

DEVELOPING A TEACHING PORTFOLIO



McGill

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Career and Planning Services

TLS



Common Questions

- 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?

Agenda



1. What is a teaching portfolio?
2. What goes into a teaching portfolio?
 - A. Teaching Philosophy
 - B. Experiences
 - C. Development activities
 - D. Evidence of Effectiveness
3. Tips
4. Sample Teaching Portfolio
5. Resources
6. Questions
7. Workshop Evaluation

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**.

Who will read your teaching portfolio?



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

General Guidelines

A. Teaching portfolio (5-10 pages)

- I. Teaching philosophy
- II. Experiences
- III. Development activities
- IV. Evidence of effectiveness

B. Appendices (10 pages maximum, excluding course evaluation comments)

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

Sample Organization



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:
rown.edu/Administration/Sheridan_Center/docs/teach_port.pdf

Purpose of a teaching philosophy or 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

Teaching philosophy excerpts



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, from Center for Teaching and Learning at University of Georgia)

I am aware that students' approaches to learning are informed by their background and previous experiences. In the field of political science, this is a great opportunity for student engagement if harnessed appropriately. In my lectures, I always include contemporary examples and discussions to relate course material to student experiences. In doing so, I strive to create respectful and open learning environments, where students will gain the confidence to ask challenging questions and an appreciation of diverse responses.

(Holly Ann Garnett, Political Science)

Activity: 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? (“I think students learn best when...”)

DISCUSSION

1. Discuss your example.

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.

Summary: Teaching Philosophy



- 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

Teaching Experience



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

Teaching Responsibilities: Information to include



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.



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

Using Course Evaluations



The screenshot shows the McGill MERCURY Course Evaluations website. The browser address bar displays www.mcgill.ca/mercury/. The page features the McGill logo, a search bar, and a 'Quick Links' dropdown. The main heading is 'MERCURY Course Evaluations'. Below this is a navigation menu with links: General Information, Students, Instructors, Teaching Assistants, Unit Heads & Liaisons, and Contact Us & Support. The page is divided into three main sections: Student Spotlight, Instructor Spotlight, and Evaluation Dates.

Home | MERCURY Course Evaluations

www.mcgill.ca/mercury/

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Quick Links

MERCURY Course Evaluations

General Information Students Instructors Teaching Assistants Unit Heads & Liaisons Contact Us & Support

McGill.CA / MERCURY COURSE EVALUATIONS

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT

EVALUATION DATES

10 Nov to 22 Dec	Course Evaluations matter... evaluate your courses! [Default Period]
10 Nov to 6 Dec	Course Evaluations matter... evaluate your courses! [Condensed Period]

Course Evaluations at McGill



- Each unit has a designated person (Mercury liaison) responsible for coordinating course evaluations.
- TAs have direct access to their results:
<https://www.mcgill.ca/mercury/teaching-assistants>
- More details on course evaluation policies and procedures available at:
<https://www.mcgill.ca/mercury>

Interpretation of Comments

“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.

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

Professional Development and Educational Leadership



Formal workshops/courses:

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

Professional Development and Educational Leadership



“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)

How do I get more experience?



Volunteer:

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

Tip: Keep your records



- Collect relevant materials (the shoebox)



- Keep an updated record

Tip: Find Good Mentors



- Observe good teachers – find out what they do to teach effectively
- Find good mentors – ask them about their teaching philosophy

Tip: Refine your portfolio



- Have others review drafts of portfolio
- Review samples available online and at TLS
- Attend information sessions on hiring process for teaching positions (CaPS, department, etc.)

SAMPLE TEACHING PORTFOLIO

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/career-advice/career-advice-article/developing-a-teaching-profile/> 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-portfolio> Information about developing the teaching portfolio from the **University of Texas at Austin**, Center for Teaching and Learning

<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

Resources



Websites with guidelines and samples of teaching philosophies:

<http://cei.umn.edu/support-services/tutorials/writing-teaching-philosophy> 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/pages/future-faculty-program/2005> 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**

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>

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://isites.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

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: 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: 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: LB1029 P67 S45 2009

Resources

Links to Education Journals:

<http://cetl.kennesaw.edu/teaching-journals-directory> 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

QUESTIONS?



WORKSHOP EVALUATION