

Laura Otero, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor & MSIDT Program Coordinator, School of Information

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Curriculum Vitae • Last updated: August 2026

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

San José State University — San José, CA

July 2025–present

Assistant Professor & MSIDT Program Coordinator, School of Information

Naval Postgraduate School — Monterey, CA

February 2025–July 2025

Instructional Design and Faculty Academic Coordinator, NPS Extended Campus

California State University Monterey Bay — Seaside, CA

August 2022–July 2025

Adjunct Faculty, School of Computing & Design

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Leadership: Instructional Technology

University of the Cumberlands

M.S., Education: Online Teaching & Learning

California State University (CSU) East Bay

B.A., Human Communication: English Subject Matter Preparation

CSU Monterey Bay

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Instructional design; instructional designer–faculty collaboration; professional identity and expertise; generative AI and human–AI collaboration; learning technologies; instructional design workforce development.

Research trajectory: Examines the evolving professional identity and work of instructional designers across academic and organizational settings, with particular attention to collaborative relationships and the ways generative AI is reshaping instructional design expertise, credibility, and practice.

SCHOLARSHIP

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Otero, L., Lara, M., & Yamashita, J. (2025). Emerging generative artificial intelligence use by educators in the California State University system. *Proceedings of INTED2025*, 2961–2965. <https://doi.org/10.21125/inted.2025.0784>

Manuscripts Under Review

Wang, K., & Otero, L. (2026). Automation or augmentation? Exploring AI competency expectations in instructional design job postings. *(Revise and resubmit.)*

Otero, L. (2026). Leading for collaboration: Exemplary leadership practices and bonding social capital between instructional designers and faculty.

Otero, L., Shaffer, G., Akers-Gifford, K., & Hussein, K. (2026). Teaching the teachers: Instructional design, academic librarianship, and the recognition of educational expertise.

Aguinaga, J., Ghosh, V., Mooradian, N., Shaffer, G., & Otero, L. (2026). AI literacy readiness among academic library professionals in the era of generative AI. *(Revise and resubmit.)*

Otero, L. (2026). Lowering technical barriers: Agentic AI and instructional designer collaboration in immersive learning development.

Book Chapters

Aguinaga, J., Otero, L., & Shaffer, G. (2026). Leadership competencies in the age of AI: Leading digital transformation in academic libraries. *(Chapter proposal accepted.)*

Dissertation

Otero, L. M. (2023). Building relationships between instructional designers and faculty: Cultivating social capital through exemplary leadership (Publication No. 31147095) [Doctoral dissertation, University of the Cumberlands]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

GRANTS & SPONSORED RESEARCH

Research Funding & Proposals

- 2026 — San José State University RSCA Seed Grant, The AI Third Wheel Effect (awarded; PI). Mixed-methods randomized pilot examining how generative AI affects bonding social capital and source credibility in faculty–instructional designer collaboration.

Program, Operational & Professional Development Funding

- 2025: \$315,000 in reimbursable funding secured and managed for Naval Postgraduate School Extended Campus staffing and operations.
- 2024: \$100,000 in internal funding managed for Summer Institute artificial intelligence training.
- 2024, 2023, 2022: \$17,000 Quality Matters Online Course Services Grant each year (secured and managed).
- 2022: \$15,000 Affordable Learning Solutions/OER Grant (secured).
- 2018–2019: \$34,000 Classified Staff Professional Development Grant (managed).

INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOPS

- Otero, L., & Beem, C. (2026). AI demystified: Separating fact from fiction [Invited public lecture]. Salinas Public Library, Salinas, CA.
- Otero, L. (2025). Generative AI training for the CSU Board of Trustees [Invited training]. California State University Board of Trustees Meeting, Long Beach, CA.
- Otero, L. (2025). Experimenting with generative AI to enhance teaching and learning [Invited workshop]. Online Teaching Conference.
- Otero, L. (2025). Writing measurable learning outcomes with generative AI [Invited talk]. California Outcomes Assessment Coordinators Hub, Friday SLO Talk.
- Otero, L. (2024). Course mapping with AI: Leveraging tools for alignment [Invited workshop]. California Virtual Campus–Online Education Initiative.
- Otero, L. (2024). Introduction to generative AI [Invited workshop]. Monterey Bay Area Cooperative Library System.
- Otero, L., & Beem, C. (2023). Generative AI workshop [Invited workshop]. University of San Francisco Speaker Series, San Francisco, CA.

CONFERENCE & INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- Otero, L. (2024). Panelist, Life and Work after ChatGPT: New Opportunities and Ethical Challenges from Generative AI. 22nd Ethics & Responsible Business Forum, California State University Monterey Bay.
- Otero, L. (2023). Opening Pandora's box: Developing AI training for higher ed [Conference presentation]. 38th Annual DET/CHE Conference.
- Otero, L. (2023). Building relationships between instructional designers and faculty through exemplary leadership [Conference presentation]. 38th Annual DET/CHE Conference.
- Española, L., & Otero, L. (2023). Digital accessibility and equity: Building self-paced professional development opportunities for faculty [Conference presentation]. Accessing Higher Ground Conference.
- Otero, L., & Española, L. (2023). Digital accessibility and equity: Building self-paced professional development opportunities for faculty [Conference presentation]. Peralta Equity Conference.
- Otero, L. (2023). Critical conversation about cheating: Strategies and best practices to encourage academic integrity [Panelist]. CSU Monterey Bay Winter Institute.
- Otero, L. (2021). Redesign your online course: Resources for success and equity. Hartnell College Convocation.
- Otero, L. (2021). Canvas Studio: Enhance and capture lectures in your online courses. Hartnell College Student Success Conference.
- Otero, L. (2020). Regular and effective contact: Accreditation compliance in distance education courses. Hartnell College Convocation.
- Otero, L. (2019). Accessibility and Section 508 compliance in online courses. Hartnell College Student Success Conference.

TEACHING & CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP

San José State University — Master of Science in Instructional Design & Technology

- IDT 202: Systematic Design of Instruction and Human Performance. Fall 2025–present.
- IDT 204: Theories of Teaching, Learning, and Human Cognition. Fall 2025–present.
- (In development) IDT 211: Generative AI for Instructional Design Professionals. Spring 2027.
- (In development) IDT 212: Digital Learning Operations and Strategic Leadership. Fall 2027.
- INFO 298: Special Topics. Fall 2026.
- Teaching evaluations: Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 SOTE mean = 5.0/5.0, above university norms.

Curriculum & Program Leadership

- Led launch and ongoing coordination of the 100% online MS in Instructional Design & Technology, including curriculum planning, program assessment, faculty coordination, and industry engagement.
- Created four graduate IDT courses (211, 212, 287, and 298) and led two through the approval process (213 and 214).

- Developed the Instructional Design Foundations graduate certificate (post-baccalaureate) to expand enrollment pathways and align curriculum with workforce needs.
- Contributed to development of the Ed.D. in Educational Technology, including doctoral-course design work in digital transformation and professional learning.
- Recruited, supervised, and evaluated lecturer faculty and graduate student research assistants; convened and chaired the MSIDT Program Advisory Committee.

California State University Monterey Bay — Adjunct Faculty

- CST 300L: Major Proseminar. Fall 2022–Spring 2024.
- IST 524: Instructional Technology. Fall 2023.
- IST 520: Theories of Learning and Instruction. Spring 2024–Spring 2025.
- IST 595: Special Topics: Artificial Intelligence Tools for Teaching and Learning. Summer 2024–Summer 2025.
- IST 522: Instructional Design. Fall 2024.
- Graduate Capstone (Thesis) Advisor: Fall 2023–Summer 2025 (5+ students), with student evaluations consistently above university norms.

Faculty & Staff Professional Development Instruction

- CSU Monterey Bay Center for Academic Technologies (2022–2025): CAT 104 Online Instruction Certification; CAT 103 Introduction to AI Tools for Teaching & Learning; CAT 101 Digital Accessibility & Equity; CAT 102 Resilient Teaching; workshops on learning outcomes, course mapping, and AI-enabled course design.
- Hartnell College Professional Development Center (2014–2022): PDC 100 Introduction to Tech Tools; PDC 101 Introduction to Canvas; PDO 100 Foundations for Success in Online Teaching; PDO 101 Introduction to Teaching Online; PDO 102 Virtual Classroom Skills; PDW 102 Creating Webpages with Omni CMS.
- Additional faculty development delivered through the CSU Chancellor’s Office, California Virtual Campus, and UNICEF/Juba University in South Sudan.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

California State University Monterey Bay — Seaside, CA

March 2022–February 2025

Online Education Coordinator, Center for Academic Technologies

- Led campus planning, development, quality assurance, accessibility, and faculty development for online education.
- Authored and led the CSU-wide AI Tools for Teaching & Learning program for faculty and instructional designers, reaching 2,000+ completions and mentoring 10 facilitators.
- Initiated development of the campus Digital Learning policy and expanded Quality Matters peer review by certifying 20+ faculty.
- Secured and/or managed more than \$150,000 total in professional development and online course quality funding.

Hartnell College — Salinas, CA

April 2014–March 2022

Instructional Technologist, Information Technology Resources Department

- Directed Professional Development Center activities and supported the Distance Education program across a multi-campus system.
- Developed emergency remote-teaching and remote-work training supporting 500+ faculty and 100+ staff during the COVID-19 closure.
- Developed and taught professional-development curricula for 500+ employees and issued online-teaching certifications for 300+ faculty.
- Led statewide technology implementation and grant-supported distance-education initiatives.

Comcourse, Inc. — Santa Cruz, CA

August 2011–April 2014

Course Developer, Instructional Design Department

- Converted 50+ face-to-face courses to online formats; trained 50+ faculty and 8+ instructional designers; collaborated with subject-matter experts to develop interactive multimedia.

SELECTED INDUSTRY & CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

- Meridian Rise — Chief Academic Officer and Founding Partner (2026–present): provide ad-hoc expertise in instructional design and AI-powered educational technology solutions for government and corporate clients.
- Copal.ai — Technical Advisor (2023–2025): advised an AI-focused higher-education start-up and led learning-and-development strategy with developers and UI/UX specialists.
- Independent Faculty Professional Development Consultant (2022–2025): delivered AI and teaching/learning consulting and presentations for universities, school districts, libraries, CSU partners, and international audiences.
- FlipOUT Educational Services — Consultant (2013–2014): founded a consulting practice providing course development, instructional design, and training support.

SERVICE & PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

San José State University

- Co-Chair, Facilities, Technology, and Sustainability Subcommittee (2026).
- Member, Strategic Planning and Resource Committee (2026).
- Member, Curriculum Committee (2025–present).
- Chair/Convener, MSIDT Program Advisory Committee (academic and industry representatives).
- AI Ambassador, School of Information; guidance to faculty on AI integration and use.

California State University System & Professional Outreach

- Campus Lead, CSU Online Course Services Professional Learning Community (2022–2025).
- Member, CSU Instructional Designer Common Interest Group (2022–2025).
- Member, CSU Extended Reality Common Interest Group (2022–2025).

Naval Postgraduate School

- Member, Accreditation and Assessment Steering Committee (A2SC) (2025).
- Member, Quality Assurance Subcommittee, A2SC (2025).

California State University Monterey Bay

- Member, President’s Artificial Intelligence Taskforce (2024–2025).
- Member, Online Education/Digital Learning Working Group (2023–2025).
- Faculty Representative, Disability Advisory Committee (2023–2025).
- Faculty Representative, Lecturer Resource Group (2023–2025).

Hartnell College & California Community Colleges

- Professional Development Committee (2014–2022); Chair, Classified Professional Development Subcommittee (2019–2022).
- Distance Education Committee (2014–2022); Administrative Governance Council (2020–2022); Online Services Committee (2016–2022); Technology Development Council (2014–2022); Institutional Effectiveness Council (2014–2017).
- Collective bargaining service: Employee-Employer Relations Committee (as needed, 2017–2022) and Negotiations Team (2016–2022; two contract cycles).
- CVC-OEI Common Course Management System Advisory Committee, California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (2020).

HONORS & RECOGNITION

- Academic Senate of the California State University commendation in Resolution AS-3679-24/AA/FA, Artificial Intelligence: Empowering CSU Faculty Colleagues (2024), recognizing contributions as a CSU generative AI course author.

PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS & DEVELOPMENT

- Achieving Equitable Student Outcomes Certificate, San José State University College of Information, Data and Society (2025).
- Quality Matters — Certified Master Course Reviewer (2024); Certified Peer Course Reviewer (2023); Certified Instructional Designer (2022).
- DET/CHE Women Mentorship Program (2025); DET/CHE Leadership Program Cohort (2023).
- CRE@TLA S.T.E.M. Academy for Inclusive and Culturally Responsive Teaching (2023).
- Association of California Community College Administrators, Admin 001: So, You Want To Be An Administrator? Cohort (2022).
- Instructional Technology Council, Distance Education Leadership Academy Cohort (2021).
- Hartnell College Classified Leadership Academy Cohorts 1 and 2 (2021–2022); Leadership Institute (2019).
- National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Mental Health First Aid Training (2023).