

John S. Vassar

Louisiana State University in Shreveport
 One University Place, Shreveport, LA 71115
 Email: john_vassar@bellsouth.net

Phone (cell): 318-393-0004

EDUCATION

Baylor University	Ph.D. in Religious Studies (Old Testament)
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	MA in Theology
Louisiana State University in Shreveport	BA in History

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Louisiana State University in Shreveport

Provost and Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs **2012 – Present (2012-2013 interim)**

Chair, Dept of Fine Arts, Foreign Languages, and Humanities: **2004 – 2012**

ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

****All achievements listed here were accomplished in a collaborative, team environment. None of them are mine alone and none of them would have been possible without the hard work of dedicated colleagues.****

Provost and Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs

The Provost and VCAA serves as the Chief Academic Officer of the Shreveport campus in the LSU System and in that capacity supervises the five Schools (Liberal Arts, Sciences, Business, Education, and Human Sciences), the Library, and the Division of Continuing Education and Community Outreach. In addition to these schools, Academic Affairs also includes the three offices of Institutional Effectiveness, Academic Services, and Multicultural Affairs. This position reports to the Chancellor of LSU Shreveport. In the summer of 2015, a campus reorganization brought Enrollment Management, Admissions, the Registrar's Office, and Student Development into Academic Affairs. LSU Shreveport has an enrollment of 4,800 students, 143 faculty, and 156 staff.

On campus:

- Academic Affairs led the reaffirmation process for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges) SACS-COC decennial accreditation review. We received zero recommendations on the site team visit.
- Received SACS-COC approval for an institutional level change from a Level IV (offers the master's and specialist degree as the highest degrees) to a Level V (offers three or fewer doctorate degrees as highest degrees) institution (2013). We received zero recommendations on the site team visit.
- Gained Louisiana Board of Regents approval for LSU Shreveport's first doctoral program, an Ed.D. in Leadership Studies.
- Achieved initial Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) accreditation for joint Masters in Public Health Program with LSU Health Science Center.
- Expanded the Licensed Professional Nursing program from two to four cohorts.
- Initiated a change in delivery mode from face-to-face to online for our MBA. Enrollment has increased from 40 students in March 2013 to over 900 students in our June 2016 start.
- Implemented a change in delivery mode from face-to-face to online for our Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction (MEdCI) and Masters of Educational Leadership. Enrollment has increased from 12 in March 2013 to 274 in our June 2015 start.
- Gained "Governor's Military Friendly Campus" status for our work with both active duty military and veterans.

- Partnered with Barksdale Air Force Base (BAFB is the largest Air Force base in the United States) on Strategic Alternatives Consortium (SAC). SAC has increased our connections with BAFB and provided opportunities for faculty/student connections in supporting the mission of BAFB.
- Appointed a Director of Sponsored Research and saw significant increase in disclosures, patent applications, and grant applications.
- Developed a “Partners Program” MOU with Caddo Parish Schools, providing pipeline to guarantee LSUS education graduates opportunities to interview for classroom jobs.
- Negotiated an agreement with The Language Company (an intensive ESL company) for the LSU Shreveport campus.
- Developed MOUs with LSU (Baton Rouge campus), LSU Health Science Shreveport, Southern University of Shreveport, and Bossier Parish Community College for program articulation and transfer.
- Developed MOUs and articulation agreements with universities in Ghana and Japan.
- Initiated social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) for Office of the Provost, which has opened new channels of communication with students and community leaders.
- Implemented bridge transfer program with Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC@LSUS) and Southern University of Shreveport (SU Connect).
- Directed Strategic Planning process in lead up to SACSCOC review.
- Instituted personnel evaluation process for all levels of campus administration in the Academic division.
- Developed leadership training modules for Department Chairs and faculty training for all new faculty.
- Achieved Louisiana Board of Regents renewal for Red River Watershed Management Institute and Institute of Human Services and Public Policy.
- Worked alongside the Faculty Senate to revise numerous campus policies including Promotion and Tenure, research and Development, and others.
- Instituted Faculty Research Grants and Outstanding Faculty of the Year Awards.

Engagement with External Stakeholders

- Quarterly meetings with Shreveport Mayor Ollie Tyler and with City Chief Operating Officer Brian Crawford.
- Appointed by the Hon. Cedric Glover, Mayor of Shreveport, as a higher education representative on a benchmarking and economic development team for Northwest Louisiana in Birmingham, Alabama.
- Served on a regional corporate recruitment committee that met with companies exploring relocating to the Northwest Louisiana Region. This activity directly resulted in Computer Sciences Corporation announcing a new facility in Bossier City which will employ over 800 Computer Science graduates from regional schools.
- Worked with the Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance for Higher Education (SBBA) to ensure that LSU Shreveport course offerings met the needs of the business community.
- Made presentations to the SBBA and the Committee of 100 on behalf of LSU Shreveport.
- Represented LSU Shreveport in numerous community settings including church meetings, conferences, and symposia.
- Worked with a downtown NGO to sponsor Shreveport’s Cohabitat, a program through which LSU Shreveport offers classes (credit and noncredit) in a more convenient, off campus location for the community.

In LSU System

- Involved in coordinating capital campaign drive with other campuses in the LSU System.
- Represented the LSU System at the Black Legislative Caucus Workshop for the 2014 Louisiana Legislative Session.
- Planned and hosted events with local legislative delegation.
- Collaborated on LSU/LSU Shreveport degrees (five LSU Baton Rouge degrees that are offered on the LSU Shreveport campus).
- Served on the LSU 2015 Transition Advisory Team Academic Subcommittee. This committee recommended opportunities for closer collaboration in academic areas across the nine-member LSU System.
- Served as campus representative on numerous LSU System meetings.
- Worked on LSU System wide marketing plans for online program offerings.

Chair, Department of Fine Arts, Foreign Languages, and Humanities

The Chair of the Department of Fine Arts, Foreign Languages, and Humanities serves as the leader of one of the fastest growing and most entrepreneurial departments on the LSUS campus. This department included the fields of Art, Foreign Languages, Music, and Philosophy. Responsibilities included oversight of 12 faculty members, three labs (Foreign Language, Art, and Piano), and numerous student workers. This position reports to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

- Provided management of instructional programs in the three divisions of the department. Responsibilities included scheduling and staffing of classes, budget management, and evaluating departmental faculty. Duties also included hiring and assigning departmental staff and student workers.
- Oversaw the increase of majors in the Department Fine Arts, Foreign Language, and Humanities
- Collaborated with the Computer Science department on a new degree for film production: Animation and Visual Effects combining Graphic Design and Computer Science.
- Encouraged interdisciplinary work through minors: Minor in Art Design and Marketing (with Department of Management and Marketing) and Film Minor (with Department of Communications).
- Founding Faculty Member of LSU Shreveport Honors College and instructor in inaugural Honors College class.
- Collaborated with Dean of Arts and Sciences to institute development of a tenure workshop for junior faculty.
- University Program and Departmental Assessment Committee – responsible for providing ongoing assessment for all Departments and Programs on Campus (Academic and Non-Academic).
- University General Education Committee – responsible for certifying and supervising the assessment of all General Education courses on campus.
- Successfully nominated multiple departmental faculty members for various campus awards as well as for tenure, promotion, and sabbatical leave.
- Served on Leadership Council for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
- Worked with local high schools to introduce dual enrollment programs between our department and their local high school students.
- Wrote several successful grants to convert standard classrooms into “Smart” classrooms.

Ecclesiastical Service

Concurrent with my academic career, I have remained active in the local church. I have trained as an Intentional interim Pastor through the Pastorless Churches Division of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. This training prepared me to assist communities of faith experiencing various crises or transitions in leadership.

- Intentional Interim Pastor, Mansfield Road Baptist Church, Shreveport, LA (2012)
- Intentional Interim Pastor, Walnut Creek Baptist Church, Diana, Texas (2009-2011)
- Intentional Interim Pastor, Linda Lay Baptist Church, Gilliam, LA (2006-2007)
- Pastor, Purmela Baptist Church, Purmela, TX (1995-2000)

Additional supply preaching opportunities/consultant work at churches in Texas and Louisiana.

My home church is Willow Point Baptist Church in Shreveport, LA. I have served as Sunday School teacher for fifteen years, on the Personnel and Stewardship Committees, and as Chair of various search committees, including the Pastor Search Committee, messenger to associational meetings and to the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

I am licensed and ordained in the Southern Baptist Tradition.

Faith and Learning:

- 2016 Participant in International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities annual meeting (Asheville, NC).
- 2015 Keynote address at LeTourneau University conference on Creativity in Teaching “Beyond Integration: Creating Narratives and Narratives of Creation” (August).
- 2015 Participant in International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities annual meeting (St. Louis, Missouri).
- 2015 Participant in Baylor Seminar for Higher Education Leadership (only state institution representative).
- 2014 “Reading the Book of Judges in the Flickering Light of *Unforgiven, True Grit, and Zero Dark Thirty*. Presentation to the Institute of Faith and Learning Conference, Baylor University, October.
- 2014 Panelist in Baylor Seminar for Higher Education Leadership (only state institution representative).
- 2011 “Imagination in *Cinema Paradiso*” Presentation for the Honors College at East Texas Baptist University. Marshall, TX.

Professional Service and Leadership:

- Served as an external reviewer for institutional readiness of a public, four-year campus on behalf of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. The campus was seeking a role, scope, and mission change to offer graduate courses (2014)
- President (and Vice-President) for the Southwest Region of the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion (2009-2011)
- Hebrew Bible Section Leader, Southwest Commission on Religious Studies (2008 – 2011)

Academic Rank:

Instructor/Assistant/Associate/Professor of Humanities: Aug 2000 – Present

Scholarly Activity:Peer Reviewed Articles:

- 2016 “Faculty Attitudes for Changing a University’s Core and Structure.” Kevin S. Krug, Kole W. Dickson, Julie A. Lessiter, John S. Vassar. *International Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 5, No 2; 2016. Pp. 63-73.
- 2015 “Student Preference Rates for Predominately Online, Compressed, or Traditionally Taught University Courses.” Kevin S. Krug, Kole W. Dickson, Julie A. Lessiter, John S. Vassar. *Innovative Higher Education*, October 2015. pp. 1-13.
- 2012 “All Writings Great and Small: Reading James Herriot’s Stories as Travel Literature” in *Academic Quarter*, vol 4. Spring. pp. 58-70.
- 2011 Essays on “Ingmar Bergman” and “Paul Schrader” for *Encyclopedia of Religion and Film*, ed. Eric Mazur. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO. pp. 56-60. pp. 381-82.
- 2007 *Reading the Book of Psalms in Days of War*. Society of Biblical Literature Forum, June.
- 2000 The entries *Elam* and *Jorkeam* in David Noel Freedman, *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans’s Publishing.
- 1999 “...but we need the eggs” An article on religious studies in the context of a denominational institution. *Religious Studies News*, February.

Monograph:

- 2007 *Recalling a Story Once Told: An Intertextual Reading of the Psalter and the Pentateuch*. (Mercer University Press).

Presentations:

- 2016 “Lions, Lambs, and Lynchings: Isaiah and the Peaceable Kingdom” College of Arts and Sciences Lecture Series, Louisiana State University in Shreveport. (Forthcoming, October).
- 2015 Keynote address at LeTourneau University conference on Creativity in Teaching. August, Longview, TX (Mentioned above under Faith/Learning).
- 2014 “Tensions in Transition While Leveling Up: Can We Keep a Level Head During a Level Change?” Annual Meeting of SACSCOC. Nashville, TN.
- 2014 Panelist at Seminar on Academic Leadership. Baylor University. Waco, TX.
- 2014 “Notes from the Dark Side: Reflections on a Year as Interim Provost” College of Arts and Sciences Lecture Series, Louisiana State University in Shreveport. May.
- 2013 “Reflections on the Death of Children: Reading Job with the Coen Brothers and Terrence Malik” for the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies in Dallas, TX.
- 2012 “A Few Words on Religion in Film Studies.” Southwest Commission on Religious Studies in Dallas, TX.
- 2012 Designated Scholar in the “Big Read” program for the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.
- 2011 “Hollywood Hokmah: Reading the Book of Job in Three Films” Presentation at the Southwest meeting of the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion in Dallas, TX.
- 2010 Panelist at the Ang Lee Film Festival at the Robinson Film Center, Shreveport, LA.
- 2009 “Yahweh as Artisan: A Metaphor of Creation in the Hebrew Psalter” for the Society of Biblical Literature national meeting in New Orleans, LA.
- 2007 “*The Lady in the Water* and the Death of Postmodernism” for the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies in Dallas, TX.
- 2007 “Battle Hymns of the Republic: The Book of Psalms in Times of War” for the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies in Dallas, TX.
- 2005 “The Impact of Psalms in Times of War” for the Society of Biblical Literature National Meeting in Philadelphia, PA.
- 2005 “Connections in Creation: An Intertextual Reading of Psalm 107 and Genesis 1:1-2” for the Society of Biblical Literature National Meeting in Philadelphia, PA.
- 2005 “Reading the Book of Psalms in Days of War” for the Southwestern Region of the Modern Language Association in Houston, TX.
- 2004 “All Stories Great and Small: Reading James Herriot as Travel Literature.” October 21-24, International Society for Travel Writing, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- 2004 “Confronting the Whirlwind in Fiction and Film: The Book of Job, Bruce Almighty, and Commandments.” Mid-West Conference on Christianity and Literature, Indiana Wesleyan University.
- 2004 “Connections in Creation: Psalm 107 and Genesis 1:1-2” Presentation to the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies. Dallas, Texas.
- 2003 “Civilizing Cowboys: The Book of Judges and Clint Eastwood’s *Unforgiven*.” Presentation to the Western Conference on Christianity and Literature. Seattle, Washington.
- 2003 “From Author to Auteur: Martin Scorsese and the Gospel of Luke” Presentation to the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies. Dallas, Texas.
- 2002 “Hope in Hell’s Kitchen: Narrating Hope in Contemporary Film” Presentation to the Western Conference on Christianity and Literature. Los Angeles, California.
- 2002 “Reading out of Time: Russia in the Days of the Judges” Presentation to the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies. Dallas, Texas.
- 2001 “Recalling a Story Once Told: Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible” Presentation to the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies. Dallas, Texas.

Book Reviews:

- 2007 Review of *The Psalms*. James Eaton. *Review of Biblical Literature*. February.
- 2006 Review of *Gospel Tracks Through Texas: The Mission Chapel of Car Good Will*. Wilma Ruth Taylor. *East Texas Historical Journal*. Fall.
- 2006 "From Socrates to *Seinfeld*: What's the Deal with Nothing?" *Journal of Film-Philosophy*, v. 10, n. 3, pp. 114-121.
- 2004 Review of *Genesis: The Movie*. Robert Farrar Capon. *Review of Biblical Literature*. September.
- 2004 Review of *Psalms 73-150*. Richard J. Clifford. *Review of Biblical Literature*. July.
- 2004 Book Reviews for *Perspectives in Religious Studies*. Winter 2004, (vol. 31 #4) 512-516.
- A Matrix of Meanings: Finding God in Popular Culture*. By Craig Detweiler and Barry Taylor, 2003. *Hollywood Worldviews: Watching Films With Wisdom and Discernment*. Brian Godawa, 2002. *Screening Scripture: Intertextual Connections Between Scripture and Film*. Edited by George Aichele and Richard Walsh, 2002.
- 2004 Review of *Anything Else* for *The Journal of Religion and Film*. Vol. 8, No. 1 April.
- 2003 Feature review essay of Ari Hiltunen's *Aristotle in Hollywood* for the *Journal of Film and Philosophy* (Winter).
- 2003 Review of *Reading is Believing*. David S. Cunningham. *The Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, vol. 4, Summer.

Courses of Instruction (LSUS)

Undergraduate

- History (American Survey, Christianity, Film, Renaissance/Reformation)
- Philosophy (Survey, History, Ethics)
- Hebrew Bible (Biblical Hebrew, Pentateuch, Psalms, Wisdom, Survey)
- New Testament (Gospels, Survey)

Graduate

- Modern and Postmodern Culture
- Special Topics in Philosophy: Problem of Evil
- Philosophy in Film
- Team Taught Seminar With an English Colleague on Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*

Director of Multiple Theses in the Master of Liberal Arts Program

Courses of Instruction (New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary extension in Shreveport, LA)

- Introduction to the Old Testament
- Introduction to the New Testament
- Hebrew I and II

Campus Service

University Service:

- Faculty Senator (multiple terms, member of Executive Committee)
- University General Education Assessment Committee
- University Reaccreditation Assessment Committee
- Faculty Recruiter (working with admissions office to recruit students)
- University Committee on Ethics Conference
- Instruction and Professional Development Committee
- Inaugural Member of the LSU Shreveport Leadership Academy
- Chapter President of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Fraternity

College Service:

- Graduate Council
- Committee on College Strategic Planning
- Courses and Curricula Committee
- Chair for Film Studies Committee
- Leadership Council
- Committee on Service Learning

Community Service

- LSU Shreveport Circle of Excellence Award Recipient for Leadership and Professionalism by the LSUS Alumni Association – 2014
- Organized NUMANA project that prepared 4,000 meals for local foodbanks – 2016
- Founding Board Member and Member of the Faith on Film Advisory Committee for the Robinson Film Center
- Rotary Club International (East Shreveport Chapter)
- Active in numerous church outreach activities