

Guidelines for Developing a Teaching Portfolio

This information was taken from the Teaching and Learning Services website at:
http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/resources/topic/teaching_portfolios/

Teaching Portfolios have been initiated at McGill because they are useful in:

- focusing professors' reflection on the quality of teaching;
- providing a framework for documenting teaching effectiveness;
- expanding the ways in which good teaching and the complexity of teaching can be documented;
- fostering ongoing dialogue about teaching and teaching improvement;
- emphasizing McGill's commitment to teaching as a highly regarded, valued, and rewarded scholarly activity that is an integral part of the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process.

The "Regulations Relating to the Employment of Academic Staff" state that, along with documentation pertaining to research and service, dossiers for reappointment, tenure, and promotion to full professor must include a teaching portfolio prepared in accordance with these guidelines. The Teaching Portfolio is 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 a professor's teaching in the last 5-8 years. It is formatted and organized so that this progression is obvious to the reader. The Teaching Portfolio consists of a teaching statement and appendices to support that statement.

A. Teaching Statement (between 5-10 pages)

Four main categories should be summarized: 1) teaching approach or philosophy, 2) teaching responsibilities, 3) evidence of teaching effectiveness, and 4) teaching development activities.

1) Teaching approach

This first section of the teaching statement should include an explanation of the professor's approaches to teaching and research supervision and a rationale why the professor has approached teaching and supervision in this manner. Included here might be the priorities, beliefs, and convictions that drive the approach to teaching, the learning goals set for the students, why particular teaching methods are used, why student learning is evaluated in a particular way, and directions and plans for teaching. The clarity with which this section is elaborated is critical in communicating one's perspective to the reader and facilitates the interpretation of the rest of the portfolio.

2) Teaching responsibilities

This section summarizes the different teaching activities in which one has been involved, with a description of primary role and contribution. This summary statement of teaching

responsibilities can refer the reader to the curriculum vitae or the appendices for more detailed listings.

Key information should include:

- Courses taught, course level, enrollment, and format.
- Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars supervised (theses, projects, internships).
- Undergraduate supervision (projects, theses).

Other information as applicable could include:

New courses developed; involvement in curriculum development; mentoring assistants and other instructors; training graduate students to teach.

3) Evidence of teaching effectiveness

This section presents a summary of evidence that should be included to help the reader evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. It is understood that not all of the following forms of evaluation are available for all forms of teaching. In those cases the professor should include any other relevant material to document teaching effectiveness.

Key information should include:

- Summary and interpretation of course evaluation numerical ratings with department or faculty norms. (The suggested format is a table, showing the average rating and the average rating for the department or faculty for each question and for each course taught.)
- Interpretation of student course evaluation numerical ratings
- Measures taken in response to feedback on teaching
- Evidence of effective postdoctoral, graduate and undergraduate supervision where applicable.

Other information as applicable could include:

One intact set of students' written comments on course evaluations; teaching awards received; other formal recognition of accomplishment; comments from peer observers; letters from alumni, colleagues, administrators, employers; invitations to teach due to reputation; products of good teaching; course materials created by the instructor; performance by students on standardized examinations. Limited examples of student or course materials could be chosen to support the case for teaching effectiveness.

These need to be clearly referenced in the narrative and be labeled in the appendices.

4) Teaching development activities

This section presents a summary of activities undertaken to develop and enhance teaching. The intention is to demonstrate on-going commitment to the improvement of teaching.

Key information should include:

- Teaching related publications.
- Description of teaching development and improvement efforts.
- Evaluation of effectiveness of development.
- Collaboration with colleagues on improving teaching.

Other information as applicable could include:

Self evaluation of the effectiveness of instructional approaches; funds obtained for innovative teaching activities; research on teaching and learning; steps taken and rationale given for course development or modification.

B. Appendices (maximum 30 pages)

In order not to overwhelm the reader, only documents which best support the discussion presented in the teaching statement should be appended. All appendices should be labeled clearly and explicitly referenced in the teaching statement.