaker, Women in Data Science Annual Conference, School of Information, UC Berkeley</i>	Mar 2023
2024	
“AI, Extremism, and the Future of Democracy” <i>Speaker, Metaverse Safety Week</i>	Dec 2024
“The Future of AI Governance and Responsible Technology in a Changing Political Climate” <i>Guest Lecturer, Princeton University</i>	Nov 2024
“Faculty Provocation Panel” <i>Panelist, MIDS Fall Immersion, UC Berkeley School of Information</i>	Aug 2024
“Open Questions: Evaluating the Impact of Open Source Large Language Models on Hate Speech Propagation in Online Forums” <i>Keynote Speaker, MIDS Summer Immersion, UC Berkeley School of Information</i>	Aug 2024
“The Rise of the Ethical Tech Workforce: Opportunities and Challenges for Anticipatory Governance of Digital and Algorithmic Innovation” <i>Speaker, EASST Annual Meeting, Amsterdam</i>	Jul 2024
“AI and the Humanities Curriculum: Revolutionizing Education in the Age of AI” <i>Speaker, Envision Tomorrow: Exploring AI’s Role in Higher Education, Cal State Fullerton</i>	Apr 2024
“Generative AI and Extremism” <i>Panelist, Never is Now Conference, Javits Center</i>	Feb 2024
2025	
“Ethical AI in Cosmetics: Building Intelligence That Serves Human Values & Requirements” <i>Coptis Summit on AI</i>	Nov 2025
“The Big Reboot: Tech Jobs for Good” <i>Princeton University, Center for Information Technology Policy</i>	Oct 2025

“Ethical, Responsible, and Public Interest Technology: The Future of Work” <i>Ethics and Engineering, UC Berkeley</i>	Oct 2025
“The Future of Data and AI” <i>Panelist, MIDS Fall Immersion, UC Berkeley School of Information</i>	Aug 2025
“Beyond the Algorithm: How Workplace Culture Shapes AI Ethics and the Rise of Responsible Tech Careers” <i>Speaker, MIDS Fall Immersion, UC Berkeley School of Information</i>	Aug 2025
“The Big Reboot: The Rise of the Ethical Tech Workforce” <i>Keynote Speaker, Profs & Pints</i>	Jun 2025
“The Count: How Quantifying the Job Market Helps us Decide What Matters in Human Values Centered Tech Production” <i>Speaker, Siegel Endowed Speaker Series</i>	Apr 2025

2026

“Who Governs AI for Social Welfare? State Capacity, Workforce Design, and Democratic Accountability in the Algorithmic Era” <i>London School of Economics; for inclusion, Oxford University Press Handbook on AI and the Future of Social Welfare</i>	Jun 2026
“The Technological Grotesque: What the Responsible AI Workforce Crisis Means for Higher Education — and for Programs Like This One” <i>San Diego State University</i>	Apr 2026
“Where Data Science Meets the Real World” <i>UC Berkeley MIDS Capstone Showcase Commencement</i>	Apr 2026
“Building the Future of California’s Responsible AI Workforce: Digital Literacy Beyond Technical Skills” <i>Annual Meeting of the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC)</i>	Apr 2026
“The Technological Grotesque: What the Responsible AI Workforce Crisis Means for Data Scientists” <i>MIDS Spring Immersion, UC Berkeley School of Information</i>	Mar 2026

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Committee Member <i>Berkeley Institute for Free Inquiry (BIFI), UC Berkeley</i>	2024–present
Interim Director <i>Center for Expressive Technologies (CET), Cal Poly</i>	2021–2023
Delegate <i>Public Interest Technology University Network</i>	2020–2024
Faculty Mentor <i>DEI “Believe, Empower, Advocate, Collaborate, Nurture” Fellowship Program</i>	2020–present
Committee Member <i>Social and Intellectual Engagement Committee</i>	2020–present
Committee Member <i>Graduate Curriculum and Admissions Committee</i>	2020–present
Co-Chair <i>English Department Diversity Committee</i>	2019–present
Committee Member <i>CLA Technology Committee</i>	2019–present

MEDIA PRODUCTION, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, AND ADVISORY ROLES

Podcast Host & Producer

“22 Lessons on Ethics and Technology”

Special Podcast Series, Public Humanities Scholarship

2022–present

“The Technically Human Podcast”

Podcast Series on Ethical Technology, Seasons 1–8, Episodes 1–90

2020–present

Advisory & Consulting Work

Advisor

Crickt AI: start-up focused on developing fact checking for video streaming

2024–present

Advisor

“Weight of the World” film series, produced by Michelle Renee Jackson and Simuel-Murray Productions

2020–2024

Policy Working Group Member

Biden Campaign Strategy Team, Higher Education

2020

Consultant

“Hunters,” Amazon Prime, produced by Jordan Peele and Amazon Studios

2019–2020

TECHNICAL SKILLS & METHODOLOGIES

Computational Methods: Large-scale data analysis, job market analytics, content analysis

Research Methods: Mixed-methods research, ethnographic interviews, organizational analysis, policy analysis

Areas of Expertise: Algorithmic bias detection, workforce development, sociotechnical systems analysis

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS AND SKILLS

Human Rights, AI Ethics, Data Science, Public Interest Technology, Public Humanities, Social Justice Practices.