

Adrien Maught
Nicholls State University

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College of Business Administration
Nicholls State University
University 906 East 1st St
Thibodaux, LA 70301

Subj: Gerald Gaston Endowed Professorship

Dear Selection Committee:

I submit this LOR on behalf of Chris Castille regarding his efforts as a mentor and meaningful work within pedagogical strategies as they relate to the CBA strategic plan and mission.

As an organizational psychologist, I sought out Chris' expertise to assist me 1) increasing engagement among my students and 2) more accurately assessing course learning objectives. In both areas, I was interested in finding innovative AND evidence based strategies. Chris has done a tremendous amount of work in the area of Team Based Learning (TBL). Specifically, Chris directed me to two works for reference:

- Team-Based Learning: Small Group Learning's Next Big Step, Michaelson et al.
- Cooperation in the Classroom, Aronson et al.

Within these structures, students engage continually throughout the semester, working on various scaffolded deliverables. Among many purposes, this methodology allows for students to engage with content through socialization, a heightened awareness of application, tighter accountability from peers, and perhaps most importantly, effective feedback loops. Over the past two years, Chris has willingly sacrificed *many* hours to work with me on building out these structures.

A primary driver for choosing Nicholls as an employer was grounded in the CBA's approach to serving our students, especially since nearly 70% are first generation. The strategic plan highlights innovation in the classroom as a means to provide autonomy and flexibility around teaching. I believe Chris fully embodies this concept, not for its own sake, but with the focus of the student experience. With TBL, students are invited to engage in real-world application of knowledge and execution within the team environment. To this point, these structures speak directly to the second portion of the CBA mission: *"positioning students to successfully meet workforce development needs as well-educated, responsible, and engaged business professionals."*

Chris has been an invaluable resource for me as a developing teacher. He encourages his colleagues to share best practices so that we may all benefit from each other's experiences. This is critical to building a healthy organizational culture of growth orientation and servant leadership to our students.

Respectfully,

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