



Teaching/Learning and Course Portfolios

Description:

If we think of artists or photographers, it is easy to picture them carrying around large portfolios of their work. A *Teaching/Learning Portfolio* is very much like that. It's a coherent set of materials that usually includes samples and connected reflective commentary about the work of teaching. A portfolio is an evidence-based description of one's approach to teaching - a scholarly argument that presents a case for an instructor's accomplishments and professional development.

Teaching (and Learning) Portfolios help us explore our beliefs about what constitutes effective teaching. They help us answer the question of how we translate those beliefs into positive experiences for our students – in other words how the learning experiences we design expand the thinking and knowledge base of our students. In essence, the portfolio is a statement, with appropriate documentation, of one's teaching responsibilities, philosophy, goals, methods, and accomplishments as a teacher

Portfolios can be developed in hard copy or electronic formats. A typical process-oriented *Teaching Portfolio* includes major headings such as an instructor's teaching responsibilities (the "what, when and where"), teaching philosophy (the "why"), and supporting evidence (the "how"). In terms of evidence, many portfolios contain teaching evaluation information (from student ratings, peer reviews, observations, student alumni or colleague letters/e-mails), course syllabi examples, methods, techniques, and/or projects that indicate innovative course/assignment design, and descriptions of teaching awards or grants.

Portfolios are often used to evaluate teaching. . Portfolios are very often used for formative evaluation conducted for the improvement of practice. At some institutions, or within some departments, portfolios may be required and be a part of a summative evaluation made for personnel decisions including tenure and promotion

Some of the content in a *Teaching Portfolio* might emerge from a *Course Portfolio* – another way to help organize evidence of good teaching. *Course Portfolios* are one way to document the intellectual work of teaching a particular course in terms of design, execution, and learning outcomes. *Course Portfolios* contain relevant materials for a single course and can show the evolution of a course taught frequently. This type of portfolio might contain course content, goals and learning objectives, the plan for obtaining these goals, data supporting student learning, and a statement or narrative that connects these components. *Course Portfolios* are valuable as archives, provide documentation of the changes in a course over time, and can be used for team teaching or introducing an instructor to a course he or she will be teaching for the first time.

References:

Cerbin, W. (1994). The course portfolio as a tool for continuous improvement of teaching and learning. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 5, (1), 95-105.

Edgerton, R., Hutchings, P., & Quinlan, K. (1991). The teaching portfolio: Capturing the scholarship in teaching. Washington D.C.: America Association for Higher Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 353 892).

Murray, J. P. (1995). The teaching portfolio: A tool for department chairpersons to create a climate of teaching excellence. *Innovative Higher Education*, 19, 163-175.

Seldin, P. (2004). *The teaching portfolio: A practical guide to improved performance and promotion/tenure decisions* (3rd edition). Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Co.

Resource Materials:

Carnegie Foundation (gallery includes some sample portfolios with audio, video)
<http://gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/>

Cornell's Teaching Evaluation Handbook
<http://www.clt.cornell.edu/resources/teh/teh.html>

Electronic portfolios:
<http://electronicportfolios.org/portfolios.html>

A faculty handbook from Brown University's Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning
http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Sheridan_Center/publications/handbooks/teach_port.pdf

Schreyer Institute overviews:
http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/pdf/Designing_a_Teaching_Portfolio.pdf
http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/pdf/Teaching_Portfolios.pdf

Site focused on "using portfolios in educational development":
<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/deliberations/portfolios/>
... with online extracts from Seldin's book:
<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/deliberations/portfolios/iced-workshop/seldin-book.cfm>

Succinct description from Columbia University
http://www.columbia.edu/cu/tat/manual/9_evaluatingimproving/portfolio.html

UCLA workbook:
http://www.oid.ucla.edu/units/tatp/resources/copy_of_portfolio

University of Georgia site for TAs:
http://www.clt.uga.edu/teach_asst/teaching_portfolio.htm

University of Minnesota (overview)
<http://www.l.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/guides/portfolio.html>

University of Texas / El Paso
<http://sunconference.utep.edu/CETaL/resources/portfolios/>

Course Portfolios:

University of Nebraska Peer Review of Teaching Project: view / search repository of course portfolios
<http://www.courseportfolio.org/peer/pages/index.jsp?what=rootMenuD&rootMenuId=6>

Youngstown State site that addresses several key questions about interdisciplinary teaching via a portfolio project
<http://www.as.yosu.edu/%7Eamerst/CoursePortfolioHome.htm>