

University Senate Chair Award Nomination Packet

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College of Education

I am honored to be a 2008 nominee for the University Senate Chair Award. In this brief information package concerning the past five years of my career at Louisiana Tech University, I will provide a snapshot of my teaching, research, and service. These three are inextricably intertwined elements within a well-defined program of scholarship in which each aspect informs the others. My research investigates teaching, both my own and that of others; my teaching supports my research and beliefs; and my service directly informs my research, writing, and teaching. I will attempt to highlight major beliefs about each area individually, both theoretically and via selected activities in each area as requested in the award criteria, but a clearer picture of my beliefs regarding high-quality scholarship will emerge when all aspects are reviewed as a whole and in connection to the overall mission of Louisiana Tech University.

Teaching is a very important aspect of my scholarship. It is my passion. Coming into the university with a long history in the public school classroom has been an asset to my university teaching. My students frequently comment on how much they learn from the classroom examples and scenarios I share from my years in the classroom both as a teacher and as an administrator. My courses seem to act as a bridge between the theoretical, philosophical, pedagogical issues at the university level and the practical demands of the P-12 setting. Constructivist theory undergirds my teaching. I work to structure classes so that students grapple with problems for themselves in order to construct deep understandings of essential content, theory, and pedagogy. In applying the ideas of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Dewey, I teach students to willingly accept children's ideas and to provide settings that suggest ideas to children instead of providing them with preconceived ideas. Rather than teaching teachers to "cover" subjects, I encourage them to help children "uncover" them—to question, explore, and construct deep understandings. It is always rewarding when students tell me at the conclusion of a course that though they were initially concerned with the open philosophy on which I base my teaching (they thought they needed specific details and instructions on which to base their work) they now understand the need to provide opportunities for students to construct their own understandings. Aristotle once said, "Teaching is the highest form of understanding" and I feel this statement truly defines teaching as scholarship.

Research is critical both for enhancing knowledge and for informing practice. Overarching goals of my work are to build research-to-practice connections in P-16 education and to strengthen multiple perspectives of literacy professionals so that teachers and principals are also researchers and learners, students are also researchers and teachers, and researchers are also teachers and learners. My scholarship in this area is a focused study of effective literacy practice and ways to build it. Using lenses of practitioner research, ethnography, and case study, I continuously explore aspects of effective practice from the university perspective, from the elementary and middle school levels, and from district, state, and national levels. These perspectives allow me to constantly articulate effective literacy practice in my writing, in my teaching, and in my service.

Service is an aspect of my scholarship that has consumed a great deal of both my professional and personal time. My involvement, in the different aspects of service, has been initiated in a variety of ways and for various reasons: self-initiated due to an interest or a desire to further my own professional development; elected, appointed, and/or requested by others due to my commitment to the task and education in general; and, most importantly because of my own personal sense of responsibility to the profession which is currently struggling in many

areas of literacy. I am fortunate to be employed at a university in which time, space, and encouragement allow one to serve in many directions in order to build both vertical relationships at the state PK-16 level as well as horizontal connections with scholars across the world. These relationships not only help me grow as a professional but also help forge connections that keep Louisiana Tech University at the forefront of literacy in district, state, regional, and national affairs.

Importance of Teaching, Research, and Service to the Overall Mission of LA Tech

The Louisiana Tech University mission statement is quite comprehensive in nature but key elements that demand attention are reflected in the following words: *committed, quality, teaching, research, public service, priority, education, development, students, challenging, supportive, learners*. Boyer (1990) argues that the quality of scholarship is dependent on the vitality of the professor. My passion to be an advocate for children and the teaching profession pushes me to be constantly engaged in the kind of productive, multi-dimensional, high-caliber scholarship that is required of faculty members striving to make Louisiana Tech’s mission statement a reality. Every book and article that I have written, every presentation I have given, every state and national document I have helped write, every piece of *research* I have conducted, every class I have *taught*, and every *service* I have performed have one common theme – they articulate my *commitment* to effective *quality* practice, particularly literacy practice, that provides *challenging, supportive education* for all *learners*.

Courses Taught and Evaluation Ratings 2003 – 2008

Courses	Level	Overall Rating
READ 531 – Foundations of Reading (6 sections)	Graduate	4.0
READ 535 – Clinical Reading: Diagnostics (6 sections)	Graduate	3.9
READ 536 – Clinical Reading: Correction (6 sections)	Graduate	4.0
READ 544 – Content Area Reading (6 sections)	Graduate	4.0
EDCI 437 – Reading Language Arts (4 sections)	Graduate	3.8
EDCI 417 – Diagnostic & Corrective Reading (8 sections)	Undergraduate	3.7
EDCI/EDLE 511 – Teacher Leadership (2 sections)	Graduate	4.0
EDCI/EDLE 530 – Professional Development (2 sections)	Graduate	4.0
LECL 711 – Advanced Theory (5 sections)	Doctoral	4.0
EDCI 489C – Special Topics (4 sections)	Graduate	4.0
EDCI 589 – Special Topics in Reading (1 section)	Graduate	4.0
EDCI 435 - (2 sections)	Grad/Undergraduate	3.6
EDCI 421 - (1 section)	Undergraduate	3.9
EDCI 434 - (2 sections)	Grad/Undergraduate	4.0
TIRE 489 – GIFT (2 sections)	Graduate	4.0

Selected List of Scholarly Activities 2003-2008

Selected Publications

(Books & Chapters)

Cummins, C. (ED). (2006) *Understanding and implementing reading first initiatives: The changing role of administrators*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

Cummins, C.& Stewart, M. (2006). “Oral Language:A strong foundation for literacy instruction” In Cummins, C. (Ed.),Understanding and implementing reading first initiatives: The changing role of administrators. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Cummins, C., Block, C. & Stewart, M. (2005). "Teaching several metacognitive strategies together increases students' independent metacognition". In Israel, S. & Block, C. (Eds.), Metacognition in literacy learning. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

(Peer-reviewed Journals)

Cummins, C., Block, C. & Stewart, M. (2009 in press February). How long does it take for internalization and transfer of metacognitive strategies? *Reading Research Quarterly*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association. (results of a 3 year study on comprehension strategic teaching grades K-5)

Cummins, C., & Stewart, M. (2008 in press Nov) "Oral Language: A strong foundation for literacy instruction". *Journal of Early Childhood and Family Review*.

Risko, V., Roller, C., Cummins, C., Bean, R., Block, C., Anders, P., & Flood, J. (2008 in press August). A critical review of the research on teacher preparation for reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association. (a 125+ intensive review of research with implications for future research)

Cummins, C., Kimbell-Lopez, K. (2008). Strategic teaching and the Louisiana comprehensive curriculum: Working together to improve instruction. *READ: Reading, Exploration, and Discovery*, 28(1), 23-32.

Cummins, C., Cheek, E., & Lindsey, J. (2004). The Relationship between teachers' literacy beliefs and their instructional practices: A brief review of the literature for teacher educators. *E-Journal of Teaching and Learning in Diverse Settings*.

(Other Selected Publications/Items)

Cummins, C. (2005) "Amazing Americans" *nonfiction guided reading program for grades 4-8*. McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Cummins, C. (2004) "Explore More" *nonfiction guided reading program for grades 4-8*. McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Cummins, C. & Benson, V. (2004-06) Wisconsin State Department of Education Reading First Institute Materials—comprehension section. The Wright Group/McGraw-Hill.

Cummins, C. & Benson, V. (2003) Professional Development workshop and manuals: *Nonfiction Retelling: Teaching Literacy Skills through Informational Text*. Wright Group.

Position Statements for International Reading Association

On Reading Specialists, Coaches, and Other Reading Leaders (2006)

On Initial Literacy Instruction in a First Language (2006)

On Newspapers in Education (2005)

On Literacy Assessment (2004)

Editorial Reviews for 11 professional books – endorsement in 4

Member of 3 journal Editorial Review Boards

Program Reviewer: National Reading Conference, College Teachers Association, International Reading Association

Selected Grants

(funded)

CoPI (Cummins, Vessel, Kimbell-Lopez, Hill, Powell). *The CSI Project: Comprehension Strategy Integration*. LaSIP. (2007 - \$362,349; 2006 – \$226,564)

CoPI (Cummins, Stewart, Norris). *OWLLS: Oral and Written Language Literacy Strategies*. LaSIP (2005 - \$188,100)

CoPI (Cummins, Stewart, Norris). *OWLLS TOO: Oral and Written Language Literacy Strategies for ALL*. General Education Initiative (2005 - \$223,100)

(not funded or pending)

CoPI (Kimbell-Lopez). *Reading Enhancement for a Model Classroom*. Louisiana Board of

Regents. (2009 – 125,000 pending)
CoPI (Kimbell-Lopez). *ISS-IT: Professional Development*. USDOE Teacher Quality Research
(2006 - \$1,500,000 not funded)
PI *Reading, Writing, and Thinking Enhancement*. Louisiana Board of Regents. (2003 - \$90,350
not funded)

Selected Professional Presentations

(total 2003-2008) International: 14 invited: 6 peer reviewed
National: 3 invited: 4 peer reviewed
Regional: 4 invited: 2 peer reviewed
State: 19 invited: 4 peer reviewed
Local: 21 invited: 0 peer reviewed

(Selected: role & title)

3/08 Brigham Young “The Literacy Promise” Conference: Salt Lake City, UT
Featured Speaker: *The Art of Making Text Explicit*

2/08 American Association of College Teachers of Education: New Orleans
Presenter: *Professional Development and the Content Area Teacher*

12/07 Southern Association of Accreditation: Orlando, FL
Presenter: *The Reading CSI Project*

11/07 Maryland Department of Education: Baltimore, MD
Featured Speaker: *The Changing Role of Administrators*

2/07;2/06;2/05 Reading for the Love of It Conference: Ontario, Canada
Featured Speaker: *Comprehension Topics*

8/07;6/06 AEA Summer Literacy Conference: Frisco, TX
Keynote Address: *The Art of Making Text Explicit; Power of Retelling*

6/06;6/05 Wisconsin Dept of Ed Reading First Seminar: Madison, WI
Keynote Address/Instructor: *Strategic Teaching*

5/07;5/06;5/05;5/04 International Reading Association Annual Conferences:
Chicago/Reno/Miami/San Antonio
Featured Speaker: *Comprehension & Vocabulary Topics*

4/06 Reading Association of Nigeria: Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Institute Instructor/Speaker: *The Explicitness of Comprehension*

2/06 Governmental Legislative Forum: Washington D.C
Guest Speaker: *The Importance of Advocacy*

1/06 Harcourt Achieve Professional Development: Austin, TX
Keynote Address: *Comprehension Strategies for All Ages*

12/05;12/04 National Reading Conference: Miami/San Antonio
Presenter: *Internalization of Comprehension Processes – Research results*

8/05 14th European Conference on Literacy: Zagreb, Croatia
Guest Speaker: *Learning to Read like a Writer*

3/05 W.V Reading Association Conference: Morgantown, WV
Luncheon Speaker: *The Impact of the Backpack*

7/04 IRA World Congress on Reading: Manila, Phillipines
Featured Speaker: *Making Text Explicit*

1/05;1/04;1/03 Alaska Early Childhood Conference: Anchorage, AK
Featured Speaker: *Comprehension and Retelling Topics*

Selected Honors

College of Education, Louisiana Tech 2007 Service Award
Gerald & Shirley Cobb Endowed Professorship 2007-2010

Delta Kappa Gamma Beta Iota nominee 2007 *Educator of the Year*
International Reading Association *January 2006 Featured Book Club Author*
McGraw-Hill Publishers, Inc. 2004 Recipient “*Seeing the Learner in Every Child*” award
International Reading Association *Elected to a 3-year term on the Board of Directors (2003-06)*
College of Education nominee *Virgil Orr Undergraduate Junior Faculty Award*

Selected Service

(University)

University Level Committees: CEE Advisory Board; Research Discussion Team; Accreditation Focus Team; Content Advisory Teams

College Level Committees: NCATE SPA (NAEYC & ACEI); Curriculum Redesign (C & I and Leadership); Special Initiative Group; Louisiana Reading Competencies (comprised of 5 separate committees – chair 2); Community Research Efforts; Pk-16+ Council; Master Comprehensive Exam Review (chair); Education Awards;

Department Level Committees: Enrollment Recruitment Team; Educational Leadership Advisory Team; Search Team (3 tenure-track positions in the areas of Math and Science); CIL Course Steward (9 courses); Course Rotation Committee; Educational Leadership Brochure Development (chair); Advising Committee; Claiborne Parish Professional Day Team; New Faculty mentor; Promotion Committee (chair); Tenure committee; PRAXIS PK-3 committee

Other: Member of Graduate Faculty; LEC Doctoral Faculty (Major Professor – 4 students, Committee Member – 5 students); CoSponsor Student Chapter of A+PEL; Time Out for Tech; Advisor (approximately 70 students each qtr); quest speaker Gambling

(Educational Community)

Professional Organizations: I support the following organizations with membership, conference attendance, and journal reading: Louisiana Staff Development Council, National Council of Teachers of English, National Association for Education of Young Children, Delta Kappa Gamma, Phi Delta Kappa, and Phi Kappa Phi. Organizations in which I serve more actively:

Louisiana Reading Association: Executive Board, President, Membership Director, Conference Coordinator, Literacy Chair, Speaker’s Bureau

International Reading Association: Board of Directors, Literacy Task Force (chair), Council & Affiliates Services, Early Childhood Commission, Programs, Standards Development, Policy and Procedures, Publications, Proposal Reviewer; Finance Committee (chair)

Louisiana Department of Education: Literacy Roundtable; LA Literacy Review Team; Harvard Government & Literacy Task Force; Reading First Committee; LEAP Item Review Team; Dyslexia committee; Reading Specialist recertification committee

Vernon Parish School Board: External literacy consultant for the Rapides Systemic Initiative Grant; Vernon Parish Literacy Team; Developer of the Vernon Parish P-12 Literacy Plan.

University Partner/Literacy Advisor: Madison Parish Federal Early First grant, East Carroll Parish; Richland Parish; Sabine Parish Literacy of All; Lincoln Parish 9th Gr Academy

Reading Association of Nigeria: working with World Bank and the Ministry of Education of Port Harcourt, Nigeria to develop a partnership between teachers in Nigeria and the U.S.

Area Schools: LATAPP assessor; DAT team member; judge social studies/science fairs; reader for literacy events; Lincoln Parish Leadership Standards review team

Consultant Services: various school districts LA, KS, PN, AZ, TX, WI, Canada

Other Professional Services: program reviewer, book reviewer, journal editor; literacy journal editorial boards; SREB trainer PD module

