



# Physics colloquium

## Astrophysicist to Data Scientist

**Jessica Kirkpatrick**

Director of Data Science

Kobold Metals

Date: 4/5/19

Time: 10:30 AM

Location: COB2 170

For more information contact

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**Abstract:** Data Scientist was named "The Sexiest Job of the 21st Century" by Harvard Business Review, but what does a data scientist actually do? How can someone break into this emerging field? Jessica Kirkpatrick will take you through a journey of her path from studying physics at UC Berkeley to leading the data science team at KoBold Metals. She will talk about what her job entails and how you can build the right skills to become a data scientist. She will talk about how she is currently using data science to fight global warming and the ways data is used for good and evil.

**Bio:** Jessica Kirkpatrick has been working as a data scientist in the tech industry for the past seven years. Her previous companies include Slack, Microsoft, Hired, and Chegg. Before making her transition to the private sector, Jessica earned a Ph.D. in Astrophysics from UC Berkeley, where she discovered and studied some of the most distant and brightest known objects in the universe, quasars, and worked with large and complex data sets. Her work led to the discovery of 200,000 new quasars.

As a data scientist, instead of spending her days finding patterns in the structure of the universe, she has spent them finding patterns in the behaviors of people in order to make technology work better for us all. She now gets to combine her love of the physical sciences with her love of data to lead Kobold Metals digital exploration and data science team. In addition to her work in private industry, Jessica maintains an active role in giving back to the astrophysics and data communities. She is on the Board of Trustees for the American Astronomical Society and the advisory board for Udacity's data science program.

