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 College of Liberal Arts

Nomination Packet for the F. Jay Taylor Undergraduate Teaching Award for 2023

Undergraduate Courses Taught from Fall, 2016-Spring, 2023:

Quarter	Course	9 th Day Enrollment	Final Enrollment	% Retained	Student Evaluations
Fall 2016	ENGL 332-001	23	23	100%	3.9
	ENGL 332-002	26	25	96%	3.9
	ENGL 303-001	25	21	84%	3.9
Winter 2017	ENGL 332-001	26	25	96%	3.8
	ENGL 332-002	24	22	91.7%	3.9
	ENGL 303-003	25	23	92%	3.9
Spring 2017	ENGL 332-001	25	21	84%	4.0
	ENGL 332-002	25	24	96%	3.9
	ENGL 303-002	24	18	75%	3.6
Fall 2017	ENGL 332-001	24	20	83.3%	3.5
	ENGL 332-002	25	21	84%	3.9
	ENGL 303-008	25	18	72%	3.6
Winter 2018	ENGL 332-001	25	21	84%	4.0
	ENGL 332-002	25	23	92%	3.9
	ENGL 303-003	25	24	96%	3.8
Spring 2018	ENGL 332-001	25	20	80%	3.9
	ENGL 332-002	25	29	80%	3.6
	ENGL 303-002	25	25	100%	3.9

Fall 2018	ENGL 332-001	21	19	90.5%	3.9
	ENGL 332-002	25	20	89%	4.0
	ENGL 303-008	24	20	83.3%	3.9
	HNRS 303-H02	19	17	89.5%	3.9
Winter 2019	ENGL 332-001	24	21	87.5%	3.6
	ENGL 332-002	25	22	88%	4.0
	ENGL 303-003	25	24	96%	4.0
Spring 2019	ENGL 332-001	25	20	80%	4.0
	ENGL 332-002	25	20	80%	4.0
	ENGL 303-002	25	21	84%	3.8
Fall 2019	ENGL 332-001	24	20	83.3%	3.8
	ENGL 332-002	25	22	88%	4.0

	ENGL 303-008	25	25	100%	3.4
	HNRS 303-H02	20	16	80%	3.9
Winter 2020	ENGL 332-001	25	21	84%	3.6
	ENGL 332-002	21	16	76%	4.0
	ENGL 303-003	25	19	76%	4.0
*Quarters	with online	courses	due to the	COVID-19	pandemic
Spring 2020*	ENGL 332-001	25	21	84%	3.6
	ENGL 332-002	25	25	100%	3.8
	ENGL 303-002	25	22	88%	3.5
Fall 2020*	HNRS 303-H84	18	15	83.3%	3.5
	ENGL 303-V84	26	20	77%	3.5
	ENGL 332-084	25	22	88%	3.4
	ENGL 332-V84	25	19	76%	3.0
Winter 2021*	ENGL 332-V84	25	23	92%	3.9
	ENGL 332-084	25	22	88%	3.0
	ENGL 303-V84	25	23	92%	3.2
Spring 2021*	ENGL 303-084	25	20	80%	3.5
	ENGL 332-V84	24	20	83.3%	3.1
	ENGL 332-084	16	13	81.3%	3.8
Fall 2021	HNRS 303-H02	17	15	88.2%	3.9
	ENGL 303-003	24	19	79%	3.7
	ENGL 332-001	17	17	100%	3.9
	ENGL 332-002	9	8	89%	3.8

Winter 2022	ENGL 332-01	12	11	91.7%	4.0
	ENGL 303-001	24	22	91.7%	3.4
	ENGL 303-015	24	23	95.8%	3.5
Spring 2022	HNRS 303-H02	18	18	100%	3.8
	ENGL 303-014	23	23	100%	3.8
	ENGL 332-001	19	17	89.4%	4.0
Summer 2022	HNRS 303-H30	2	2	100%	n/a
Fall 2022	HNRS 303-H02	12	12	100%	4.0
	ENGL 303-003	23	23	100%	3.9
	ENGL 303-014	23	23	100%	3.7
	ENGL 332-001	25	22	88%	4.0
Winter 2023	ENGL 332-001	19	15	79%	3.8

	ENGL 303-001	22	19	86.3%	3.6
	ENGL 303-015	22	19	86.3%	3.9
	HNRS 303-H02	15	13	86.7%	3.5
Spring 2023	HNRS 389C-H01	4	TBD (4 expected)	TBD (100% expected)	TBD
	ENGL 303-011	22	TBD (20 expected)	TBD (91% expected)	TBD
	ENGL 303-014	22	TBD (18 expected)	TBD (81.8% expected)	TBD
	ENGL 332-001	22	TBD (19 expected)	TBD (86.3% expected)	TBD

Beliefs Concerning the Significance of Undergraduate Teaching:

Since I teach service courses required by students from a wide range of academic majors, I have the opportunity to implement the mission of Louisiana Tech University, an institution which “maintains as its highest priority the education and development of its students in a challenging, yet safe and supportive, diverse community of learners.” The students who enroll in ENGL 303: Technical Writing, HNRS 303: Honors Technical Writing, and ENGL 332: Advanced Grammar—my primary responsibilities—represent all five colleges of the university and enter my courses with incredibly different experiences, expectations, abilities, and skills. My challenge is to create coursework that is applicable to everyone.

I believe that strong communication skills are important in all disciplines and careers. Therefore—although I will freely admit that non-English majors are not always enthusiastic about writing or grammar courses—I am determined to demonstrate how the ability to write effectively and speak persuasively can be useful, no matter what career path a student may eventually take. One way that I encourage student buy-in is by showing how much I care about the subjects I’m teaching. I make a concerted effort to present material enthusiastically. After all, if I am not passionate about what I’m teaching, how can I expect my students to be? To help aid student retention, I am intentional about teaching via storytelling. Sometimes an amusing anecdote will help a student remember material much more effectively than a lecture ever will.

Louisiana Tech’s mission statement reveals the university’s commitment to “research, creative activity, public service, and workforce/economic development.” In my Technical Writing classes, my course objectives include goals for students to differentiate fact from opinion, form logical arguments, organize ideas, and perform credible research. These objectives are put into practice with the writing of a research proposal and a report. Additionally, my course objectives stress that students will make wise design choices and integrate graphics effectively. They do so through the creative project of designing an infographic based on their research. Through in-class discussions of evaluating ethical dilemmas, my students learn about their responsibilities to their future employers, the general public, and the environment. Almost every assignment and project in Technical Writing is centered on preparing students for the workplace. In previous quarters, comments from students have included variations of this theme: “This class has been the most useful/practical course I’ve ever taken.”

Practicality isn’t everything, though. In my literature classes, I want my students to appreciate the beauty of words and to enjoy well-crafted sentences. In addition, I encourage my students to read critically. I hope to help guide my students through all the questions that good writing stimulates, and I strive to create safe spaces for discussion.

I am grateful to be a teacher, and I understand and respect the enormous responsibility that serving as an educator and mentor to our undergraduate students requires. I hope that I always establish an atmosphere of trust that encourages my students to speak up, to ask hard questions, and to know that I am in their corner. To this goal of building relationships, I actively participate in various on-campus events because I want my students to know me as someone who cares about them and who is invested in the university’s mission.

Innovations in Undergraduate Teaching:

This spring I am teaching HNRS 389C: Sports Literature, a course that I developed. In this class, my students are reading a variety of literary genres (poetry, essays, sports journalism columns, novels, short stories, and non-fiction books) as they learn about the historical significance of sports from ancient times to the present, examine the connection between sports and popular culture, and consider important societal issues found in sports literature. They recently completed an experiential learning project that required them to do research, conduct interviews, and write a human-interest story about sports. This project resulted in the publication of their article in a local newspaper.

Since ENGL 303: Technical Writing is one of my primary teaching responsibilities, I have worked to make the assignments and projects useful for students with widely different career plans. In addition to teaching my students how to conduct research, verify the credibility of sources, and write documents, I incorporate lessons about professionalism, ethics, cross-cultural communication, and collaboration—topics that should provide all students with practical knowledge.

In my ENGL 332: Advanced Grammar courses, I work to teach students—who often feel defeated by previous experiences that made them feel judged or chastised—that usage is situational. We examine contexts of use. Although I do teach the rules of Standard American English, I encourage my students to describe grammar as appropriate or inappropriate for a situation, not as right or wrong. I have also incorporated a collaborative research project on regional and ethnic/cultural varieties of English so that my students learn about the importance of dialect as a cultural marker.

Presentations Related to Undergraduate Teaching:

I have facilitated workshops on faculty advising of undergraduates for the School of Literature. Advising—if done properly—should be more than course scheduling. It should be an extension of our relationships with the students we teach—an opportunity to educate them about graduate programs, internship possibilities, and job options.

On many occasions, I have worked with area high school English teachers to answer their questions about college-level English courses. I have provided course syllabi and have described course objectives and expectations so that the high school teachers can share this information with their junior and senior students.

Honors/Awards:

Outstanding Alumna Award, Cedar Creek School	2023
Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award, Louisiana Tech University	2006
Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award, College of Liberal Arts	2002, 2003, 2006
Nominee for Virgil Orr Junior Faculty Award	2001-2003, 2005-2007

Service to the University:

Pre-medical/Pre-dental Advisory Committee Member	2009-present
Academic Advisor (for English majors)	2009-present
Interview/Resume Advisor for Miss Louisiana Tech University	2003-present
Volunteer, Professors in the Plaza	2021, 2022, 2023
BMES Guest Speaker	2022
QEP Team Member	2022
Faculty Representative for CoLA, Louisiana Tech Giving Day	2019, 2020, 2021
Louisiana Tech Admissions Focus Group Member	2019-2020
Lady Techsters Tip-Off Club Member	2019-2020
HDFS Curriculum Review Team Member	2019
Textbook Coordinator, School of Literature and Language	2010-2019

Transfer Equivalency Coordinator, School of Literature and Language	2010-2018
Faculty Advisor Award Selection Committee Member	2017, 2018, 2019
North Louisiana Literary Rally Exam Proctor	2016, 2018, 2019
Panel Member from a Supporting Discipline, ACEND	2017
Judge, Louisiana Tech Research Symposium	2015, 2016, 2017
Women's Basketball Guest Coach, Louisiana Tech Athletics	2017
Judge, Regional Science Fair	2016
Football Guest Coach, Louisiana Tech Athletics	2015
Panel Member from a Supporting Discipline, AAFCS	2015

Service to the Community:

Trinity Methodist Church Worship Committee Member	2019-present
Trinity Chancel Choir Member	2018-present
Miss Louisiana/Miss America Organization Judge	2017-present
Miss Louisiana System Mock Interview Panelist	2016-present
LifeHouse Ministries Board of Directors	2014-2018
LifeHouse Ministries Secretary	2017-2018
Trinity Volunteer: Project Angel Tree, Hurricane Relief, Loaves of Love	2009-2019
Cedar Creek School Education Committee	2010-2013
Cedar Creek School Hospitality Chairperson	2011-2012
Cedar Creek School Parent Club President	2009-2011
Cedar Creek School Board of Directors	2009-2011
NELA Susan G. Komen Board Member	2007-2009

Note to the University Senate:

Being named a finalist for the F. Jay Taylor Undergraduate Teaching Award is an honor that I do not take lightly. I am completing my 27th year of undergraduate teaching at Louisiana Tech, and I appreciate your recognition of my work. I am grateful for the opportunity to represent the College of Liberal Arts.

Thanks also for the excellent work that you do for Louisiana Tech University. Your service does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. Louisiana Tech is a special place because of the administrators, faculty, staff, and students who are invested in striving for excellence in teaching, research, and creativity. I am thankful to be part of such a great team.