

Professor Autumn McDonald

Howard University

Music

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Professional Positions

Academic Co-Coordinator Music Business, Department. (January 13, 2025 - Present).

Education

MS, Applied Anthropology, Sociocultural. University of North Texas, 2022.

BA, Dual Degree Mathematics & Spanish. University of Texas at Austin, 1996.

Licensures and Certifications

Digital Marketing and Social Media Analytics, MIT Sloan School of Management. (April 2018 - Present).

Digital Marketing and Analytics, Rutgers Business School. (September 2016 - Present).

International Business and Finance, NYU. (August 2011 - Present).

Design Experiments for Breakthrough and Adoption, Kellogg School of Management. (September 2008 - Present).

Professional Memberships

Women In Research (Regional Chair). (May 2024 - Present).

Global Business Anthropology Summit (Board of Directors). (June 2021 – July 2025).

American Anthropological Association. (May 2021 - May 2025).

Awards and Honors

2026 Distinguished Award in Teaching, Howard University College of Fine Arts. (May 2026).

2026 Distinguished Award in Service, Howard University College of Fine Arts. (May 2026).

2025 Distinguished Adjunct Faculty Award, Howard University College of Fine Arts. (May 13, 2025).

2024 Distinguished Adjunct Faculty Award, Howard University College of Fine Arts. (May 14, 2024).

2014 Advertising Research Foundation David Ogilvy Awards Fashion & Style Silver Winner, Advertising Research Foundation. (March 2014).

Consulting

For Profit Organization, Entertainment Industry (Company is Confidential). (2025 - Present).

For Profit Organization, Energy Industry (Company is Confidential). (2024 - Present).

For Profit Organization, Health Care Industry (Company is Confidential). (2021 - Present).

For Profit Organization, Pet Care Industry (Company is Confidential). (2021 - Present).

For Profit Organization, Tech Industry (Company is Confidential). (2020 - Present).

For Profit Organization, Durables Industry (Company is Confidential). (2018 - Present).

For Profit Organization, Beverages Industry (Company is Confidential). (2024 - 2025).

For Profit Organization, Health Care Industry (Company is Confidential). (2024 - 2025).

For Profit Organization, Food & Beverages Industry (Company is Confidential). (2023 - 2025).

For Profit Organization, Consumer Goods Industry (Company is Confidential). (2023 - 2024).

For Profit Organization, Health Care Industry (Company is Confidential). (2023 - 2024).

For Profit Organization, Spirits Industry (Company is Confidential). (2023 - 2024).

For Profit Organization, Beverages Industry (Company is Confidential). (2022 - 2023).

For Profit Organization, Food Industry (Company is Confidential). (2022 - 2023).

For Profit Organization, Food Industry (Company is Confidential). (2022 - 2023).

For Profit Organization, Insurance Industry (Company is Confidential). (2022 - 2023).

For Profit Organization, Agency (Company is Confidential). (2021 - 2023).

For Profit Organization, Fashion Industry (Company is Confidential). (2021 - 2022).

For Profit Organization, Retail Industry (Company is Confidential). (2021 - 2022).

For Profit Organization, Consumer Packaged Goods Industry (Company is Confidential). (2020 - 2021).

For Profit Organization, Food Industry (Company is Confidential). (2020 - 2021).

For Profit Organization, Agency (Company is Confidential). (2019 - 2021).

For Profit Organization, Tech Industry (Company is Confidential). (2019 - 2021).

For Profit Organization, Consumer Packaged Goods Industry (Company is Confidential). (2019 - 2020).

For Profit Organization, Food & Beverages Industry (Company is Confidential). (2019 - 2020).

Media Appearances and Interviews

""Career Journeys and Risk Taking", " Career Safari Podcast. (August 2025).

""Black Women, Anthropology, and Entrepreneurship"," Office Hours: The Black Girl Podcast. (August 2024).

""Navigating Business as a Black Researcher of African Descent"," Global Business Anthropology Summit. (June 2021).

""Autumn McDonald on Anthropology in Business with Matt Artz"," Anthropology in Business. (April 2021).

""Black Still Matters in Marketing: Experts Share Insights About Black America in the Era of #GeorgeFloyd"," Marketing Opportunities in Business and Entertainment Symposium. (July 2020).

""Racism in America and the Path Forward"," JMS Ministries: What's Really Going On? (June 2020).

""COVID-19 Insights Leaders Roundtable"," Greenbook. (April 2020).

Publications

McDonald, A. D. and Matus, M. (2026 Forthcoming). *Applying Anthropological Techniques to Foster Understanding of the Latin American Diaspora, Indigenous Peoples, and Afro-Latine Constituents Across Borders*. Applied Anthropology Handbook. Routledge.

McDonald, A. D. (2026 Forthcoming). *Anthropology in Market Research and Artificial Intelligence: Crossroads of Opportunity or Forthcoming Pitfalls?* Journal of Business Anthropology

McDonald, A.D., Vogel, M. Ashford, C., Matus-Ruiz, M., Sumter, T., Murphy, J. (2026 Forthcoming) "AI-Moderated Interviews: What Market Researchers Need to Rethink About Quality, Culture, and Insight." *Quirk's Marketing Research Review*.

McDonald, A. D. (2024). *From Theory to Praxis: Entrepreneurship as Resistance*. American Anthropological Association. <https://www.anthropology-news.org/articles/from-theory-to-praxis-entrepreneurship-as-resistance/>

McDonald, A. D. (2024). *Why Black Women Are Carving New Career Pathways As Entrepreneurs*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2024/07/05/why-black-women-are-carving-new-career-pathways-as-entrepreneurs/>

McDonald, A. D. (2023). *Bolstering Market Research with Anthropology*. Jersey City, NJ: Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2023/11/28/bolstering-market-research-with-anthropology/?sh=52ef39dc154a>

McDonald, A. D. (2022). *"How to Reap the Benefits of a Disciplinary Twin"* (vol. April 2022). American Anthropological Association. <https://www.anthropology-news.org/articles/how-to-reap-the-benefits-of-a-disciplinary-twin/>

Presentations

McDonald, A., Vogel, M., Women in Research Regional AI Summit, ""Watchouts: AI Use in Research"," Washington, DC, United States. (April 14, 2026).

McDonald, A., Sumter, T., VIBE Black Market Research & Insights Professionals Conference, ""AI

- Moderated Interviews: A Comparative Analysis Examining Usage in Market Research Contexts", " Atlanta, GA, United States. (March 2026).
- McDonald, A., Grant, D., James, J., VIBE Black Market Research & Insights Professionals Conference, ""The Future of Insights", " Atlanta, GA, United States. (March 2026).
- Randolph, C. S., McDonald, A., Mnyandu, P., Murphy, J., Jackson, H., Global Business Anthropology Summit, Chou University, Tokyo, Japan. (June 2025).
- McDonald, A. D. (Presenter), Global Business Anthropology Summit 2023, ""Leveraging Immersive Techniques in Business Research to Promote a Better Understanding of Indigenous Peoples and AfroLatinos in Current Concepts of Latinidad in the U.S.", " GBAS, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City, Mexico. (June 2023).
- McDonald, A. D. (Panelist), Applied Anthropology at a Crossroad, ""Anthropologists in Advertising: Reflections on negotiating the boundaries between 'Anthropology of advertising' and 'Anthropology for advertising.' ", " Society for Applied Anthropology, Cincinnati, OH, United States. (March 2023).
- McDonald, A., Kresnicka, S., Hasbrouk, J., Erickson, K., Anthropology Salon, ""Making the Case for Business Anthropology", " New York, NY, United States. (December 2020).
- McDonald, A., Future Trends Conference, ""Not All Trends Are Created Equal", " New York, NY, United States. (September 2018).
- McDonald, A., Fenton, A., Zalis, S., Advertising Research Foundation: AUDIENCExSCIENCE, ""Gender Inclusivity in Market Research", " New York, NY, United States. (June 2018).
- McDonald, A., The Market Research Conference, ""In Market Testing for Growth", " San Diego, CA, United States. (November 2010).
- McDonald, A., Hispanic 360 Conference, ""In Market Pre/Post/Test/Control Evaluations for Brand Growth", " San Diego, CA, United States. (August 2010).
- McDonald, A., Merz, L., Advertising Research Foundation MultiCultural Council, ""Ethnic Representation in Research", " New York, NY, United States. (October 2004).

Exhibits and Performances

- McDonald, A., Dimmerling, A., Esenwein, G., ""Too Much Rhythm", " Women of Sole, Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH, United States. (May 2005 - Present).
- McDonald, A., ""Trio", " AD Dance Tappers, Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH, United States. (May 2005 - Present).
- McDonald, A., Leptak-Moreau, F., ""Kai Kweol", " Ballet Caraïbes, Cincinnati Contemporary Dance Theater, Cincinnati, OH, United States. (May 1999 - Present).

Research Activity

- ""Research on Research: Dynamics of AI-Moderated Market Research Interviews Among Afrodescendant and Latine Study Participants"" (Complete). (August 2025 - January 2026).
- "Myths in Afro-Descendant Representation Across Japanese and Chinese Marketing Communications: The Realities of African and African Diaspora Representation in Arts Marketing Communications" (Complete). (2025).

Teaching Experience

MUSI 033, Entrepreneurship in the Arts, 4 courses.
MUSI 035, Marketing for the Arts, 2 courses.
MUSI 037, Mgmt.&Organ. Behavior for Arts, 4 courses.
MUSI 33, Entrepreneur Entertainment Industry, 1 course.
MUSI 35, Marketing for the Arts, 1 course.
MUSI 37, Mgmt.&Organ. Behavior for Arts, 1 course.

Non-Credit Instruction Taught

Guest Lecture, University of North Texas Department of Anthropology, 25 participants. (April 2026).

Guest Lecture, School of Business Entrepreneurship Incubator, 30 participants. (February 2026).

Moderator, School of Business, 20 participants. (May 2, 2025).

Guest Lecture, School of Business Entrepreneurship Incubator, 30 participants. (February 4, 2025).

Guest Lecture, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, 25 participants. (December 3, 2024).

Guest Lecture, University of North Texas Department of Anthropology, 20 participants. (October 7, 2024).

Guest Lecture, College of Fine Arts Freshman Seminar, 40 participants. (October 12, 2023).

Guest Lecture, University of Pennsylvania, 20 participants. (July 20, 2023).

Teaching Innovation and Curriculum Development

New Course. Business Anthropology for the Arts. January 2026 - Present.

New Course. Management and Organizational Behavior for the Arts. January 2023 - Present.

Revise Existing Course. Entrepreneurship for the Arts. January 2023 - Present.

New Course. Marketing for the Arts. August 2022 - Present.

Multidisciplinary Conference Leadership. Business in the Arts Summit. March 2026.

Immersive Business Program. Immersive Business Travel Program. February 2026.

Multidisciplinary Conference Leadership. Business in the Arts. March 28, 2025.

Now in its second year, the "Business in the Arts Summit" (BITAS) will be an integrated part of HU Entrepreneurship Week and will close out the Entrepreneurship Week's daytime events on March 28, 2025. The purpose of this summit is to provide attendees with actionable information and insightful perspective that can be directly applied to careers at the intersection of the arts and business.

Immersive Business Program. Immersive Business Travel Program. October 2, 2024 - October 3, 2024.

Connects Music Business students directly with industry leaders for in-context learning and instruction synergistic with course syllabi.

Multidisciplinary Conference Creation. Business in the Arts Summit. February 23, 2024.

Newly created, the "Business in the Arts Summit" was a day-long event (9:30amET to 5:30pmET) in the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts on Friday, February 23, 2024. The strategic target for this special event was the College of Fine Arts community. There will also be broader participation from the School of Business, School of Communications, and the Howard University Entrepreneurship Task Force. The purpose of this summit was to empower students, faculty, and staff with actionable information and insightful perspective that can be directly applied to careers at the intersection of the arts and business.

Immersive Business Program. Immersive Business Travel Program. April 14, 2023.
Connects Music Business students directly with industry leaders for in-context learning and instruction synergistic with course syllabi.

Faculty Development Activities Attended

Workshop, "MSLE Generative AI for Teaching Bootcamp," Howard University, Washington, DC, United States. (February 2026 - Present).

Junior Faculty Forum, ""So, What Are You Working On? Junior Faculty Share their Works in Progress or Completed Works"," Howard University, Washington, DC, United States. (October 2022 - Present).

Junior Faculty Forum, ""Career Advice for Junior Faculty from Experienced Faculty"," Howard University, Washington, DC, United States. (September 2022 - Present).

Conference Attendance, "VIBE Black Market Research & Insights Professionals Conference." (March 2026).

Conference Attendance, "Transformation to Triumph: Black Women's Summit," Howard University. (February 2026).

Conference Attendance, "HBCU Entrepreneurship Empowerment Summit," Howard University & PNC National Center for Entrepreneurship. (June 20, 2025 - June 21, 2025).

Conference Attendance, "VIBE Black Market Research & Insights Professionals Conference." (March 14, 2025 - March 15, 2025).

Conference Attendance, "Qual 360 2025," Merlien Institute, Washington, DC, United States. (March 12, 2025 - March 13, 2025).

Meeting, "Teaching & Learning with AI: Preparing Statements for Syllabi," Howard University CETLA, Washington, DC, United States. (2024).

Training Meeting, "Howard University Library Ecosystem," Howard University Junior Faculty Forum, Washington, DC, United States. (2024).

Conference Attendance, "Marketing In Higher Education," American Marketing Association, Washington, DC, United States. (April 24, 2024).

Workshop, "Integrating AI in the Insights Workflow," Insights Association, Washington, DC, United States. (March 14, 2024 - March 21, 2024).

Conference Attendance, "Qual 360 Conference 2024," Merlien Institute, Washington, DC, United States. (March 13, 2024 - March 14, 2024).

Conference Attendance, "The Yale Customer Insights Conference," Yale School of Management, New Haven, CT, United States. (May 2019).

University Service

Committee Member, Departmental AI Exploratory Committee. (May 1, 2025 - Present).

College of Fine Arts Representative, Howard University Entrepreneurship Taskforce. (August 21, 2023 - Present).

Professional Service

Board of Advisors, Artificial Intelligence Advisory Board Lumivero. (June 30, 2025 - Present).

DC Region Co-Lead, Women In Research (WIRe). (May 2, 2025 - Present).

Board of Advisors, Department of Anthropology at the University of North Texas. (December 2023 - Present).

Board of Directors, Global Business Anthropology Summit. (July 2020 – July 2025).

Interaction with Industry, VIBE Black Market Research & Insights Professional Conference. (March 14, 2025 - March 15, 2025).