



# Heather Olson, Ph.D.

LEARNING, MOTIVATION, AND  
ONLINE DESIGN



239-433-8034



hrolson@fsw.edu



[www.linkedin.com/in/  
drheather-olson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/drheather-olson)



Ft. Myers, FL

## Education

**Capella University —  
General Psychology, Ph.D.  
2022**

Specialized in positive psychology  
with a dissertation focused on  
meditation and stress reduction.

**Florida Gulf Coast  
University**  
English, M.A. 2013  
English, B.A. 2013

## Certifications

- Foundations of Positive Psychology Specialization (UPenn)
- Quality Matters (QM) Course Design
- Mental Health First Aid Facilitator

## Skills

Motivation-Informed Course Design

Positive Psychology in Education

Faculty Professional Learning

Data-Informed Teaching & Learning

Learner-Centered Instruction

## About me

Scholar-practitioner and institutional leader specializing in motivation, belonging, and human-centered online learning. Expertise in applying positive psychology, self-determination theory, and growth mindset principles to faculty development, course design, and learning experience innovation across blended and virtual environments.

## Experience

### Director, Online Teaching and Learning Experience

May 2022- Present

Florida SouthWestern State College

- Design faculty learning experiences grounded in motivation, belonging, and autonomy to support effective online teaching.
- Lead and facilitate cross-disciplinary communities of practice focused on human-centered pedagogy and reflective teaching.
- Consult with faculty and academic partners to translate learning science into scalable course design and instructional practices.
- Collaborate with Student Affairs on initiatives supporting student wellness, engagement, and holistic success.

### Faculty

Aug. 2014 - May 2022

Florida SouthWestern State College

- Designed learner-centered courses emphasizing motivation, self-regulation, and academic success.
- Developed tools and frameworks to support meaningful interaction and quality in online learning environments.
- Served on institutional committees focused on mental health, inclusion, equity, accessibility, and student well-being.
- Created a master shell for an asynchronous Academic Success Skills course grounded in learner needs and feedback.

### English Teacher

Aug 2010 - Aug 2014

Florida SouthWestern State College Collegiate High School

- Developed interdisciplinary curriculum integrating literacy, STEM themes, and experiential learning.
- Piloted blended learning and early LMS adoption to support student engagement and agency.
- Initiated and managed a school garden program embedded within the curriculum.