



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

John McDonough | Sept. 2021

Welcome to Faculty Spotlight! This month we're highlighting Crystal Green Brown, an adjunct faculty member in the CIS and Fashion Merchandising and Marketing Departments, who has extensive experience teaching online classes at LIM College.

Tell us about how you came to LIM College.

I have been teaching at the college level for the last 21 years. I have instructed at...let's see, five different colleges, including Kent State and from there I worked at The Art Institute [to name a few]. I've noticed over the last two decades that the landscape of higher education has changed, and I wanted to change with it.

So, I noticed an advertisement for LIM and I loved teaching fashion courses at all the previous colleges where I was employed. So, I thought, wouldn't it be great to teach at a fashion college in New York? After applying and getting the job I started in the Graduate Department and I guess things evolved and Nicole found me. I moved to teaching undergraduate courses and then I evolved into the CIS department. My background is in career development, marketing and fashion. I also own my own business as a career coach.

What prompted you to go into career coaching?

My PhD is in curriculum development and instruction with a concentration, or specialization, in career development.

A part of that has to do with a philosophy, or mantra that I believe, everyone has a purpose in life. Even in undergraduate school I changed majors, multiple times. I still believe that everyone has a purpose and that purpose is fluid. So, as we grow and develop personally and professionally, our career path will grow and evolve. I believe that part of MY purpose is to help other people. I love being able to work in CIS and also in Marketing and having students in one department and see them again in another department.

Describe what has been a success for you, during your teaching career.

Developing course assignments/projects that are as close as possible to industry standards. Students need to enter the workplace or an internship with real-world experience. Before becoming a professor, I worked in management for ten years. And currently, as a small business owner, I often collaborate with organizations that have helped me to stay abreast of corporate standards and expectations. Implementing these standards in the classroom specifically for course projects and assignments is one of the best ways to make the teaching experience successful.

What courses have you taught [at LIM] in the past and what are you currently teaching?

So, I started [teaching] at LIM in July of 2017 and I primarily teach marketing classes, like consumer behavior and integrated marketing communications. I was teaching power of the brand, which I love. The whole idea of the students and people, personalizing themselves by identifying themselves as a brand.

In CIS I teach Internship 1. I used to teach Internship 2 but I sort of like to get students at the beginning of their journey. Helping them identify their dream job.

What drew you to teaching?

When I was working on my Master's, I was a Graduate Assistant for Family and Consumer Sciences and I was actually a little shy. My boss was sick and I had to take over for her, so that pushed me into getting out of my shyness in a hurry and take over her course! I'm not going to say that I liked it initially - it's nerve wracking to do something you're not comfortable with. But, it gave me an opportunity to become exposed to something I have never done before.

Sort of like internships, when students have an opportunity to become exposed to an internship they are either going to love it or hate it. Or, maybe they are somewhere in-between. But, just that exposure of learning that this could be a new opportunity.

So, this gave me an opportunity to sink or swim...and I swam. I've been swimming for 21 years!

What was the moment when teaching was no longer uncomfortable for you?

I remember some advice that someone shared with me about feeling a little less uncomfortable and that was, just tell stories. So, based on what you were teaching - share a story that would be relatable to your audience. I think what helped [at the time] is that as a graduate student I was still close to the same age as my students, so it made it easier to relate to them.

When they looked engaged in what I had to say and saw me as an authority figure, everything changed for me. I became a little more comfortable and at ease at being an authority figure, being a teacher/professor.

What has been the most successful in your online courses?

I think it's the assignments. I've improved at creating assignments that replicate activities and aspects that we plan to review in class.

I've also improved at sharing clear and specific instructions to guide students on the expectations of the assignment. I've learned the importance of emphasizing specific aspects while communicating at different touch points to ensure that students are submitting really focused assignments that build on each other.

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TYPICAL WEEKLY TEACHING SCHEDULE

Due to your busy schedule what does a typical week look like for you at LIM?

MONDAY

Respond to discussion board questions. Provide feedback and redirect, if necessary. Continue grading. Check in!

KEEP CHECKING IN:

START THE WEEK:

I complete attendance, first thing. Then, I reach out to students who were absent the previous week and document in Dropout Detective. Finally, I start grading.

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

START GRADING:

Respond to discussion board questions. Provide feedback and redirect, if necessary. Continue grading assignments and activities that have been due throughout the week, thus far.

FRIDAY

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK:

Continue grading all of the activities and assignments for the week. If you start grading earlier in the week, this does not seem as time consuming. You also have more time to spend on individual assignments.

What, if anything, drew you to teaching online?

So, I actually started teaching online at Johnson and Wales. I enjoyed the convenience because even though I was teaching at Johnson and Wales, I was in Charlotte. The school's main campus is located in Providence, RI. So, through teaching online, I was exposed to different courses that weren't offered on the Charlotte campus. The idea of teaching online was not only convenient for the students, but a convenience for me as well because it provided me the opportunity to teach a wide variety of courses that I was not able to teach in-person.

If teaching online was not an option, I would not be able to teach at LIM. Most of the students, I have, aren't even living in New York City. So, it's also a treat to be exposed to students who are all over the world.

Could you describe an interaction(s) with a student(s), that you found successful?

My favorite teaching moments have occurred while teaching in FMM and CIS. I've noticed that some of my former Internship 1 students that have an interest in marketing or have majored in one of the marketing programs have enrolled in one or more of my marketing courses.

It's rewarding to know that the student-professor relationships that have been developed in one department have successfully carried over into another.

Although there isn't a specific moment, one of the things that has resonated with me is receiving the end of quarter evaluations. Some feedback will state that the assignments are relevant in a 'real world' context. Not just in marketing courses but the CIS courses as well. Hats off to the CIS department because over the last couple of semesters they have changed the curriculum, quite a bit. The changes have been phenomenal and the students have learned so much about their role in identifying a dream job.

I know there was one student who came back and just said, "thank you for this course".

What advice do you have for new LIM faculty?

Set clear and specific course requirements. Be consistent and fair while empathic to each student's individual need or situation.

Develop high expectations for course deliverables and consider reaching out to faculty members who have worked at LIM longer than you for support. Although I've only been with LIM since 2017, I welcome the opportunity to guide, advise or mentor any new faculty.

Want to be featured in the next issue?

If you would like to nominate a colleague to be featured in next month's "Faculty Spotlight", or if you would like to nominate yourself, please email oli@limcollege.edu with the subject: FACULTY SPOTLIGHT. Those who are featured will be contacted to schedule a brief interview.