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List of undergraduate courses taught and their enrollment, student retention rate, summary student evals

Course	Enrollment	Retention	Student Evals	Course	Enrollment	Retention	Student Evals	Course	Enrollment	Retention	Student Evals
								Spring 2011			
								395	28	100%	3.8
Fall 2011				Winter 2011-2012				Spring 2012			
301	50	92%	3.8	331	43	95%	3.7	395	23	100%	4.0
Graduate Course				447	23	96%	3.9	Graduate Course			
Fall 2012				Winter 2012-2013				Spring 2013			
301	52	94%	3.8	301	40	100%	3.7	331	46	96%	3.6
395	24	96%	3.9	447	19	100%	3.9	431	23	100%	4.0
Fall 2013				Winter 2013-2014				Spring 2014			
110	33	94%	3.9	301	40	100%	3.7	331	59	97%	3.7
255	60	97%	3.7	447	27	100%	4.0	431	29	100%	4.0
301	49	96%	3.5								
395	39	100%	3.9								
Fall 2014				Winter 2014-2015				Spring 2015			
301	43	98%	3.8	200	63	94%	3.9	331	64	100%	3.9
395	43	100%	3.9	301	23	100%	3.9	Only taught 1 because taught			
				447	17	94%	4.0	3 in the Winter			
Fall 2015				Winter 2015-2016				Spring 2016			
255	62	100%	3.9	200	60	100%	3.9	331	40	100%	4.0
301	53	94%	3.8	447	17	100%	4.0	331	39	100%	3.5
395	35	97%	3.9					431	38	100%	3.9
Fall 2016				Winter 2016-2017				Spring 2017			
301	57	100%	3.9	200	62	100%	3.7	331	42	100%	3.7
395	55	98%	4.0	447	40	100%	3.9	331	42	98%	3.9
								431	39	100%	4.0
Fall 2017				Winter 2017-2018				Spring 2018			
395	24	92%	4.0	431	31	97%	3.9	Not included			
395	28	100%	3.9								
FALL TOTALS				WINTER TOTALS				SPRING TOTALS			
	707	96.75%	3.85		505	98.29%	3.86		512	99.31%	3.85

Overall Enrollment: 1,724; Overall Retention: 98.11%; Overall Student Evaluations: 3.85

*All courses are FCS, evaluations are on a 4.0 scale, includes only undergraduate courses taught

Since Spring 2011, I have taught 53 classes consisting of 13 different courses, 16% more than I was appointed to teach during the regular academic year as well as seven classes during summer sessions while maintaining a 98.11% retention rating and an overall 3.85 summary teaching evaluation.

Statement of beliefs concerning the significance of undergraduate teaching within the overall mission of Louisiana Tech

Undergraduate teaching is the reason that I came to Louisiana Tech University. When I was considering my career path, I always came back to wanting to provide *unparalleled*

educational experiences to undergraduate students – the types of experiences you cannot offer at larger universities. Many graduates in programs like Family and Child Studies directly enter their careers after their undergraduate program and, thus, never have the chance to receive the benefits of mentorship, extensive field/lab based experience, and small, discussion-oriented classroom-based experiences like they would in a graduate program. As such, I wanted to have a career at a smaller university with a passion for and a commitment to excellence in undergraduate education. I definitely found that at Louisiana Tech and in Family and Child Studies. One of my goals when starting at Tech was to develop relationships with my students to enhance their classroom-based learning and to give them opportunities to grow and develop into future experts and scholars in their own right. This is possible when students are *names* and not numbers and you can provide growth opportunities through your research and service as well as your classroom.

The three pedagogical goals of each course I teach are: developing students' *expertise*, igniting their *passion*, and increasing their hands-on *experiences*. Innovative teaching is finding a way to meet students where they are to stimulate their abilities and advance their knowledge whether it is by utilizing different teaching methodologies, assigning authentic, relatable problem-solving activities, or showing your own passion and continued development in and contributions to your field.

Many educators, whether they have been teaching one year or thirty years, have the same root purpose – for students to learn the material and, hopefully, to make a difference in their lives. How this purpose is achieved must change as the students in the classrooms do each year. Today's college students have experienced a different educational and technology-influenced upbringing than most of their college educators. From an influx of standardized testing during primary and secondary education, to being "programmed" to commercial breaks in attention span, to instant access to endless information via the internet, today's students and the ways they learn are different than students less than twenty years ago before the first touch-screen smartphones were available.

A common concern for today's students across majors and even universities regards their ability to think critically and finding ways to capture their interest to ensure they learn course material. One of the primary ways I utilize in helping students learn course material is by expanding the classroom doors in my courses whether it is through an activity during class time, a practical application assignment, or a quarter-long project. Although there are still lecture-based components to my courses, classroom lecture time is regularly broken up by in-class activities that focus on increasing understanding as well as displaying the practical application of the material. During this time, I meet one-on-one with small groups and help them work through these assignments and clear up any misunderstandings of the material. It is important that my students know that I care about their understanding and that my focus is not their success in my course, which they would define by their letter grade; but, rather mastery of the subject matter which will lay the groundwork for advancement into other courses and preparedness for their future career.

Showing students my own passion and continued development in and contributions to my field is also important. I share with my classes about my current research projects and link it into what we are learning to show how class material has multiple practical applications. Most importantly, I cannot expect to see, hear, and read passion from them related to class material if I do not model that myself. I regularly include students in my ongoing research projects through class-work, volunteering, or paid positions. I have supervised/mentored over 400 undergraduate and graduate students on my research projects on positions including: volunteering, independent study/practicum/honors projects, and as paid research assistants as well as their own research through courses I teach. Of the 54 category 3 publications (paper and poster presentations at professional conferences) I have given since I began working at Tech, 34 (63%) include students as authors. To me, it is these experiences as well as the classroom-

based experiences described below that provide unparalleled educational experiences for students. They are given incredible opportunities that undergraduates at larger institutions do not get to not only prepare them for their future career or continued academic experiences but to put them at the top of the qualified candidates.

Description of an important innovation made in undergraduate teaching

The two main innovations I will highlight are a focus on out-of-class assignments and continual evaluations of curriculum and making changes for improvement in new or creative ways. As I mentioned above, the three pedagogical goals of each course I teach are: developing students' *expertise*, igniting their *passion*, and increasing their hands-on *experiences*. One of the best ways to do this is to develop strong out-of-class assignments and activities. Out-of-class assignments allow classroom materials to come to life and for students to see what is currently happening in their field. They see in-person and experience hands-on the careers that they will enter in the next few years. Then they have the opportunity to relate those experiences back to what is being learned in class, which can increase their understanding of why the classroom-based material is so important to understand before going into the field. Any technology skills they will need in the field of social sciences and child development are utilized in these assignments and projects. And, importantly, they are networking with professionals that can be helpful to them for practicum experiences, internships, and potentially a career. Out-of-class assignments include: required attendance at special one-time events on campus or in the community followed by a reflection of how it relates to the class, quarter-long observations of children's development followed by assessment of target children's development using learned class material as well as practicing using the gold standard developmental assessment tool in the field on actual children, quarter-long research project from conception to public presentation (including creating research questions, survey questions, entering data, writing research reports, and creating posters), volunteering with programs that provide services to those with developmental disabilities, visiting programs that provide services to individuals with disabilities and their families like the Louisiana Center for the Blind, Outdoor Wilderness Learning Center, and Horse Assisted Therapy Services, and an award winning quarter-long service-learning project with a local assisted living facility.

The other area of innovation is continual evaluations of curriculum and making changes for improvement in new or creative ways. Early in my career at Tech, I evaluated the Family and Child Studies curriculum and felt there was a void in the previous programs of study. Our students are trained to be experts in Child Development when they graduate. We have a strong series of development courses from prenatal through gerontology that focus on typical development. However, it is imperative for our students to understand both typical and non-typical development and we had no course on developmental disabilities. After obtaining support from my FCS colleagues and HEC unit head, I developed Issues in Developmental Disabilities, a course that is now a requirement in two of the three FCS concentrations and open to students from other majors across campus. A creative way I have changed the curriculum is in the way I have re-structured the research methods course I teach. It is a required course for all FCS students, one of the hardest in our curriculum, and, being honest, one of the most dreaded by the students. As our program has grown by around 30% in the last few years while having the desire to continue to provide a specific kind of experience in Research Methods, I changed this course to be a lecture/lab design. This took extensive re-working of the course materials as well as me being in the classroom more per week than a typical 3 credit hour course. However, this allows me to have more of a small class feel and more 'one-on-one'/'one-on-small research team' time with students. The student response was overwhelming positive and eliminated all of the frustrations students had been expressing in the past few years as the class size had continued to increase with the growth of our program.

List of publications and papers that relate to teaching

- Rutledge, J. M., Yates, A. M., Liu, P. (2016, June). *Tackling program assessment: Determining what you are doing, what you need to be doing, and how to do it better.* Paper presented at the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, Bellevue, WA.
 - *Included because program assessment should ultimately make your program stronger for your students*
- Rutledge, J. M. (2015). Family and child studies at Louisiana Tech University. Published in *Collaborations* in response to a call for descriptions of child development programs in the state of Louisiana.
- Rutledge, J. M., & Yates, A. M. (April, 2015). *How is Engaging the Aging a two-way street between college students and assisted living facility residents?* Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Gerontological Society, Williamsburg, VA.
- Rutledge, J. M. (2013, April). *Engaging the aging: Closing the 40-year age gap in a gerontology course through service-learning.* Paper presented at the University of Louisiana System Academic Summit, Monroe, LA.
- Rutledge, J. M. (2013, March). *Embracing students' changing learning styles by expanding the classroom doors.* Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Association for Family and Consumer Sciences, Lafayette, LA.

Other pertinent information

Some written student comments:

- Dr. Rutledge will never receive enough credit where it's due. She's a ball of positive energy and good vibes. Research methods was only a great class because of how wonderful of a professor we had. La Tech is beyond blessed to have someone so dedicated.
- The teacher requires a lot of work and preparation of her students, which I see as a strength because it generates a strong understanding of material while keeping us engaged. The instructor is very helpful and often goes out of her way to help us succeed. I really enjoyed the class and I owe this mainly to Dr. Rutledge.
- I want to be you when I grow up. You are by far the best HEC teacher here. I really enjoy having you as a teacher. I wish there was an A+ option on the scantron evaluation. You are AWESOME!! This was my favorite FCS class so far!
- You're a sweet, quirky teacher. I love being in your classes and witnessing your enthusiasm on all the topics you teach. The examples help me learn the material along with the in-class assignments.
- I really enjoyed this course. I liked that Dr. Rutledge used class activities to reinforce what she had covered each class meeting. Any time I had a question Dr. Rutledge was quick to respond, and if I was ever unsure about how to do an assignment she explained in further detail without making me feel stupid for not just knowing (I appreciated that).
- I think Dr. Rutledge does a good job challenging our ideas. She is a teacher that explains things well and asks the class if there are questions.
- Hands on experience was beneficial and definitely something I will never forget.
- Dr. Rutledge is sooo incredibly smart and a fantastic teacher! Will always be one of my favorites!
- She is a great teacher! She always seems happy to be there and willing to answer any questions people have.
- Amazing professor who has a gift for teaching. Great class.
- I love that she loves research! Also, I love that she gets us involved in research as well. Research is definitely not my favorite thing, but being able to help with her research made me enjoy it and understand it a little more! PPVT's helped open my eyes to the fact that

research isn't the boring sit in a lab and watch bacteria grow kind of thing. It can definitely be fun and interactive as well.

- Dr. Rutledge is an amazing professor and person! She always responds to any questions or emails and is just incredibly personable and cares that the students learn the material. Even though this class was the hardest FCS course I have taken in this field, she makes it so much easier and you can see her passion on the topic as she teaches. Definitely my favorite teacher and an overall fantastic person.
- This was my second time to ever have this instructor, and I thought she did an absolutely incredible job at teaching both classes. She makes it very obvious that she cares about our understanding rather than our ability to take a test well. She makes sure we know what she's teaching. That's rare on the quarter system."
- She helps us learn how to apply what we learn in class to real life examples at the ECEC. This allows us to fully understand what we are learning and how it applies to different careers. Being able to do the different assessments at the ECEC allowed us to get on a personal level with kiddos in early childhood and really understand what all we learned in class about how they think and react about things. It was really cool!
- I always enjoy having you as an instructor. You do a great job with clearly presenting information and you always make me laugh! Thank you for everything you've done for me these past few years.
- Great class. I really enjoyed the material we learned. You always give good applications to real life and make it interesting.
- I love you Dr. Rutledge! I love your enthusiasm about 301. I'm not an FCS major but you kept me interested and focused.
- She is so organized, willing to help each student, and is very knowledgeable about the subject!
- You go above and beyond as an instructor in all your classes but especially in Research Methods! You tackle such a huge and intimidating topic and make it seem so easy and fun!
- While research methods may not be my favorite class I've ever taken, you made it as painless as possible. I can't say I'm leaving this class excited about the next time I'll do a research project but I won't be completely dreading it. Thanks for always being a fabulous professor and being so passionate about what you're teaching.
- Fun. Prepared. Caring. Smart. Very knowledgeable. You did an amazing job 😊
- Dr. Rutledge, You are the best teacher I have ever had! I can't believe this is my last class with you!
- Favorite teacher ever!
- One strength is the passion for the content.
- Presents instructions and class material well. Teaches effectively, explains course material with enthusiasm
- I have loved having you as my professor and if I had known how awesome you were I might of changed my concentration. I love how you teach your classes and you're aren't too proud to say you don't know sometimes but you look up the answer for us. You are one of my favorite teachers. Thank you for making my senior year enjoyable!! Please keep being awesome, because you are!! 😊
- I really like this class. The activities at the Arbor were always fun to watch and participate in. BEST TEACHER EVER!
- Lessons/observation help with future career. Valuable information learned.
- You did a fantastic job! You have become one of my favorite teachers. You have a gift!