

2023 Virgil Orr Junior Faculty Award Nomination Packet - Brooke Cassady

Assistant Professor in Studio Art (3D/Ceramics), Clarece Harp Lyles Endowed Professorship in Ceramic Arts
Director School of Design Galleries, School of Design, College of Liberal Arts

Thank you for this opportunity to share my excitement and joy for teaching at Louisiana Tech University. I am honored to be nominated for the 2023 Virgil Orr Junior Faculty Award. This nomination provides me the opportunity to reflect on how I've grown through my last four years (2019-2023) teaching at Louisiana Tech. It also illuminates how I want to continue to contribute to our students' success within the School of Design, the university, the community, and their professions.

TEACHING

I incorporate the university's mission statement in my commitment to "teaching, research, creative activity, public service, and workforce/economic development." I foster "the education and development of its students in a challenging, yet safe and supportive, diverse community of learners" by centering my teaching practice around exploring courage and vulnerability in the classroom. I encourage students to embrace failure in the efforts of progress and personal growth. I hope that my generosity, availability, and willingness to serve the students and their needs, creates an environment of trust where they feel capable of taking such risks. This environment also enables honest, respectful, and challenging conversations about students' work ethic, time management, and approach to materials and processes. Students learn to develop sustainable studio practices, trust their instincts and intuition, and develop a greater capacity for connection within the work they make and the audience with whom they intend to communicate. Additionally, I focus on safe and proper use of tools and equipment in addition to learning how to maintain communal studio spaces.

Within the School of Design, I teach a full course load, which follows a 2-3-2 schedule, with the majority of classes occurring twice a week, for four-hour class periods. During my four years at Louisiana Tech, I've taught 12 courses including ART 118, ART 240, ART 241, ART 250, ART 347, ART 390, ART 440, ART 499, ART 540, ART 541, ART 542, and ART 599. In all courses, I employ seminar-style discussions in the classroom to democratize the learning process. I engage in a culture of listening and peer learning to encourage active participation, reflection, and dialogue among students. I foster language development at all levels through purposeful, deliberate conversation between myself and students, and assist written and oral language development through modeling, eliciting, probing, restating, clarifying, questioning, praising, etc., in verbal critiques and written assessments. I incorporate a wide variety of formative assessment techniques to assess student learning and target instruction to student's needs. I also differentiate my instruction through demos, hands-on assistance, and online tutorials, to meet the needs of all of my students. I give students clear, direct feedback about how their performance compares with their peers in the classroom, and in the field of studio art and I strive to create authentic performance assessments that are valid, reliable, and accurately measure competencies.

In ART 118 we incorporate the elements and principles of design into individual and team-based projects. Students design maquettes, moving 2D sketches into 3D forms. Students improvise with a variety of materials, and tools (including digital technology), and work towards a large collaboration that requires communication and professionalism. In ART 240, 241, 347, and 440 students investigate materials, processes, and ancient and contemporary resources while building visual and verbal vocabularies, as well as cultural awareness. Students install work in a gallery space, eat meals together from their handmade tableware, and learn to successfully document work for their portfolio. Students hone their curiosity for creative problem solving and apply critical thinking to communicate effectively, visually and verbally. I teach students to recognize how the innovation and improvisation they learn in the classroom applies to various career paths and outside circumstances. I encourage students to connect their achievements in class to a greater responsibility to serve as active, engaged citizens with global awareness.

In Art After 1980, I infuse classroom discussions with pertinent contemporary topics. Our research has an inclusive and global focus, to draw attention to historically underrepresented groups, including, but not limited to, members of the BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities. Cross-disciplinary reading assignments in history, philosophy, psychology, journalism, and poetry broaden students' intellectual and conceptual understanding. We explore various methodologies of contemporary art and visual culture studies by analyzing critical theory, theories of deconstruction, psychoanalysis, and post-colonialism. We examine critical literature with diverse viewpoints to understand the various complexities of information recording and exchange. We also investigate not only the art that people make but how artists live, to fully understand the diverse set of practices, issues, and debates in modern and contemporary art.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Quarter	Course	Rating	Department	College	University
WINTER 22/23	ART 240	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.4
WINTER 22/23	ART 347	4.0	3.6	3.7	3.4
FALL 22/23	ART 241	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.6
SPRING 21/22	ART 241	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
SPRING 21/22	ART 499	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
WINTER 21/22	ART 118	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.7
WINTER 21/22	ART 240	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.7
WINTER 21/22	ART 347	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.7
FALL 21/22	ART 118	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
FALL 21/22	ART 241	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
FALL 21/22	ART 541	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
SPRING 20/21	ART 241	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.6
SPRING 20/21	ART 347	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.6
SPRING 20/21	ART 499	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6
WINTER 20/21	ART 118	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
WINTER 20/21	ART 240	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
WINTER 20/21	ART 347	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
FALL 20/21	ART 118	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.7
FALL 20/21	ART 241	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
FALL 20/21	ART 347	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
FALL 20/21	ART 541	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7
WINTER 19/20	ART 118	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.7
WINTER 19/20	ART 240	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7
SPRING 19/20	ART 118	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.7
SPRING 19/20	ART 241	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7
SPRING 19/20	ART 541	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.7
FALL 19/20	ART 250	3.0	3.6	3.7	3.6
FALL 19/20	ART 390	4.0	3.6	3.7	3.6
FALL 19/20	ART 541	2.6	3.6	3.7	3.6

*Evaluations are not available for all courses and sections, mostly ART 440, ART 541, and ART 542. Items in **bold** exceed means.

RESEARCH

In my research, I explore fusing various clay and glaze materials with mixed media and a multitude of other processes including cyanotype, papermaking, natural dyes, textiles, encaustic, and metal-working. I test clay bodies and appropriate additives, fluxes, and colorants in addition to electroforming and enameling research, incorporating found objects and ceramic materials. My studio practice also involves an interdisciplinary exploration of philosophy, breathwork, phenomenology, psychology, literature, and art history. This provides a strong conceptual component to the vessels, installations, and interactions that speak to the human condition, specifically grief, tenderness, impermanence, loss, and fragility. I learn from my students' experimentation and courage and I hope to exemplify a similar determination and curiosity about process, conceptual development, and authenticity.

GRANTS / HONORS / SCHOLARSHIPS

2022 Louisiana Tech University | *Lagniappe Ladies Grant* (\$4,515.31) | Ruston, LA
 2019 Northeast Louisiana Arts Council | Mini-Grant (\$500) in collaboration with Vitus Shell for the North Louisiana Children's Coalition Family Garden | Monroe, LA

LECTURER / VISITING ARTIST / RESIDENCIES

- 2022 Pocosin Arts | *Resident Artist* | Columbia, NC
2021 Shakerag Workshops | *Resident Artist* | Sewanee, TN
2020 Art on 45 | *Juror* | Ruston, LA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS / INSTALLATIONS

- 2024 Bossier Arts Council | *return to the cradle of your body* | Bossier, LA
2020 Forsythe Park | *6 feet apart, Mother's Day 2020* | Monroe, LA

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS AND INVITATIONALS

- 2023 Ruston Artisans | *Reflections* | Ruston, LA
Louisiana Tech University | Site-Specific Installation with Magdolene Dykstra and Louisiana Tech students | Ruston, LA
- 2022 Louisiana Tech University & Ruston Skatepark | *Deck the Halls* | Ruston, LA
Ruston Artisans | *Metal and Clay* | Ruston, LA
Masur Museum | *Off the Wall* | Monroe, LA
Louisiana Tech University | In Arcadia Ego (collaboration with David Hamlow) | Ruston, LA
Louisiana Tech University | *Faculty Exhibition* | Ruston, LA
Shakerag Workshops | *Staff Exhibition* | Sewanee, TN
Ruston Skatepark | *50-50 Auction* | Ruston, LA
- 2021 Shakerag Workshops | *Staff Exhibition* | Sewanee, TN
Masur Museum | *Off the Wall* | Monroe, LA
- 2020 Schepis Museum | *Mixed* | Columbia, LA
North Central Louisiana Arts Council | *Peach Art Exhibit* | Ruston, LA
Shakerag Workshops | *Staff Exhibition* | Sewanee, TN
- 2019 Big Room Gallery | *gather... squeeze... let go* | Monroe, LA
Ogden Museum of Southern Art | *Art of the Cup* | New Orleans, LA
Shakerag Workshops | *Staff Exhibition* | Sewanee, TN
- 2018 Ogden Museum of Southern Art | *Art of the Cup* | New Orleans, LA

JURIED EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Strata Gallery | *Fragments* | Santa Fe, NM
- 2022 Fine Line | *Art on 45* | Ruston, LA
Masur Museum | *59th Annual Juried Competition* | Monroe, LA
- 2021 River Oaks Square Arts Center | *6th Annual 5x5x5"* | Alexandria, LA
Bossier Arts Council | *Contained Cube* | Bossier, LA
Verum Ultimum Art Gallery | *Chasing Ghosts VI* | Portland, OR
North Central Louisiana Arts Council | *50 for 50* | Ruston, LA

PUBLICATIONS

- 2020 Wagner, Alana. "Bayou Artist: Brooke Cassady." *Bayou Life Magazine*, July 2020, pp. 24-28.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

On the SOD Resources Committee, I help manage GAs at the Art and Architecture Workshop (AAWS) and maintain inventory and prepare shop ordering for Ceramics, the Metalshop, and the Woodshop. I also repair and service tools and equipment in the Ceramics Studio and the SOD Galleries. In 2022, I received a Lagniappe Ladies Grant to replace/upgrade 2 electric kilns.

As Gallery Director and a member of the Coordination Committee, I communicate with the Events & Promotion Committee, and Lectures Committee, including the Director of the SOD and the Dean of the COLA to ensure gallery programming complements and adds diversity and inclusion to other activities and events within the SOD. In collaboration with Frank Hamrick and the MFA Seminar class, we manage an extraordinary team of MFA students to install and promote shows and schedule studio visits.

I encourage the use of the gallery space as a way of promoting our current students, expanding and connecting to the regional communities, and attracting future BFA and MFA candidates. I bring in an inclusive group of exhibiting artists and jurors which ignites important connections for students and faculty, with university, regional, and national communities. Exhibitions are promoted through a variety of sources regionally and nationally. I help BFA and MFA candidates submit, prepare, and install work for exhibitions. I also coordinate the exhibition space with faculty in charge of the MFA Thesis Exhibitions; BFA Studio and Graphic Design Capstone Exhibitions; and the MArch Thesis Exhibitions. I collaborate with the MFA students and the Graphic Design faculty, to promote exhibitions and lectures via printed and email publications in addition to the monthly gallery newsletter, and Facebook and Instagram posts I publish for the gallery.

Together, the galleries and the visiting artists continue the efforts to engage and involve the student population, the University, and the local and regional community in the rewards of visual arts communication and how it relates to and impacts our existence culturally and historically.

COMMUNITY/PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Through my current role as Board Member and Exhibitions Committee Member with the Twin City Art Foundation, I support local artists, faculty, and students by volunteering and advocating for their well-being, promotion, and equal representation. I gather sponsorships, encourage student participation, and also donate artwork to the *Off the Wall* event, as well as other community fundraisers.

I Co-Chair the NELA Foodbank’s Empty Bowls event and host an annual *Make-a-Thon* at Louisiana Tech to connect students to the community service aspect of working in ceramics, meeting local potters, and considering those in need. This high-profile event also highlights Louisiana Tech’s ceramic studio and students via local broadcast networks.

Through over 17 years working with Shakerag Workshops, I connect with esteemed national and international artists, to gain exposure with my work, as well as for our students, community, and university. In June 2023, I will mentor Louisiana Tech’s students during their assistantships/scholarships. In June 2022, I invited and mentored five Louisiana Tech students during their assistantships/scholarships at Shakerag.

SERVICE TO STUDENTS / FACULTY / UNIVERSITY

2023	Loaned Penny Humphries 8 paintings from the SOD gallery collection for the Fashion and Merchandising Runway Show.
2020 - present	Director, Co-Director, Gallery Committee Chair
2020	Faculty search committee member
2020	Started a GOFUNDME fundraiser for colleague Todd Cloe, raising \$7485 to help his son pay for medical bills following a life-threatening car accident
2020	Curated a show of student work at the Schepis Museum in Columbia, LA
2021 - present	Coordination Committee
2021 - present	Resources Committee
2019 - present	Served on eight MFA committees, Chair of two
2019 - present	Donated annually to LA Tech Giving Day
2019– present	Tour visiting students and demonstrated ceramics techniques to boost recruitment.

SERVICE TO PROFESSION / COMMUNITY

2020	NCLAC “Arts in Action” Ruston, LA Virtual Presenter
2019 - present	Twin Cities Art Foundation Monroe, LA Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Board Member, Exhibitions Committee
2018 - present	Food Bank of NELA Co-Chair Empty Bowls Committee Monroe, LA
2019	Art on 45 Ruston, LA Juror
2019	University of Louisiana Monroe Monroe, LA Professional Practices Panelist
2019	Downtown Monroe Alliance Main Street Design Committee Monroe, LA Board Member
2019	Raised \$595 for The Ceramic Emergency Relief Fund.
2018	Northeast Louisiana Arts Council Masur Museum, Monroe, LA Panelist

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS BY SUPERIORS

- “Professor Brooke Cassady's annual contribution showcases a highly innovative, productive, and committed educator and artist. In terms of instructional innovations, Professor Cassady has achieved remarkable progress in incorporating contemporary art history criticism, diverse artists, and varied modes of learning into her courses...Professor Cassady's service contributions to her school, college, university, and professional and local communities are exemplary...Professor Cassady's annual evaluation reflects a dedicated and accomplished educator and artist who has made significant contributions to her field, students, and community. Her commitment to diversity, innovative teaching, and research, coupled with her service-oriented approach, make her an invaluable member of Louisiana Tech University.” -Pasquale DePaola, Interim Director SOD, 2023
- “She is very willing of providing time and attention to help her students (and others). She has regularly demonstrated her advocacy for student mental health and other crises that have unfolded within the student body of the SOD. Her teaching evaluations well exceed Program, College, and University averages. She remains productive in her studio as a professional artist despite the challenges offered by the pandemic... She works collegially and is respected by her peers in the School of Design.” -Karl Puljak, Director SOD, 2022
- “...the SOD galleries are superbly managed by a Director of Galleries who oversees daily functions—such as operations, record keeping, and correspondence with current and prospective exhibitors—while also serving as a full-time studio art faculty member in ceramics with responsibility for overseeing an equipment- dependent teaching lab. Each position, gallery director and ceramics faculty member, appears to be a full-time position in and of itself.” -Jim Hopsfenberger, former President of the College Art Association in his 2023 National Association of Schools of Art and Design Report

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

- “Very supportive when asked for help or feedback. Makes hard material/projects easier to accomplish by offering support. Willing to stay behind or come in to help students beyond required times. Kind and fair. Very dedicated to course and job. Brooke's response to COVID has been well thought out and highly considered in order to guarantee we would still be able to complete all course material and actually enjoy taking this class. I appreciated that we were given as much time in class as possible to work rather than sitting through many more lecture type days. She always encouraged us to challenge ourselves to better improve our craft and to be making work that we are proud of. Overall I thoroughly enjoyed wheel throwing and getting a chance to explore more materials and methods of working with ceramics and look forward to taking more classes with Brooke in the future.”
- “This professor is a phenomenal instructor; she is very helpful, and I never felt lost in this class. She is also very understanding of personal issues. Despite that, she is not an easy professor and has high expectations of her students; that's why I did so well.
- “She makes the class feel like a safe place to express ourselves and explore the possibilities of ceramics. I enjoy being taught by Brooke, and will always choose her classes first.”
- “Brooke does a wonderful job of inspiring her students to try new things and to keep going. She is willing to answer any question and goes beyond to help her students succeed. Her knowledge is endless and I have learned so much from her. I can't wait to take another class with her!”
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- Brooke is the best. She is always willing to help and answer questions. She always goes above and beyond to inspire and push her students and makes sure they have an endless amount of research. Classes are always well balanced. I'm so glad I have had the opportunity to learn from her. You can tell Brooke cares so much for her students (AND CERAMICS) and pushes them to be the best they can be. She's always checking in on how we are physically as well as mentally and I think that sets her apart from other professors I have had. I love having her as a professor and hope I can take her classes again before I graduate!
- “Brooke Cassady is a very caring instructor and is very willing to make accommodations for students. She has a lot of passion for contemporary art and teaching... I love Brooke - she is very personable, kind, and hardworking... I am grateful for the contribution she has given to my education.”