

Nikki Christensen

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Education

- *Master of Science in Folklore Studies*
 - Utah State University, May 2026
 - Thesis: “The Dragon in the Dress: A Folklore Analysis of Gender Bias in AI-Generated Monster Imagery”
- *Bachelor of Science in English - Creative Writing, Cum Laude*
 - Utah State University, May 2023
 - Minors: Folklore, Marketing
- *Associate of Science - Summa Cum Laude*
 - Snow College, May 2019

Teaching Experience

- *Temporary Lecturer, Utah State University* (August 2026 - Present)
 - Teach a 4/4 schedule that consists of three in-person sections of English 2010 (Intermediate Writing) as well as one online section of the same course.
 - Balance the needs of 84 students across four sections in Fall semester 2026 with four more sections scheduled for Spring semester 2027.
 - Built and integrated a research analysis unit explicitly designed to discuss the difference between AI (LLM) writing and human authored research essays.
 - Created a Braided Essay unit to teach students how and when to incorporate personal narrative into their research writing.
 - Aligned all lessons explicitly with course learning outcomes while offering 3-4 different strategies per writing task to accommodate diverse learning approaches.

- *Graduate Instructor, Utah State University (August 2024 - May 2026)*
 - Taught 5 sections of English 1010 (Introduction to Writing) and 2 sections of English 2010 (Intermediate Writing) to more than 140 students.
 - Integrated AI technologies into composition pedagogy, including role-assignment strategies for targeted feedback, perspective-taking exercises for literature reviews, and published "Monster Mindscapes" lesson using AI image generators to teach source synthesis and audience awareness.
 - 'Monster Mindscapes' activity named by students in open-ended course evaluations across three separate semesters (Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Fall 2025)
 - Taught advanced reading strategies from skimming/scanning to rhetorical annotation, alongside core composition skills in revision, synthesis, and analysis.
 - Designed and implemented curriculum covering rhetorical analysis, argument construction, source synthesis, revision strategies, and research methods.
- *Writing Center Tutor, Utah State University (August 2024- May 2025)*
 - Conducted approximately 50 one-on-one tutoring sessions, providing individualized support in editing, revision, citation formatting, and essay development.
 - Addressed core writing challenges including flow and coherence, idea development, clarity of expression, and argument structure.

Research & Publications

- **"Monster Mindscapes: Teaching Synthesis, Revision, and Audience Awareness With Monsters"**
 - Developed an AI-assisted lesson plan using visual storytelling to teach text synthesis in composition writing.
 - Published in:
 - *The WAC Clearinghouse*, Continuing Experiments Collection, August 2025.
 - [Link to "Monster Mindscapes"](#)
 - Presented research at:

- Kick-off event for the Data Science & AI Center, Utah State University.
 - Professional Development Training, USU English Department.
- 75-Minute Guest Lecture in English 6820
 - Presented the lesson plan in a condensed 75-minute lecture for a group of graduate educators.
- **“The Dragon in the Dress: A Folklore Analysis of Gender Bias in AI-Generated Monster Imagery”**
 - Conducted a year-long experiment across seven AI image generators, collecting and coding 577 monster images to demonstrate that neutrally prompted generators never produce female monsters, arguing that GenAI does not merely reflect cultural bias but actively reshapes and intensifies it through model training
 - Developed original theoretical framework of the "prosthetic feminine" to describe how generators attach superficial gendered signifiers onto structurally unchanged bodies when forced to generate female monstrosity, situated within Tolbert and Foster's Möbius media framework and the monster theory of Cohen, Creed, Weinstock, and Shildrick
 - [Link to “The Dragon in the Dress”](#)
- **"An Examination of the Inverse Riddle: Derived From the Traditional Riddle"**
 - Winner, W. W. Newell Prize for Children's Folklore, September 2022
 - Conducted original research on children's folklore, identifying a new subgenre, "Inverse Riddles."
 - Designed and implemented a field study with children ages 6-12 to analyze cognitive engagement with riddles.
- **Creative Publications**
 - *Weeds: Snow College Literary Journal*
 - "The Story of Their Lives" (Short Essay, 2018)
 - "Change" (Poem, 2018)
 - "Silo?" (Short Story, 2019)
 - *Sink Hollow Magazine* (Photography)
 - "Dragon" (2nd Place Winner, 2020)
 - "Forgotten Spring" (Honorable Mention, 2020)
 - "Desert Snow" (Honorable Mention, 2020)
 - *Still Small Stories*
 - “The Bowl” (Short Story, 2025)

- *Substack Newsletter*
 - The AI Bestiary (January 2026 - Present)
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Professional Experience

- *Editorial Assistant, Marvels and Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies* (October 2024 - Present)
 - Collaborated with the editorial team to review and edit journal submissions.
 - Provided feedback and support in academic publishing workflows.
 - Contacted and worked with contributors to get their final copy edits submitted to the journal editors.
 - *Graduate Archiving Intern at the Fife Folklore Archives* (Summer 2025)
 - Designed four lesson plans to be used in library/archive guest lectures.
 - Transcribed 6 interviews using *Express Scribe* transcription software and a foot pedal.
 - Fulfilled patron requests by locating materials stored in the archive and scanning them.
 - Processed a new collection from beginning to end using *ProQuest* and in-house cataloging spreadsheets.
 - *Product Support Specialist 1, Quadra eCommerce*. (January 2022 - August 2023)
 - Managed website content and marketplace listings, including product descriptions and visuals.
 - Created manufacturer onboarding program and contributed to social media strategy.
 - Wrote in-house work instruction documents and standard operating procedures, and wrote articles for the company FAQ section and blog.
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Professional Development

- ITLS 6520: Introduction to Instructional Design, Utah State University (2026)
 - Graduate coursework in instructional design principles, learning theory, and curriculum development.
 - Collaborated on a four-person team to design a comprehensive Canvas onboarding module for incoming USU students, including needs analysis, learner analysis, instructional goals and objectives, and summative evaluation framework.

- Independently created and built a fully functional sample Canvas course module demonstrating navigation, assignment submission, and communication tools for novice LMS users.
 - Online Teaching: A Training Course, USU Center for Instructional Design and Innovation (CIDI) (Spring 2026)
 - Completed certification in online pedagogy and course design in preparation for full-time teaching responsibilities.
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Presentations & Conferences

- **“Monster Mindscapes: Teaching Synthesis, Revision, and Audience Awareness With Monsters” (2025)**
 - Kick-off event for the Data Science and AI Center, Utah State University
 - Professional Development Training, USU English Department
 - 75-Minute Guest Lecture in English 6820: Practicum in Teaching English
 - **“From Algorithms to AI: The Future of Folklore in Digital Spaces” (2025)**
 - American Folklore Society Annual Meeting (AFS)
 - **“AI: Supplement or Replacement” (2025)**
 - Western States Folklore Society (WSFS)
 - **“Folklore: As Perceived by English Majors as Compared to Non-English Majors at Utah State University” (2019-2020)**
 - Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research (UCUR)
 - Accepted for presentation at National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR)
 - Conference Cancelled due to COVID-19 Pandemic
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Independent Projects

- Budget App Creation and Design
 - Independently designed a working Excel spreadsheet containing 1,000+ working cells as a run for the app.
 - Used AI-assisted tools to code a fully functional app based on the spreadsheet’s original function.
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Community Leadership and Service

- **Pantry Packs Food Drive Organizer**
 - Led and organized a community service initiative raising approximately \$700 to fund weekend food packs for food-insecure students from low-income families in the Logan area.
 - Coordinated volunteers to assemble and deliver packs directly to the local food pantry, ensuring students had access to food over weekends when school meals were unavailable.
 - Completed as part of a university leadership course requiring 100 hours of service.
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Technical & Research Skills

- Data Collection & Analysis
 - Qualitative Research & Interviewing
 - Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint
 - Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, CorelDRAW
 - WordPress Web Design
 - Basic Python & SQL
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Interests & Specializations

- Composition & Writing Pedagogy
- Professional & Technical Writing
- Digital Humanities & AI in Education
- Folklore & Narrative Studies
- Creative Writing