

**From:** [TLC](#)  
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The Teaching and Learning Center is pleased to present the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*. The series is dedicated to helping faculty to stay connected with one another while working remotely. Every week, a faculty member will have the opportunity to answer ten questions about themselves and about navigating the changes brought about by COVID-19. This week, we are pleased to feature Dr. Monica Krupinski, Professor of Humanities



**Dr. Monica Krupinski**  
**Professor of Humanities**

***Where are you from?***

Weirton, West Virginia. It was a great place to grow up because, unlike much of WV, Weirton was a diverse place. The city was founded in 1910 because of the new steel mill—Weirton Steel was a major domestic steel producer in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and was the first employee-owned steel mill in the United States—and so attracted immigrant laborers from many countries and regions throughout the first half of the century. As I look back on my academic interests, so many of them tie somehow to my upbringing

there. As a side note, Weirton is so big that it extends from the border with Ohio on one side to the border of Pennsylvania on the other! (Ok, it's only like 4 miles wide, but still!)

***Which college or university did you attend?***

I'm a proud product of West Virginia public schools for K-12 and of public universities in the state as well. I went to Marshall University (Go Herd!) in Huntington for my Bachelor's, then West Virginia University (Go 'Eers!) for my Masters in German and Linguistics, my Masters in Secondary Education and almost a PhD in History (I just didn't get around to finishing that pesky dissertation). Finally, a decade or so and a move to Kentucky later, I completed a PhD in Humanities from the University of Louisville (Go Cards!). As you may have guessed, I was an avid college sports fan throughout.

***When did you begin teaching at FSW?***

I started here as an adjunct in 2015 and have been lucky enough to teach in the Humanities and History Departments. I have also had the distinct pleasure of teaching on all of FSW's campuses, an unexpectedly delightful experience that allowed me to gain a better understanding of FSW's students and to really endear me to the mission of the institution as a whole. I can't think of anywhere else I'd rather be. FSW is my dream job.

***What made you become interested in your academic discipline?***

Humanities seems like the most natural fit for me because it encompasses so much of the endeavor of being human and rather than narrowing and compartmentalizing that experience, humanities allows me to think across disciplines and to encourage students to do the same. We talk a lot about transdisciplinary connections, and I think that humanities is the home base for that kind of engagement.

***What is your favorite food?***

Popcorn, hands down. No flavors, no toppings. Salt only. In fact, if I were ever to get a tattoo, it would be of one perfectly popped kernel. A close second is any meal that my partner cooks—he can whip up delicious dinners out of practically any set of ingredients. It's baffling to me. I've never understood how cooking works, so I am thankful for his expertise!

***If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you ask them?***

Franklin D. Roosevelt. Ever since I was a kid I wanted to talk to him, so this question was an easy one. I have so many questions for him, from his thoughts on how we can continue to expand his legacy of social programs to how we might embrace those with differing abilities to what his perceptions on the American presidency and America's role would be after 75 years. I would also need to ask him some hard questions about his presidency dealing with Japanese internment camps and civil rights, of course. He's one of my favorite historical figures because he is flawed—and who among us isn't—but still had made such progress as a leader.

***What is your favorite local restaurant?***

My favorite restaurants are in Punta Gorda since I lived there for the longest after moving to Florida. The Celtic Ray has amaazing fish, Isabel and Annabel's has yummy no-frills Mexican fare with a great waitstaff, and the Burg'r Bar has the most delicious breakfast, no contest. And Working Cow ice cream to follow, of course.

***What new things have you learned or done as a result of COVID-19 & working remotely?***

Prior to the pandemic, I needed to be out in the world every day, teaching, shopping, walking, something. That came to a screeching halt in March, and I have to say that I've found surprising comfort in the change on a personal level. On a professional one, at first it was strange to engage with students through a mediated form, since so much of what drives intellectual endeavors for me depends on the fluidity and unknowns of shared human experiences (in other words, you never know what a student will say about

a

work of art, a poem, or a piece of music). But I've found that this "hard stop" made me have to let go a little of the intellectualizing and to focus more of my energy toward the nurturing side of the role of professor.

***What are you doing (exercise, cooking, reading, etc.) to take care of your mental and physical health during social isolation?***

Reading for pure enjoyment again! During the runaround of pre-COVID life, that was one thing I had let go by the wayside, and now I realize how much I missed it.

***What advice do you have for your colleagues on how to navigate social isolation and changes from COVID-19?***

My advice for everyone is to slow down for a minute and watch a cat sleep (or dog, if you insist).

If you would like to be featured in the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*, please contact Kelly Westfield, Coordinator of Marketing & Technology for the Teaching and Learning Center: [kwestfield@fsw.edu](mailto:kwestfield@fsw.edu)

