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 F. J. Taylor Undergraduate Teaching Award Nominee, 2017
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List of Undergraduate Courses taught over the last five years, including evaluation ratings, enrollment numbers, and retention rates:

Quarter	Class	Course Title	Evaluation	Enrollment	Retention
Fall 2013					
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.7	55	95%
	HIST 450-001	History of the Old South	3.8	25	96%
Winter 2014					
	HIST 360-051	History of Louisiana	3.3	37	89%
	HIST 423-001	Civil War & Reconstruction	3.4	26	81%
	HIST 489-001	Internship in Public History	n/a	2	50%
Spring 2014					
	HIST 201-001	History of the US: 1492-1877	3.3	47	98%
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.9	35	94%
Summer 2014					
	HIST 360-684	History of Louisiana	n/a	22	100%
Fall 2014					
	HIST 201-001	History of the US: 1492-1877	3.6	109	97%
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.9	33	90%
	HIST 486-001	Introduction to Public History	4.0	4	100%
Winter 2015					
	HIST 478-051	African-American History	3.8	17	94%
	HIST 495-001	Sr. Seminar: Comparative Slavery in the Americas	3.3	8	87%
Spring 2015					
	HIST 201-001	History of the US: 1492-1877	3.6	72	91%
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.6	59	83%
	HIST 489-001	Internship in Public History	n/a	1	100%
Summer 2015					
	HIST 360-384	History of Louisiana	n/a	25	96%
Fall 2015					
	HIST 201-001	History of the US: 1492-1877	3.2	104	90%
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.7	43	93%
Winter 2016					
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.7	47	94%
	HIST 450-001	History of the Old South	3.8	23	87%
	HIST 489-001	Internship in Public History	n/a	1	100%
Spring 2016					
	HIST 201-001	History of the US: 1492-1877	3.3	95	95%
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	2.7	60	83%
	HIST 423-001	Civil War & Reconstruction	4.0	24	92%
Summer 2016					
	HIST 360-384	History of Louisiana	n/a	25	100%
Fall 2016					

	HIST 201-001	History of the US: 1492-1877	3.3	147	94%
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.6	45	91%
	HIST 486-001	Introduction to Public History	4.0	13	92%
Winter 2017					
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.9	46	96%
	HIST 478-001	African-American History	3.3	14	93%
	HIST 489-001	Internship in Public History	n/a	1	100%
Spring 2017					
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.6	59	88%
Summer 2017					
	HIST 360-384	History of Louisiana	n/a	22	91%
Fall 2017					
	HIST 201-001	History of the US: 1492-1877	3.9	112	90%
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.6	45	87%
	HIST 450-001	History of the Old South	4.0	17	100%
Winter 2018					
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	3.9	45	74%
	HIST 423-001	Civil War & Reconstruction	3.1	22	82%
Spring 2018					
	HIST 360-001	History of Louisiana	n/a	50	n/a

STATEMENT ON TEACHING

Introductory courses are designed to provide breadth of knowledge. History courses offer a rare opportunity for educators to cover not only a basic chronology of historical events, but also civics, economics, and social issues such as race and gender within a broader context of human history. In my classes, it is not enough to merely learn names and dates; students should be able to place movements and ideologies into a historical context. When teaching a general education course such as the introductory American History survey, however, 90% or more of my students are there only to fulfill a requirement, not because of an inherent love for the subject. I endeavor to achieve my goals in part by having developed a comprehensive set of lecture notes for myself and accompanying (but limited) Power Points for the students. These Power Points are made available to my students before class in Moodle, which allows me to *explain* the topic of the day and to discuss this information actively with my students, rather than watching them mindlessly scribble away in their notebooks for the entire class period. To be sure, these technological aids are not complete, but serve only as a guideline. By having these aids available to my students, however, I find that they are more engaged and more willing to participate in class discussions—even in large classes of 100 or more students. This method also allows me to introduce primary documents into my classes. Students often seem intimidated by hand-written documents from the 18th or 19th-centuries. In our modern era of media saturation, however, students tend to be more comfortable evaluating visual images, and I am usually able to coax a thoughtful analysis of historical images. Utilizing these primary sources allows me to express my enthusiasm for history. As historians, we get to read other people’s mail for a living. Exploring primary documents is fun, and I love to share that with my students. My “expressiveness” student evaluation score regularly runs higher than both the department and college average, and this is almost certainly due in part to my excitement when teaching primary documents. How many others can say that they get chill bumps every time they read the Declaration of Independence with their students?

Upper level courses are designed to provide depth of knowledge. To accomplish this goal, I provide greater detail during my class lectures, and expect a greater level of understanding from

my students as demonstrated in essay exams, rather than objective tests. A significant concept in the teaching of history is “change over time.” This is true not only in the timeline of historical events, but also in the way historians understand those past events. Consequently, I believe that by the time they reach a 400-level course, students should be introduced to the notion that historians do not always agree with each other (I talk about this only to a limited degree in 200-level courses). I discuss authorial voice and bias in class, and I delve more deeply into historiographical debates, i.e., the way that historians’ interpretations of the past have changed. At this point, I begin to train students in how to discern that voice when reading historical works, as evidenced by the Book Review Template that I use to guide student reading of historical monographs. I also require students to begin exploring specific topics in order to gain research experience and to understand that history is, in large part, a series of individual stories that can be connected together to discern the larger story of our past. Examples of this research include research posters in my African-American History course (which are put on display in the hallways of GTM during Black History month) and exhibit design in my Introduction to Public History course.

While I am a teacher, I also continue to be a student. I am constantly striving to improve my own content knowledge and pedagogical skills through professional development. I have participated in three National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Faculty Institutes and Seminars since 2005. As more of our courses are expected to be taught in an online environment, I completed the Quality Matters online course development class to improve my online course delivery. The History Department is now considering using the changes I have implemented in my online courses as a template for all future online classes in the department.

I meet regularly with my students not only in class, but also during scheduled office hours and sometimes over lunch at Tolliver or in the halls of GTM. I am accessible through Moodle and via email, and my communication with students seems to be largely via email in the last couple of years. Students seem to respond well to my teaching methods, as indicated by my teaching evaluations which regularly meet or exceed the departmental and college averages.

Through my teaching, I have endeavored to provide Tech students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become active and educated American citizens.

INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM: PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

In this era when so many people see a college education as little more than job training, I work hard to ensure that our students understand the relevance of a degree in history. Public History, or applied history, encompasses a broad range of history-oriented professions ranging from archives to museums. As the supervisor of all Public History activities in the department, I have revamped the Public History curriculum, including a redesign of the Public History minor, and I include public displays in many of my courses so that students may be introduced to these professions and gain experience in the process.

I offer several examples of how the Public History program is having a positive impact not only on the long-term career goals of our students, but also in their daily learning:

- **Public displays:** I require all students in my HIST 478: African-American History course to research a historically significant individual, organization, or event within the field of African-American History. Students then create posters which are put on display in the hallway of GTM as part of the Department’s Black History Month celebration. Students are also required to make brief presentations to the class about their research

project, which allowed these students to transform themselves into teachers. Altogether, this project encourages students to develop research, writing, graphic design, and public speaking skills. While some find the project intimidating to begin with, they generally are very proud of the work they produce and display at the end of the term.

- **Internships:** Many students erroneously believe that a degree in History can prepare them for one job: teaching history. The Public History program offers a wide variety of professional options for history students to pursue upon completing their degree, and the internship is an essential part of their education. By working at a local museum, the students gain valuable insight into the field and experience in the day-to-day work of curation and preservation, museum education, exhibit research and design, and grant writing. Others have worked with the Louisiana Tech University Archives, and at least one of my former students now works as an archivist at the South Carolina State Archives in Columbia, South Carolina. Several dozen students have participated in our growing internship program.

I have developed a good relationship with staff at several museums and archives in North Louisiana, which has generated a number of internship opportunities for students. Dr. Stephen Webre and I created a standard syllabus for internships. As part of the reconfiguration of the Public History minor, internships have been assigned an official HIST designation (HIST 489), and are no longer treated as an ad hoc course utilizing the LBAR designation. I oversee all internships.

Host sites include: Louisiana Tech Archives; Temple B’Nai Israel; Chennault Aviation Museum; Lincoln Parish Museum; North Louisiana Military Museum; Louisiana State Exhibit Museum, and I am actively seeking new partners to host our students.

- **Exhibits:** In 2006, Ian Tham, a local engineer, donated a large collection of photographs that he took while surveying the damage from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in South Louisiana. Students in my HIST 486: Introduction to Public History course culled through the photographs and selected a variety of themes to research, ranging from the environment, to school systems, to churches and cemeteries. Over the course of two quarters, history students selected the photographs and wrote the script for the exhibit. This gave students valuable insight into how museum curators select topics and items for display in museums.

A \$14,000 grant from the Board of Regents allowed history majors under my supervision to work with students in the architecture and graphic design students to create a complete, portable exhibit. The final result, *Broken Pieces: Rural Louisiana After the Hurricanes*, was on display at the Lincoln Parish Library for over a month.

- **Tours:** The projects in my HIST 486: Introduction to Public History vary from year to year, depending on what projects are feasible at any given time. Students enrolled in that course over the years have written historical walking tours of Tech’s campus, Grambling’s campus, and Ruston/Lincoln Parish. While focusing on a distinctly local topic, this project asks students to conceptualize the history of the town or university, to research the history of specific locales, and then to put all of that into context of the larger community. This requires students to develop both individual historical research skills as well as their skills at teamwork to put the entire project together. The tour of campus produced in Fall 2012 was recently published as a series in *Ruston Living* magazine.
- **Documentary Projects:** Students in my HIST 486: Introduction to Public History course have also tackled large-scale documentary editing projects, in which archives have made

high-quality scans of historical documents available to the public for transcription. These projects were once decades-long endeavors (I spent seven years working on one myself while in graduate school), but they can now be turned around in months or years. Students are introduced to a range of skills from reading paleography (deciphering old hand-written script) to utilizing modern digital techniques to process historical writings. Students have worked on the *War Department Papers* from George Mason University, and *Decoding the Civil War* from the Huntington Library.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, AND AWARDS

North Louisiana History & Culture, vol 2.1865-present, editor, (Ruston, La.: McGinty Publications, forthcoming)

Clinton, Louisiana: Society, Politics, and Race Relations in a nineteenth-Century Southern Small Town, (Lafayette, La.: University of Louisiana Press, 2014).

“Lunacy and the Law: Paternalism, Due Process, and the Louisiana State Insane Asylum,” *Louisiana History*, accepted for publication in *Louisiana History*, under revision

"The Battle for Beauvoir: Who Won the Lost Cause," *Journal of Mississippi History*, forthcoming

“Writing Local History: *Clinton, Louisiana*,” 17th Annual Conference of the North Louisiana Collegium of Historical Studies, Ruston, Louisiana, March 2014

“Reanimating the Dead: Unearthing Biographies Lost to History, John Gair as a Case Study,” Bossier Arts Council Academic Symposium, Bossier City, Louisiana, April 20, 2012

Roundtable Chair & Discussant: “The Transformative Power of Knowledge,” American Association of State and Local History, Rochester, New York, September 2008

Roundtable Discussant: “Teaching History in Louisiana Colleges and Universities,” Louisiana Historical Association Meeting, Lafayette, Louisiana, March 2008

“Public History Internships from the Academic Perspective,” American Association of State and Local History National Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, September, 2007

College of Liberal Arts, Advisor of the Year, 2015 & 2016

