

Teaching Portfolios: Improve Teaching and Personnel Decisions

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1

Today's Topics

- What is a Teaching Portfolio?
- What are the important parts?
- How are they used to improve teaching?
- How can they improve personnel decisions?
- What steps do I need to prepare one?
- What materials should be included?
- How do I guarantee success in writing?
- What pitfalls should I avoid?
- Where do I go from here?

2

What is a Teaching Portfolio?

It is a description of a faculty member's teaching strengths and accomplishments.

It includes a description of the instructor's teaching responsibilities, philosophy, goals and accomplishments as a teacher.

It provides evidence as proof of success in effective teaching.

3

The Teaching Portfolio

- Narrative typically eight to ten pages
 - Describe teaching responsibilities
 - Courses, mentoring, advising, teaching, administration
 - Reflective statement or teaching philosophy
 - Describe import of appendix materials
 - Syllabi, assignments, peer reviews, student ratings
- Supporting materials in an appendix

4

The Teaching Portfolio

Teaching Portfolio is to Teaching

As

Curriculum vitae is to Research

5

Teaching requires the synthesis of a remarkable number of skills, knowledge, and experience.

The Professor is simultaneously the writer, producer, director, actor in constant communication with students.

6

Impacts on teaching: academic discipline, scholarly work, personality traits, style of communication, specific circumstances of courses, motivation for teaching, use of specific strategies and methods

The Teaching Portfolio is a tool to capture all these attributes and combine them into a coherent whole.

7

What are the important parts?

- Description of teaching responsibilities
- Personal reflective statement on strategies, methods: teaching philosophy
- Narrative explaining evidence, documents, and materials in appendix
- Appendix

8

Description of Teaching

- **Courses:**
 - Kinds of courses: undergraduate, graduate
 - Elective or required
 - Size, style of presentation, teaching strategies
 - Large lecture or small seminar
 - Active Learning, Team projects, Field work
 - Types of students
 - Motivated majors, Reluctantly Required, mixture
 - Challenges or Opportunities

9

	Fall 2003	Spring 2004	Fall 2004	Spring 2005	Fall 2005	Spring 2006
Intro 101 – A Good Start with Language	Intro 101		Intro 101		Intro 101	
Intermediate 205 – Learning to think in Discipline		Intermediate 205				Intermediate 205
Field Study 321 – Putting Theory into Practice	Field Study 321					
Capstone seminar 450 – Putting It All Together		Capstone seminar 450			Capstone seminar 450	
Graduate seminar 507 – The Bigger Picture		Graduate seminar 507		Graduate seminar 507		Graduate seminar 507
Administrative Duties			Acting Chair	Acting Chair		

10

Teaching Responsibilities

Besides courses...

- Advising
- Graduate Students
- Mentoring Programs
- Outreach to Community
- Department, College Teaching Committees
- New, Innovative Courses or Programs

11

How are Teaching Portfolios used?

...for teaching improvement

structure for self-reflections, collection of
teaching materials, comments from others

...for promotion and tenure decisions

gather and present hard evidence and specific
data about teaching effectiveness, and
demonstrate student learning

12

Other Purposes

- document how teaching has evolved
- new position search or post-tenure review
- share experience and expertise as mentor
- share teaching tips on specific course
- teaching awards and grants
- legacy to department for faculty to come

13

To Improve Teaching

Actions -

- Organize, present record of teaching and accomplishments
- Time for self-reflection on practice of teaching
 - Ask yourself about the how and why of your teaching
 - What do you value in your teaching, in students' learning?
 - What strategies and methods do you use or would like to use?
 - Have you changed your teaching style over time?

14

To Improve Teaching

Outcomes -

- Never think about teaching the same way again, see areas for improvement
- Collect formative materials and comments
- More aware of teaching day to day
- Consider the challenges
- More aware of one's own effectiveness
- Set short-term and long-term goals

15

How can they improve personnel decisions?

Faculty members need to gather and present hard evidence and specific data about teaching effectiveness and demonstrate student learning for personnel decisions.

16

For Personnel Decisions

Faculty member presents *Best Works*

- Students are successful in individual course assignments, their course of study, and careers
- Accomplishments of new courses, new instructional initiatives, and grants for supporting the creation of new courses
- Descriptions of courses highlight multiple opportunities for learning by all students with successful outcomes

17

For Personnel Decisions

Same documents and materials presented as for Improving Teaching.

Different priority and value given to evidence

Areas for improvement become goals

Low ratings are background for betterment

18

For Personnel Decisions

- Consider the readers
 - Busy administrators
 - Reading many Tenure/Promotion packets
- Be organized
 - use tabs, cross references
 - redundant references
- Executive Summary
 - Don't Miss these Five Important Contributions

19

For Personnel Decisions

Reviewers will be looking for

- Clear statement of responsibilities
- Purposes and goals consistent with department and institution
- Evidence-based success in teaching as demonstrated by student learning
- Comments from Peer Reviews, colleagues
- Student ratings and comments

20

For Personnel Decisions

Reviewers will also be looking for
connections between...

strategies, methods and goals

and

course content materials and activities

and

student product and projects

21

Any questions at this point?

22

What steps do I need?

- Consider the main sections
 - teaching responsibilities
 - teaching philosophy
 - narrative of evidence
 - appendix of documents
- Consider the main sources of information
 - Yourself
 - Others
 - Products of Good Teaching, Student Work

23

Materials for Teaching Portfolio

Selected information ...
on teaching activities

Solid evidence ...
of teaching effectiveness

24

Materials for Teaching Portfolio

- Highly personal
- Disciplinary differences
- Departmental differences
 - Level of Courses
 - Course specifics

25

Section of Portfolio	Source of Information		
	You	Others	Student Work
1. Description of Teaching	X		
2. Teaching Philosophy	X		
3. Narrative of Evidence	X		
Appendix	X	X	X

26

Section 1: Material from Oneself

- Description of Teaching Responsibilities
 - Courses
 - In class, online, labs, field placement
 - Supervise courses, programs, training
- Advising
- Mentoring
- Thesis and Dissertation Supervision
- Administrative

27

Section 2: Material from Oneself

- Reflective Statement
 - Personal Teaching Philosophy
 - Strategies and Objectives
 - Methodologies
 - Goals in teaching
 - Goals for student learning

28

Section 3: Material from Oneself (Appendix: Original Documents)

- Representative Course Materials
 - Syllabi
 - Course content and objectives
 - Teaching methods
 - Readings, guide questions
 - Assignments, projects
 - Study Guides
 - Exams, quizzes

29

Section 3: Material from Oneself (Appendix: Original Documents)

- Participation in teaching workshops
 - strategies, techniques now implemented
- Description of Curricular Revisions
 - new courses, materials, assignments
- Instructional Innovations
 - new methods and outcomes assessment

30

Section 3: Material from Oneself (Appendix: Original Documents)

- Personal Statement of Goals
 - for next five years
- Scholarship of Teaching
 - steps to evaluate and improve teaching
 - any changes resulting from self-evaluation
 - activities or programs to improve teaching

31

Section 3: Material from Others (Appendix: Original Documents)

- Honors or Awards for Teaching
 - teaching, advising, mentoring
- Peer-review statements
 - class room observation reviews
 - reviews of teaching materials, assignments, testing and grading practices

32

Section 3: Material from Others

(Appendix: Original Documents)

- Student course or teaching evaluations
 - overall effectiveness or improvements
 - trends over time, in specific areas
- Large amount of data
 - Explain
 - Compare
 - Analyze
 - Show effectiveness

33

	Fall 2003 Intro 101	Fall 2004 Intro 101	Fall 2005 Intro 101	Spring 2004 Intermd 205	Spring 2005 Intermd 205	Spring 2006 Intermd 205
1. The instructor was prepared for class.	3.07 (4.21)	3.75 (4.11)	3.89 (4.17)	3.25 (4.17)	3.69 (4.22)	4.02 (4.15)
3. The instructor generated interest in the course material.	4.03 (3.89)	4.41 (3.97)	4.32 (3.94)	3.00 (3.54)	3.12 (3.52)	3.01 (3.67)
6. The instructional methods encouraged student learning.	3.55 (4.11)	3.69 (4.32)	3.78 (4.53)	4.44 (4.22)	4.52 (4.43)	4.67 (4.32)
7. I learned a great deal in this course.	3.89 (3.12)	3.56 (3.33)	3.41 (3.14)	4.02 (3.51)	4.35 (3.22)	4.69 (3.10)
9. I rate the teaching effectiveness of the instructor as excellent.	3.21 (4.01)	3.43 (4.21)	3.32 (4.35)	4.36 (3.54)	4.65 (3.43)	4.77 (3.45)

Mean scores for instructor over mean score for department (in parentheses)
5=Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Neutral 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

34

Section 3: Material from Others *(Appendix: Original Documents)*

- Documentation of teaching development
 - Credits for faculty development programs
- Statements by graduates
 - departmental exit survey
- Student comments
 - notes, cards, letters, emails

35

Section 3: Student Products *(Appendix: Original Documents)*

- Pre-test and post-test exams
 - student scores showing improvement
- Examples of graded student essays with professor's comments
 - explain grading, editorial/marginal comments
- Successive drafts of student papers with comments

36

Section 3: Student Products

(Appendix: Original Documents)

- Students who succeed in advanced study
- Statements of effectiveness on student's career choices, advice, help with employment, graduate school admission
- Graduate students, post-doctoral fellows

37

Section 3: Other Materials

(Appendix: Original Documents)

- Assistance to colleague improved teaching
- Videotape of teaching or student presentations
- Self-evaluation
- Professional meetings on teaching
- Chair's statement on teaching
- Statement on use of non-traditional media
- Contributions to teaching journal
- Performance review as advisor

38

Materials for Teaching Portfolio

- Be Selective
 - commentary of eight to ten pages
- Supporting Materials in Appendix
 - syllabi, assignments, student papers, exams, projects, peer reviews, student ratings

39

How do I guarantee success in writing?

- Plan and take the time to think, collect, analyze, consult, revise, rearrange
- Collect materials throughout the semester
- Connect
 - 1) the types of teaching, i.e., strategies and methods,
 - 2) the teaching philosophy statements or theme and
 - 3) the documents
- Mentor, colleague, faculty development staff
- Time frame for accomplishing drafts

40

What pitfalls should I avoid?

- Balance types of materials in Appendix
- Be authentic. Describe your teaching.
- Consider annual revisions
- Update with new material, remove older

41

Where do I go from here?

Review and stepwise directions

42

1. Summarize teaching responsibilities

- two - three paragraphs on current courses or recent courses
- course level
- required or elective
- student population
- special thesis preparation
- mentoring
- advising
- teaching in all that you do

43

2. Describe your approach to teaching

Why do you do what you do?

- 2 to 2 1/2 page reflective statement
- teaching philosophy, strategies, methodology, and objectives, goals
- beliefs about teaching, aims for students, why those aims are important relative to beliefs

44

3. Select items for the portfolio

- Remember the Purpose -
Improvement or Tenure/Promotion?
 - choose items most applicable to approach to teaching and teaching responsibilities
 - items reflect personal preferences, style of teaching, discipline, courses
 - be creative and inclusive in accomplishments

45

4. Prepare statements on each item

- Include activities, initiatives, and accomplishments on each item
- Do class presentations, assignments, projects, reflect goals in teaching?
- Are there a variety of measures of teaching effectiveness?
- Documentation referenced to appendices

46

5. Arrange the items in order

order of items depends on use
Improvement or Tenure/Promotion

- list materials by courses
- list materials by types of activities
- list improvement items together
- list strategies or innovations together

47

6. Compile the supporting data

- representative syllabi, assignments
- evidence may be in appendix or
"by request" in department office
- tables may be used to report data
- collection of students comments
- collection of evaluation/review forms

48

7. Incorporate into *curriculum vitae*

- add section on “Teaching”
- Abstract of Teaching Philosophy

49

Format

- Three-ring binder
 - secure, flexible, materials in different sections, easy to re-arrange
 - one set of original materials in Appendix
 - copies of portfolio (eight to ten pages)
- Digital or Online
 - flexible, materials in different linked files and site, review in any order
 - easy to distribute

50

Reminders

- The portfolio is a living collection of documents and materials that changes over time.
- New items are added and others are dropped.
- Collect materials in drawer or large envelope
- Revise along with *curriculum vitae*

51

*Thank you for your questions
and comments.*

52

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