

Dr. Leah M. Shenandoah PhD

Professor • Scholar • Designer • Vocalist

EDUCATION

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, APPAREL DESIGN, GPA 3.6 Aug 2016 - December 2024
Cornell University Ithaca, New York

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE, TEXTILES, GPA 3.5 Aug 2003 - May 2006
Syracuse University Syracuse, New York

MASTER OF FINE ARTS, METALS AND JEWELRY, GPA 3.8
Rochester Institute of Technology Aug 2008 – May 2011 • Master’s Thesis: “O’whahsa’ – Protection, Comfort and Healing” Rochester, New York

RESEARCH AND LEADERSHIP

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Rochester Institute of Technology September 2008 –May 2010
Rochester, New York

Assist instructor of an elective metals and jewelry design class

- Assist elective students in basic metalsmith operations including: forming, cold connections, cutting, soldering, design of artistic jewelry and other functional objects
- Metals store operation- weighing metal and other supplies
- Inventory
- Shop cleaning duties

OTSEGO INSTITUTE May 2017
Fenimore Museum Cooperstown, New York

- Research of indigenous artifacts from the Fenimore’s Thaw Collection
- Collaboration with established indigenous studies professionals and junior indigenous research scholars, focusing on curatorship, connoisseurship, historical research, materiality, and hybridity concepts
- Handling and care of artifacts
- Grant writing, networking, and mentorship

TEACHING ASSISTANT January 2017 – December 2018 Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

- Assist instructor in clerical duties such as: attendance sheets, extra credit assignments, grading, lab hours and office hours
- Dye lab maintenance and preparation for student activities

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR August 2022- December 2022
Mohawk Valley Community College Utica, New York

- Design syllabus, lectures and assist intro students in Intro to 3D Design FA108 course
- Grading, attendance, teaching common art terminology
- Blackboard assignments and course documents
- Ordering materials and supplies for students use

- Accommodations for neurodivergent, diverse needs of students
- Provide mentorship and support when faced with difficult circumstances • Creating a safe space for students to learn and grow

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Indigenous Visual Culture

Material Art & Design

OCAD University

- Design syllabus, lectures and assist students
- Grading, attendance, teaching
- Canvas assignments and course documents

September 2023 - current

- Intro to Jewellery
- Explorations in Jewellery
- Research through MAAD
- Professional Practice
- Indigenous Visual Culture Intro Materials and Methods

Board Member - Secretary

Hiawatha Institute for Indigenous Knowledge a 501 (c) (3) organization a non-profit educational organization designed to bring sustainability and Haudenosaunee cultural knowledge to the world. Courses ranging from language, history, agriculture, the arts, environmental, leadership and community solutions- and more will be made available to people of the world on-line.

Spring 2024

Voting Board Member

Indigenous Education Council

OCAD University's Indigenous Education Council (IEC) with a mandate to make recommendations and share strategies that provide direction and guidance in the ongoing development, maintenance and implementation of Indigenous-related initiatives and programming.

October 2024

Indigenous Design Charter

Contributing member of the Indigenous Design Charter of Turtle Island, a living framework advancing ethical, relational, and culturally grounded design practices led by Indigenous communities.

April 2025

AWARDS AND GRANTS

PUBLICATIONS

Evelyn E. Stout Graduate Fellowship (2016-17)

Mary Purchase Fund (2016-17)

2nd Place "Jewelry" Ridgefield Fine Art Market

Powell Fellowship (2016-17)

First place "Contemporary Jewelry" Schemitzun Pow Wow (2007)

First Place "Contemporary Jewelry," Second Place "Cultural Wearable," Third Place "Other Media" at Eiteljorg Indian Market (2014)

Two Native American Music Awards (2014, 2022)

Provost Diversity Fellowship (2023)

Shenandoah, Leah. 2017. O'whahsa'- Protection, comfort and healing: *RIT Scholarworks*. In publication.

Dissertation title, "Regalia: Resurgence and Resistance – Indigenous Fashion & Activism," published to ProQuest <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3153484727>

Indian Country Today

Native Max Magazine

Syracuse New Times

Rockwired Magazine Native

Albany Times Union

People's Magazine Utica

Oneida Dispatch

Phoenix

COMPUTER AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

LANGUAGE - English, basic conversational Spanish, basic Oneida - Onya'ta:aká

COMPUTER - Microsoft (Windows); Word(Apple), keyboarding 60+ wpm; internet knowledge.

Graphics packages: Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, PowerPoint.

METALS - soldering, forming, fabrication, chasing/reposse, MIG GMAW

SMAW welding, electroplating, etching, casting, stone setting, riveting, beading, stringing, jewelry techniques.

APPAREL DESIGN/TEXTILES - dyeing, carding, weaving, digital printing, knitting, crochet, draping, fashion design, sewing construction, basic patternmaking, Optitex, laser cutting fabric, half scale dress form draping.

OTHER – Singer, songwriter, recording, performing live, public relations/communications, interviews for radio and television, sales, promotion work, mass mailings, correspondence, database entry, copying for non-profit business.