



Developing a Teaching Portfolio

Dr. Laura Winer, Interim Director
Holly Ann Garnett, Graduate Education Assistant
Teaching and Learning Services

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Common questions of graduate students

- What is a teaching portfolio?
- Why do I need one?
- What do I include?
- How do I get evaluations of my teaching?
- What is my approach to teaching?

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Session Overview

- Define the teaching portfolio
- Explore why we use teaching portfolios
- Examine organization of the teaching portfolio (McGill as an example)
- Begin articulating your teaching philosophy
- Explore ways of obtaining evidence of and documenting teaching effectiveness
- Resources
- Questions
- Evaluate workshop

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What is a teaching portfolio?

- A **concise** compilation of selected information that systematically documents the effectiveness as well as the **scope, complexity, and individuality** of an instructor's teaching.
- It reflects the **progression** of an instructor's teaching.
- It is formatted and organized so that this progression is **obvious to the reader**.

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Who will read your teaching portfolio?

- Search and hiring committees
- Reappointment, promotion and tenure committees
- Awards committees

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General Guidelines

- A. Teaching portfolio (5-10 pages)
 - 1) Teaching philosophy/statement
 - 2) Responsibilities
 - 3) Evidence of effectiveness
 - 4) Development activities
- B. Appendices (30 pages maximum)

Based on McGill Guidelines: <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/portfolio/guidelines>

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Organizing the Portfolio: Sample

Table of Contents

Teaching Philosophy
Teaching Responsibilities
Teaching Materials
Teaching Methods
Innovative Teaching Practices
Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness
Awards
Goals

Appendices

A: Sample Course Syllabi
B: Course Handouts
C: Summary of Student Evaluations
D: Comments concerning supervision of Graduate Students
E: Statements from Peers on Teaching Effectiveness

Sample from: Rodriguez-Farrar. (2006). The Teaching Portfolio Handbook. Retrieved February 2012 from:
brown.edu/Administration/Sheridan_Center/docs/teach_port.pdf

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Purpose of your teaching statement:

- Clarifies your own thinking
- Helps uncover [tacit] beliefs about teaching
- Provides your rationale for decisions and actions
- Communicates your identity and development as a teacher

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Excerpts from graduate students' teaching philosophies

I never particularly loved school, but I loved to learn. That is how I teach: to cater to those students who enjoy learning. For my students who do not love to learn, I try to ease the process by giving them in-class and web resources to pique their interest and enhance course material.
(Patti Davis, Psychology) http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/ta_mentors/philosophy/2008phil/Patti%20Davis/index.html

One of my main goals in teaching is to ensure that this groundwork is formed within each student so there is always a reserve of physics knowledge to draw upon in solving problems that are encountered. I attempt to do this by revisiting the fundamentals often and show how new subjects can be linked to what is already known. Encouraging inquiry and stressing the importance of experimentation can help immensely in supporting this structure of knowledge. (Adam Schneider, Physics and Astronomy)
http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/ta_mentors/philosophy/2008phil/Adam%20Schneider/index.html

The goal of a liberal arts education is to become a self-reflective, critically-thinking and responsible global citizen. I therefore endeavor to instill in my students the confidence to ask challenging questions and the drive to seek diverse responses to them. As a political scientist, this usually takes the form of challenging students with some of the greatest classical and contemporary political questions, and unraveling them together in lectures, activities and debates in class, while also reflecting on and engaging in the world outside the university.
(Holly Ann Garnett, Political Science)

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Developing a teaching philosophy

INDIVIDUAL QUICK WRITE

1. Describe a successful teaching/learning episode (either as teacher or learner) and what made this a positive teaching/learning experience?
2. Under what circumstances do you think students learn best?

DISCUSSION

1. Discuss your example.

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Teaching and Learning Attitudes, Values and Beliefs

From your discussion, extract a few general attitudes, values, beliefs you hold about teaching and learning and write them down.

**Congratulations! You have just begun
articulating your teaching statement.**

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Teaching statement: Summary

- Intentionality of teaching
- Principles, conceptions that underlie your approach to teaching
- Learning goals you have for students
- Why certain teaching methods are used
- Why you evaluate learning as you do
- Directions and plans for developing teaching

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2) Teaching responsibilities:

- Teaching a course
- Teaching assistantships
- Tutoring
- Peer or student mentoring
- Designing and facilitating educational workshops or programs
- Any non-academic related teaching experiences and accreditation (e.g., coaching)

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Teaching responsibilities: Example

University:

Department :

Number of terms as teaching assistant:

Courses: **Level? Program? Variety?**

Students: **How many? What level? What program?**

Tasks: **Explain assignments, provide feedback on assignments, meet individually with students, update myCourses site**

Remember: there is no universal job description for a TA.

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3) Evidence of effectiveness

- Summary of course evaluation numerical ratings
- Interpretation of student written comments
- Measures taken in response to feedback on teaching
- Letters from professors with whom or for whom you have taught
- Comments/letters from people you have tutored in the past
- Teaching reference letters from **former** students

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Evidence of effectiveness: Summarizing numerical evaluations and interpreting written comments

expand your search

Teaching and Learning Services

About Us Teaching at McGill Learning at McGill Graduate Education Teaching and Learning Spaces

McGill.CA / TEACHING AND LEARNING SERVICES / Teaching at McGill

McGill Policies and Guidelines

Focus on Teaching

Course & Program Design

Course Evaluations

Mid-Course Evaluations

End-of-Course Evaluations

Course Evaluations

Mid-Course Evaluations

Why do mid-course evaluations?
How to carry out mid-course evaluations?
What to ask?
How to act on the feedback?

End-of-Course Evaluations

Policy on End-of-Course Evaluations
Historical Background
Online Course Evaluation System (Mercury)

MERCURY
COURSE EVALUATION

EVALUATION PERIODS

Regular period:
Nov 11 - Dec 4, 2013
Extended period:
Nov 11 - Dec 18, 2013
[Participating Units](#)

MERCURY NEWS

[Report on Student Suggestions \[pdf\]](#)

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<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/course-evaluations>



Course evaluations at McGill

- Each unit has a designated person (Mercury liaison) responsible for coordinating course evaluations.
- TAs now have direct access to their results:
http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/sites/mcgill.ca/tls/files/ta_mercury_access.pdf
To confirm that your name is on the evaluation or in case of any problems, consult the liaison in your department:
<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/course-evaluations/resources/liaisons>
- Course evaluation policies and procedures available at:
<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/courseevaluations/>

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Evidence of effectiveness: Interpretation and actions taken

"The TA was knowledgeable, I think, but I can't be sure because she was hard to understand."

This was my first experience in "public speaking" in English as well as my first TA position. I was very nervous, and it showed. Since then, my spoken English has improved significantly. I was pleased that despite my difficulties communicating, I still received overall high ratings for this course.

"I thought the readings were interesting and applicable to the course, however there were too many for the short amount of time between classes."

When designing my first syllabus, I was enthusiastic to engage the students with a wide variety of readings. But because the class was offered in the Spring Semester, we had a three hours of lecture, four days a week. Moving forward, I learned the importance of adapting my syllabus to the context and timing of the course.

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Evidence of effectiveness: Additional information

- Full set of students' written comments
- Sample student work with your evaluative comments
- Course outlines developed by you, with annotations as to why/how they demonstrate effectiveness
- Comments from peer or faculty observers
- Teaching awards received

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4) Educational leadership and teaching development

Formal workshops/courses:

- Non-credit
 - SKILLSETS
 - Learning to Teach Workshop
 - Graduate Teaching Workshop (Tomlinson Project in University-Level Science Education; T-PULSE)
 - Leadership and Facilitation Skills Workshop (First-year Office)
 - Public speaking courses (PGSS)
- Credit
 - Teaching & Learning in Higher Education (EDPH 689)

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Educational leadership and teaching development

“Apprenticeship” experiences:

- Seek expert advice on teaching
 - Volunteer
 - Observe
- Participate in departmental/Faculty university teaching committees
- Help to design and facilitate educational workshops or seminar series (e.g., research seminar within faculty)

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How can I get more experience?

Volunteer:

- Offer to teach a class / lecture for somebody else
- Participate in programs such as “Let’s talk science”:
<http://www.medicine.mcgill.ca/expmed/LTSM/>
- Get involved in activities run by SKILLSETS such as Learning to Teach Day

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Recommendations

- Collect relevant materials (the shoebox)



- Keep an updated record

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Recommendations

- Observe and talk to good teachers
- Find a mentor
- Have others review drafts of portfolio
- Attend seminars on teaching
- Review samples available online and at TLS
- Attend information sessions on hiring process for teaching positions (CaPS, department, etc.)



Resources

Websites with guidelines for developing a teaching portfolio:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/portfolio/guidelines> Guidelines for developing a teaching portfolio from **McGill University**
<http://www.universityaffairs.ca/developing-a-teaching-profile.aspx> Information on developing a teaching portfolio from **University Affairs** website
<http://www.usask.ca/gmcte/resources/portfolio> Information on the teaching portfolio from the **University of Saskatchewan**
<http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/ctl/support/teachingportfolios.html> Information on the teaching portfolio from the **University of British Columbia**
http://ctl.utexas.edu/teaching/professional_development/teaching%20portfolio Information about developing the teaching portfolio from the **University of Texas at Austin**, Center for Teaching and Learning BROKEN LINK
<http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/reflecting/teaching-portfolios/> Guidelines for developing teaching portfolio from **Vanderbilt** with links to additional resources
http://www.celt.iastate.edu/faculty/portfolio_contents.html Guidelines for developing a portfolio from **Iowa State University**, Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

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Resources

Websites with guidelines and samples of teaching philosophies:

<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/philosophy/index.html> tutorial provided by the **University of Minnesota's** Center for Teaching and Learning
<http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/philosophy.html> Information on writing the teaching philosophy from **Iowa State University** Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/ta_mentors/philosophy/index.html Sample teaching philosophies from the **University of Georgia**
<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tstpum> Information on writing the teaching philosophy from the **University of Michigan**—includes rubric for evaluating philosophy
<http://www.usask.ca/gmcte/resources/portfolio/samples> Sample teaching philosophies from the **University of Saskatchewan**

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Resources

Handbooks available online:

Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). (2006). *Teaching dossier*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Association of University Teachers. Retrieved October 2013 from <http://www.caut.ca/docs/default-source/professional-advice/teaching-dossier.pdf> (copy and paste link)

The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, **Brown University.** (2006). *The Teaching Portfolio Handbook*. Retrieved October 2013 from <http://brown.edu/about/administration/sheridan-center/sites/brown.edu/about/administration/sheridan-center/files/uploads/TeachingPortfolio.pdf>

Teaching related questions for Academic job interviews:

<http://sites.harvard.edu/fs/html/icb.topic58474/portfolio3.html> Information related to academic job interviews provided by the **Harvard University** Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning

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Resources

Books available at McGill:

Costantino, P. M., De Lorenzo, M. N., & Tirrell-Corbin, C. (2009). *Developing a professional teaching portfolio: a guide for success* (3rd edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
Call number: Education Library LB1728 C67 2009

Seldin, P. (2004). *The teaching portfolio: a practical guide to improved performance and promotion/tenure decisions*. Bolton, Mass.: Anker Pub. Co.
Call number: Humanities & Social Sciences Library in the McLennan Building LB2333 S46 2004

Seldin, P., & Miller, J. E. (2009). *The academic portfolio: a practical guide to documenting teaching, research, and service*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass,
Call number: Education Library LB1029 P67 S45 2009

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Resources

Links to Educational Journals:

<http://www.kennesaw.edu/cetl/resources/journals.html#disciplineteaching> The website of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Kennesaw State University offers a detailed list of discipline-specific journals in higher education

<https://listserv.nd.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0404&L=POD&P=R6495> Laura Border of the University of Colorado at Boulder offers a list of journals on the POD listserv from 2004.

<http://www.washington.edu/teaching/journals-on-teaching-and-learning-research-discipline-specific/> The Center for Instructional Development and Research at the University of Washington offers a rather comprehensive list

<https://eee.uci.edu/03s/87900/education%20journals.pdf> The Electronic Educational Environment of the University of California, Irvine offers an extensive and annotated list of higher education publications organized alphabetically rather than by discipline

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QUESTIONS?

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WORKSHOP EVALUATION

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THANK YOU!

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