



The Teaching Dossier Academy

Five days to build your teaching portfolio

Resources and Worksheets

Presented by the Centre for Teaching and Learning

University of Windsor

June 7 - 11, 2021

Windsor, Ontario, Canada



University
of Windsor

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WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE

Day 1: Monday, June 7, 2021

Finding a Way In: Teaching Identity, Philosophy, and Practices, 10:00-11:00am

- Mentor Group Check-In, 11:00-11:30am
- Individual Work Time and One-on-One Meetings, Monday Afternoon

Day 2: Tuesday, June 8, 2021

Purpose, Structure, and the Sum of its Parts, 10:00-11:00am

- Mentor Group Check-In, 11:00-11:30am
- Individual Work Time and One-on-One Meetings, Tuesday Afternoon

Day 3: Wednesday, June 9, 2021

Evidencing Excellence, 10:00-11:00am

- Mentor Group Check-In, 11:00-11:30am
- Individual Work Time and One-on-One Meetings, Wednesday Afternoon

Day 4: Thursday, June 10, 2021

Contentious Issues and Burning Questions, 10:00-11:00am

- Mentor Group Check-In, 11:00-11:30am
- Individual Work Time and One-on-One Meetings, Thursday Afternoon

Day 5: Friday, June 11, 2021

Assessing, Refining, Reflecting, 10:00-11:00am

PART A: WHAT ARE TEACHING DOSSIERS?

Optional UCAPT Teaching Dossier Guide

“Education is a seamless web, and if we hope to have centres of excellence in research, we must have excellence in the classroom. It is the scholarship of teaching that keeps the flame of scholarship alive”. (Ernest Boyer, 1995)

This guide is intended to be as comprehensive as possible, to provide you with a wide range of options for documenting your teaching. You should not feel obliged to include in your documentation every item described in the guide. Furthermore, if a particular activity has not been listed but you think it is relevant to your teaching responsibilities, you should include it.

There is a common perception that teaching is not easily evaluated, whereas research achievements are fairly easy to assess. This guide is designed to counteract that perception by providing suggestions for faculty who wish to provide the University Committee on Academic Promotion and Tenure (UCAPT) with more substantial evidence of their teaching accomplishments than is conveyed by traditional means, such as SOST scores. Undoubtedly, documenting teaching requires significant effort and planning, and the inclusion of a teaching dossier in a UCAPT file is entirely voluntary. The act of not submitting a dossier will not be viewed negatively. On the other hand, if you do submit one, you may increase your chances that your teaching will get the credit it deserves.

The teaching dossier (or portfolio as it is called in the US and Australia) is a Canadian creation. It has its genesis in the 1985 CAUT publication “The CAUT Guide to the Teaching Dossier: Its Preparation and Use” written by Bruce Shore, Chris Knapper and others. It is now widely used in Canada, the US, Australia, the UK, and several countries in Europe. At McGill University, for example, the teaching dossier is a mandatory component of a tenure and promotion application.

The most effective teaching dossiers are concise, focused and brief, a limit of 5 pages is recommended by UCAPT. Supporting documentation should be included in Appendices, with a summary provided at the end of the dossier, and individual items referenced within the dossier. Appendices are in addition to your 5-page limit and should be available to UCAPT and your AAU Promotion, Renewal and Tenure Committee.

A. TEACHING APPROACH

1. Teaching Philosophy

Write a brief narrative describing your teaching philosophy and your learning goals for students. In formulating your statement, you might find it helpful to ask yourself the following questions: How do I think students learn in my subject area? What do I want students to know, to do, and to feel about my subject area? How do I go about facilitating this learning?

Examples of statements of learning objectives from specific course descriptions might be included as an appendix.

2. Teaching Practices

Outline your teaching approaches and the steps you have taken to evaluate your effectiveness. Include descriptions of any innovations you have introduced in the classroom, as they illustrate a scholarly approach to teaching.

The following questions may stimulate thought and help you to describe your teaching practices:

- How do I motivate students to learn? How do I help students achieve the learning goals? [examples might include lectures, small group discussions, group work, team work, problem solving, inquiry methods, critical thinking pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, project-based approaches, student presentations].

- How do I ensure clear communication in all contexts?
- What do I do to evaluate student learning?
- What materials, resources or technologies have I designed that best illustrate my approach?
- How do I promote diversity and inclusivity in (and beyond) the classroom? What arrangements have I made to accommodate students' special needs? [Include a description of any provisions you may have made to improve the classroom climate, or your teaching methods, in order to ensure free and open participation and comfort for all your students regardless of gender, race, class, sexual orientation, or disability of any kind.]
- How do I promote students' academic pursuits and stimulate interest in continued study of the discipline?
- How often and under what circumstances am I available to my students?

3. Teaching Development

The following questions may help you describe the steps you take to develop your teaching:

- How have I responded to unexpected circumstances (for example, conflict between students, racist, homophobic or pejorative remarks, in a course?)
- How do I monitor and assess my teaching? [examples might include peer feedback, ongoing student feedback, videotaping a class, descriptions of changes resulting from feedback] How do I incorporate the feedback into my planning?
- What seminars, workshops and conferences on teaching and learning have I attended? How have they improved or informed my teaching?

B. SUMMARY OF TEACHING CONTRIBUTIONS

This section **supplements** the tables required for the UCAPT form by allowing you to detail the full range of your teaching contributions. It provides a context for assessing your contributions and should not duplicate information already provided in the UCAPT form.

1. Teaching Assignment

- How would I describe the organizational features of my teaching assignment to someone outside my AAU? Include for example: number of TAs, lab hours, training provided to assistants and/or sessional instructors etc.
- What courses have I developed or substantially revised.

2. Student Supervision

Supervision differs from classroom teaching in a number of respects, e.g. it is typically done on a one-to-one basis, there is no set curriculum, and it can be extremely time consuming. To allow for an assessment of the extent of your contribution in this area, you might wish to provide data describing the normal supervisory practices in your AAU.

- *Undergraduate Supervision*
 - Honours thesis supervision, indicate whether supervisor or committee member.
 - Supervision of undergraduate independent study and/or directed readings.
 - Supervision of a research practicum, athletic coaching, field placement supervision and coaching in the performing arts, etc.

- *Graduate Supervision*
 - Ph.D. thesis supervision, indicate whether supervisor or committee member.
 - Masters thesis supervision, indicate whether supervisor or committee member.
 - Supervision of graduate independent study or directed readings.

3. Teaching Awards or Nominations

Document all teaching awards you have received. Nominations for awards may also be included as they provide an indication of your reputation as a teacher. Where possible, provide information regarding the nature of the award (how many are given, the adjudication procedure, etc.).

4. Teaching-Related Activities

There are a variety of activities which do not take place in the classroom but which do provide important support for teaching within an AAU. Include here activities, which may contribute to strengthening teaching, and have **not** been listed in other areas of your dossier or on your UCAPT form.

- Membership on Senate, AAU and other committees related to teaching and learning (e.g. the President's Action Plan working groups).
- Provision of teaching development for teaching assistants and/or faculty members. List workshops, seminars or lectures on teaching and learning that you have presented.
- Provision of consultation and/or observing colleagues' teaching as part of formal or informal evaluation of teaching effectiveness.
- Development of teaching resources (include description, where relevant, of the use that has been made of your teaching materials by instructors in other AAU's or universities).
- Establishment, adjudication or administration of awards or honours for student achievement.
- Involvement in retreats, curriculum review and/or program reviews for your own AAU or for other teaching units.
- Development of widely-used course evaluations or other assessment instruments.

5. Teaching-Related Publications and Other Professional Contributions

The following items document your achievements in developing the theory and practice of teaching.

- Curriculum Materials: List all published and unpublished curriculum materials, textbooks, workbooks, case studies, lab manuals and other classroom materials, which you have developed.
- Research and Professional Contributions: List books (including chapters in books, edited books, and special issues of journals); articles (indicate whether refereed, solicited or non-refereed); papers in conference proceedings (indicate whether refereed or non-refereed); bibliographies; newsletters; unpublished conference papers, workshop presentations, and unpublished professional reports.
- Funding: List internal and external research grants and teaching development grants and/or fellowships received.

C. TEACHING FEEDBACK

Include evaluations of your teaching that have been conducted outside of SOST scores, for example:

- Unsolicited signed letters from students, TAs and/or colleagues.
- Peer evaluations based on visits to the classroom
- Other appropriate material

D. APPENDICES

List all supporting documentation provided to your AAU Committee. This material is not included in your **5-page limit**.

E. REFERENCES

O'Neil, Carol and Wright, Alan (1992). *Recording Teaching Accomplishments: A Dalhousie Guide to the Teaching Dossier*. Dalhousie University Office of Instructional Development and Technology, Halifax.

Ross, Dorene et al (1995). *Guidelines for Portfolio Preparation: implications from an analysis of teaching portfolios at the University of Florida*. Innovative Higher Education 20 (1), 45-62.

Seldin, Peter and Associates (1993). *Successful Use of Teaching Portfolios*. Anker Publishing, Bolton, MA.

Shore, Bruce M., et al (revised 1986, reprinted 1991). *The CAUT Guide to The Teaching Dossier. Its Preparation and Use*. Canadian Association of University Teachers, Ottawa, Ontario.

Teaching Documentation Guide, (1993). Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning, York University, Toronto.

Teaching Dossier: A Guide, (1996). University Teaching Services, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

Teaching Dossier Preparation: A Guide for Faculty Members at the University of British Columbia.
<http://www.cstudies.ubc.ca/facdev/services/dossier.html#supp>

Urbach, Floyd, (1992). *Developing a Teaching Portfolio*. College Teaching 40 (2), 71-74.

Weeks, Patricia (1998). *The Teaching Portfolio: a professional development tool*. International Journal of Academic Development, 3(1), 70-74.

TEACHING

Dossier: A Guide

Rene Day, Faculty of Nursing; Paul Robberecht, Department of Modern Languages and Comparative Studies; and Bente Roed, University Awards Office

INTRODUCTION

Faculty members at the University of Alberta are responsible as scholars “active in teaching, in research, and in service” and are evaluated in terms of their performance in these three categories (Faculty Agreement, Article 7.01 – 7.09). In view of the University’s mandated multifaceted teaching evaluation policy (GFC Policy Manual, section 111.2) a Teaching Dossier may provide the basis for the category “input from self.” This Guide, in conjunction with *A Guide to Evaluate Teaching*¹, is designed to help document achievements in teaching and to present evidence of these in the form of a Teaching Dossier².

WHAT IS A TEACHING DOSSIER?

A Teaching Dossier is a document intended to facilitate the presentation of a faculty member’s teaching achievements and major strengths for self-assessment and interpretation by others. The process of developing the Dossier contributes to good teaching by stimulating self-reflection, self-analysis, and self-development. The Teaching Dossier is a **yearly record** and a **cumulative record** of teaching activities and results. The **yearly record** is a key document designed to help faculty members review their teaching philosophy, goals, and strategies and organize material for inclusion in the Annual Report under the “teaching” section. Ultimately, **yearly records** become a **cumulative record** helpful for the preparation of documents requiring historical information (nominations for teaching awards, applications for research leaves, teaching development grants, positions, tenure, promotion, etc.).

The Dossier, a three to eight page document with appendices, reflects a number of related areas of inquiry. These may vary according to the specific needs of individual teaching units, though research on dossier preparation agrees that because the accent of the Dossier is placed on a compilation of materials that make the case for the instructor’s effectiveness, the following categories play a significant role: (a) a statement regarding the faculty member’s teaching philosophy, goals, and strategies; (b) a description of teaching (planning, preparing, and teaching courses; assessing student learning; and giving feedback); (c) an evaluation of teaching accomplishments; and (d) suggestions regarding possible changes for future teaching.

A typical Dossier will consist of four sections:

- Approach to Teaching
- Teaching Contributions
- Reflections on and Assessment of Teaching
- Supporting Documentation

HOW TO PROCEED

The following offer a wide range of options for documenting your teaching and may be included in your Dossier³. In making a selection appropriate to your own case, consider the unique elements of your teaching style, the subject matter you teach, and other concerns (such as the type, level, and number of students in your courses). If a particular activity has not been listed but is relevant to your teaching responsibilities, include it.

1. Ideally, you should begin gathering and retaining information which pertains to your teaching from the first day of your first teaching assignment. When making decisions about what to retain and what to discard, remember that it is better to err on the side of saving too much than destroying material that may later prove useful.

Keep copies of all items referred to in your teaching documentation such as examination outlines, original copies of course evaluations (unless they are kept by your unit), letters from chairpersons and students, samples of students’ work, etc. These materials will not necessarily be included in your Teaching Dossier but should be retained in case original evidence is required. There should be a reference in your Teaching Dossier informing the reader that such

¹ *A Guide to Evaluate Teaching* (1994) is available through the Campus Wide Information System (CWIS) and in the Resource Room, University Teaching Services.

² In Britain and the United States a Teaching Dossier is often called a Teaching Portfolio.

³ University Teaching Services has a collection of materials detailing the development of teaching documentation as well as model Teaching Dossiers. These may serve as useful supplements to the Guide.

materials are available.

You may wish to include as an appendix a few representative samples of materials that illustrate accomplishments referred to in your Teaching Dossier (e.g., an exemplary course outline, unsolicited letters from students, or an outline of a particularly innovative assignment). A one-page reflection on the included samples enhances their value.

2. It might be helpful to consult your department's mission statement, the University's mission statement, the University's Academic Plan, the sections on teaching in the Faculty Agreement, the GFC Policy Manual, and other relevant documents, to identify the goals, priorities, and expectations of the University concerning excellence in teaching.
3. Examine the Teaching Contributions in section 2 and select those areas and items which are most applicable to your teaching; list accomplishments in each area.
4. Summarize your teaching contributions. Include graduate and undergraduate teaching and your contributions to curriculum and course developments. Highlight your teaching strengths.
5. If you have an item that cuts across teaching and another category (e.g., service), select the one where it fits the best and cross reference it in the other category.

APPROACH TO TEACHING

1. 1 *Philosophy*

It is useful to begin with a discipline-related statement outlining your teaching philosophy, your views about students, learning, and teaching. Examples of statements of objectives from specific course descriptions may be included. You may choose to note the changes you expect or are trying to accomplish in your teaching, and how your courses contribute to the students' achievements in their university programs.

1. 2 *Teaching Goals, Strategies, and Evaluation Methods*

Self-reflection on the consistency among your teaching philosophy, goals, learning objectives, teaching strategies, and ways to evaluate students is helpful. Examples of materials to include are found in Appendix A.

TEACHING CONTRIBUTIONS

Consider the following items for your Teaching Dossier. To assist the reader of the Dossier, elaborate on selected items.

2. 1 *Teaching Responsibilities*

See Appendix B for examples.

2. 2 *Supervising and Advising Students*

To allow for an assessment of the extent of your contribution in this area, you might wish to provide data describing the average supervision load in your department. See Appendix C for documentation.

2. 3 *Activities Undertaken to Improve Teaching and Learning*

Professional development comprises all steps taken to improve an instructor's effectiveness. See Appendix D for examples.

2. 4 *Committee Service regarding Teaching and Teaching Issues*

A variety of activities do not take place in classrooms but do provide important support for teaching. Some of these departmental, faculty and University-wide activities which contribute to strengthening teaching are described in Appendix E.

2. 5 *Publications and Professional Contributions*

This section includes your achievements in developing for a wider audience the theory and practice of teaching. Publications on teaching, papers, seminars, and workshop presentations may be included. See Appendix F for examples.

REFLECTIONS ON AND ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING

3. 1 *Documentation of Results of Teaching*

See Appendix G for examples of the different types of documentation.

3. 2 *Reflections on Teaching and Student Learning*

You may provide summary statements that reflect your assessment of the effectiveness of your teaching and the resulting student learning. Here you may include background information that provides the context for the previous section (e.g., 8a.m. class, inappropriate classroom, too cold). Teaching strategies that worked well and those that perhaps did not work out as well may be included. Describe what changes, if any, you plan to make in your teaching.

3. 3 *Future Plans*

Consider including both short-term (within one year) and long-term (two to five years) goals related to further development of your teaching skills (e.g., Short-term: Over the next year I plan to convert my lectures in Course XYZ into case studies and to experiment with small group learning. Long-term: Over the next three years I plan to develop an interactive video program for first year students in Course ABC and develop a

research project comparing two teaching strategies: traditional lecture approach and problem-based learning).

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Provide a table of contents of the documentation which you have selected to support your accomplishments.

Appendix A

1. 2 *Teaching Goals, Strategies, and Evaluation Methods*

- Course materials, special notes, handouts, problem sets, laboratory books, computer manuals, portfolio of student work, etc. relevant to your teaching methods.
- Teaching methods (e.g., lecture, small group discussion, problem-solving, collaborative inquiry, critical thinking pedagogy, problem-based learning, case studies, project-based, student presentations).
- Procedures used to assess or evaluate student learning. Arrangements made to accommodate needs of special students.
- Teaching developments undertaken (course design, curricular changes to include gender issues, student diversity, subject matter, methods of presentation, evaluation procedures, specially designed assignments, teaching methods geared to developing critical skills, as well as developments involving teaching resources such as films, computer materials, and other audio-visual material), and, where possible, evidence of the effectiveness and impact of the teaching developments you have undertaken.
- Research activities related to teaching and student learning.

Appendix B

2. 1 *Teaching Responsibilities*

- Titles and numbers of courses taught, including graduate, undergraduate, and reading courses. Indicate with an asterisk courses you have developed or substantially revised.
- Number of students in each course. Describe your workload including, where appropriate, the number of teaching assistants assigned to assist you in the course and the nature of their involvement.
- Details of other teaching activities such as seminars, advising students, supervision of a teaching or research practicum, athletic coaching, field placement supervision, and coaching in the performing arts.
- Teaching which has contributed to the achievement of awards, honours, and employment for students.

Appendix C

2. 2 *Supervising and Advising Students*

Documentation of supervision activity includes names of those supervised and the nature and the extent of the supervisory activity. It is also useful to indicate the outcome of the supervision (e.g., the thesis title and acceptance date, the citation information of a student publication, or the date and venue of a public performance).

- PhD thesis supervision (indicate whether supervisor or committee member).
- Master's thesis supervision (indicate whether supervisor or committee member).
- Honour's thesis supervision (indicate whether supervisor or committee member).
- Supervision of graduate and undergraduate independent study or directed readings.
- Advisement on program of study, courses, or career and professional advice.
- Supervision which has contributed to publications, exhibitions, performances, and conference presentations by students.

Appendix D

2. 3 *Activities Undertaken to Improve Teaching and Learning*

- Steps taken to assess and respond to general problems arising in a course, which may necessitate redesign or refocus of course content.
- Results of student ratings or questionnaires designed by you to solicit assessments of your teaching effectiveness.
- Description of efforts made to improve the classroom climate or your teaching methods. You may wish to consider items such as steps taken to ensure free and open participation and the comfort of all learners regardless of gender, ethnic origin, class, age, sexual orientation, or ability.
- Seminars, lectures, workshops, and conferences on teaching and learning approaches and techniques (internal and external) attended.

Appendix E

2. 4 *Committee Service regarding Teaching and Teaching Issues*

It may be useful to include details such as names of committees, dates, and the nature of your contribution.

- All activities concerned with teaching that you have undertaken as a member of a faculty, department, or cross disciplinary committee, sub-committee, *ad hoc* committee, or task force. Consider membership on General Faculties Council and its sub-committees; Senate; Board of Governors; AAS:UA; Library committees; University service units; Teaching and Scholarship committees;

Presidential committees; Advisory boards (examples: Academic Planning Committee, Council on Student Life, Committee for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning, Special Sessions Committee, Undergraduate Awards and Scholarship Committee, Undergraduate Teaching Awards Committee, University of Alberta Preview Days, and other committees working on academic policy, curriculum, review, planning, and implementation topics).

- Professional training, orientation, or development for teaching assistants.
- Professional training, orientation, or development sessions for faculty, such as orientation sessions for new faculty, and sessions that introduce or raise consciousness about teaching techniques or technological developments.
- Mentor Program
- Peer Consultation Program
- Teaching awards committees for full- and part-time instructors and teaching assistants.
- Involvement in establishing, adjudicating, or administering awards or honours recognizing and celebrating student achievement.
- Observing others teach as part of formal or informal evaluation and feedback regarding teaching effectiveness.
- Accreditation committees.
- Curriculum planning / review committees or task forces.
- Program revision committees.
- Organization of retreats and strategic planning sessions.
- Development of department teaching resources such as a computer instruc-

tion project, a teaching materials resource centre, a reference map collection, and a visiting scholar program.

- Coordination of multi-section, sequenced, or inter-related courses.
- Other cross-University committees, standing or ad hoc, which examine teaching and learning matters.
- Use of your teaching materials by instructors in other departments, faculties, colleges, or universities.
- Involvement in program review of other teaching units.
- Workshops, seminars, or invited presentations within and outside of the University.
- Involvement in providing consultation or review to instructors in other units in improving teaching effectiveness.
- Development of widely-used student ratings of instruction or other assessment instruments.

Teaching involvement outside your unit.

Appendix F

2. 5 Publications and Professional

Contributions

It is helpful to include information about the nature of your audience and your contribution.

- **Curriculum materials**
Details of published and unpublished curriculum materials, textbooks, workbooks, case studies, class notes, lab manuals, and other classroom materials which you have developed.
- **Research and professional contributions related to teaching**
Books (including chapters in books, edited books, and special issues of journals); articles (indicate whether refereed, solicited, or non-refereed); papers in conference proceedings (indicate whether refereed or non-

refereed); bibliographies; newsletters; unpublished conference papers; workshop presentations; and unpublished professional reports.

- **Funding related to teaching**

Internal and external teaching development grants, fellowships, and research grants received.

Appendix G

3. 1 Documentation of Results of Teaching

- Results of the multifaceted teaching evaluations (GFC Policy Manual, section 111.2).
- Results (statistics) and student comments from the GFC Universal Student Ratings of Instruction as well as the results of questions selected by your department, faculty, and you.
- Unsolicited letters from students; and solicited letters from students and teaching assistants.
- Feedback which has been initiated by groups of students.
- Objective indicators of student progress, where available (e.g., proficiency tests; examples of students' work "before" and "after"; students' standings on nation-wide tests).
- Peer evaluations or reviews based on visits to your classroom or on scrutiny of your course materials.
- Teaching awards received by you including departmental, faculty, and University of Alberta awards, and external awards (professional association, civic groups, nation-wide, and international teaching awards).

Nominations for awards also indicate your reputation as a teacher.

TEACHING

Dossier: A Guide

In preparation of this Guide we have consulted the following Canadian publications and wish to acknowledge their works:

Recording Teaching Accomplishments: A Dalhousie Guide to the Teaching Dossier
Carol O'Neil and Alan Wright, Office of Instructional Development and Technology, Halifax, 1992

Teaching Documentation Guide
Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning, York University, Toronto, December 1993.

The CAUT Guide to The Teaching Dossier. Its Preparation and Use
Bruce M. Shore et al., Canadian Association of University Teachers, revised 1986, reprinted 1991.

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If you have comments on the Guide or suggestions for future revisions, please contact
University Teaching Services
(780) 492 5763 or
email at uts@ualberta.ca

THE TEACHING PORTFOLIO

Matthew Kaplan

At institutions across the country, faculty are creating opportunities to exchange ideas on teaching and, in the process, becoming more reflective about their teaching. In part, this is a response to national discussions about the false dichotomy that is often drawn between teaching and research. To move beyond this debate, there have been calls for expanding the idea of scholarship to include certain teaching products, as well as research products (Boyer, 1990). Three strategies for taking a scholarly approach to reviews of teaching are ones that are common to discussions of research as well (Shulman, 1993). First, scholarship is firmly grounded in the disciplines, and a scholarly approach to the review of teaching would focus on the teaching of a specific discipline. Second, just as research becomes scholarship when it is shared, faculty would need to begin making teaching community property. And finally, scholarship often involves making judgments about faculty work, which, for teaching, would mean that faculty would become more involved in reviewing each others' accomplishments in teaching and learning.

The teaching portfolio is one of the tools faculty can use to document their scholarly work in teaching. This Occasional Paper contains a discussion of the nature and purpose of the teaching portfolio (and its offshoot, the course portfolio) and suggestions for how individuals and units can use portfolios most effectively.

What Is a Teaching Portfolio?

A record of accomplishments in teaching

Based on the model of the portfolio kept by artists and architects, the teaching portfolio contains evidence of a faculty member's achievements in teaching: "What is a teaching portfolio? It includes documents and materials which collectively suggest the scope and quality of a professor's teaching performance. . . . The portfolio is not an exhaustive compilation of all of the documents and materials that bear on teaching performance. Instead, it presents *selected information* on teaching activities and *solid evidence* of their effectiveness" (Seldin, 1997, p. 2).

Documentation in context

The portfolio should be more than a simple collection of documents.

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It also should contain reflective statements on the material included and on the faculty member's approach to teaching and student learning. The reflective portions of the portfolio help set the documents in context for the reader; the materials provide evidence to back up the assertions made in the reflective statement.

What Might Go into a Portfolio?

When considering the contents of a portfolio, faculty must distinguish clearly between being *representative* and being *exhaustive*. Attempts to create an exhaustive compendium of an instructor's work in teaching run the risk of becoming exhausting, both for the person collecting the materials and for any readers who might choose (or need) to respond to the portfolio. Furthermore, the attempt to be completely comprehensive can turn the project of developing a portfolio into a paper chase. Such a large collection of documents makes it difficult to maintain the reflective aspect of the portfolio, which is one of its chief purposes and advantages.

The portfolio should, instead, be representative of the various aspects of a faculty member's teaching. This means looking beyond the most obvious part of teaching — what goes on in the classroom. While the activities and interactions with students in class are important, they do not fully reflect faculty work with teaching. Other items might include planning courses, assessing student learning, advising students (in office hours or in larger projects such as theses and dissertations), curriculum development and assessment, supervising student research, working to improve one's teaching, and publishing articles on teaching and learning.

One way to categorize items that a faculty member might include is to divide them into three categories based on the source of the item: materials from oneself (e.g., reflective statements, descriptions of course responsibilities, syllabi, assignments), materials from others (e.g., statements from colleagues who have observed or reviewed teaching materials, student ratings, letters from students or alumni, honors or recognition); and products of good teaching (student essays or creative work, a record of students who have succeeded in the field, evidence of supervision of theses). Some of these sources may be more appropriate for certain aspects of teaching than for others. See Appendix A for a more comprehensive list.

Purposes of Portfolios

Self-reflection and improvement

Assembling a portfolio involves reflection. Most portfolios include a reflective statement that can cover topics such as the instructor's approach to teaching and learning, his or her

assumptions about the roles of students and teachers, and goals the instructor expects students to achieve (Chism, 1997-1998). In addition, faculty need to collect documents that support their reflective statement, a process that also involves reflection (selecting some items over others, reviewing past work, etc.). As a result, the portfolio is well-suited to helping faculty examine their goals for teaching and student learning, and compare those goals to the reality of their praxis.

The comparison between the ideal and the real is the first step in the process of improving teaching. Instructors can gain a sense of how effective their teaching is and how they could improve from a variety of sources: student ratings of instruction, midsemester feedback, self-perception, discussions with colleagues, etc. By constructing a portfolio, faculty will look systematically at the various sources of data about their teaching; therefore, they can make more informed decisions about teaching strengths on which they wish to build and problems in their teaching they wish to address. The reflection and improvement process can be further enhanced when faculty work together (in pairs or small groups) as they develop their portfolios. Colleagues can offer support and advice, exchange new ideas and solutions to problems, and broaden each other's views of the teaching and learning process. Moreover, such exchanges help create a community of scholarship around teaching that is based on a concrete, discipline-specific context.

Decision making

Accomplishments in teaching are becoming a more important factor in administrative decisions such as tenure, promotion, reappointment, and merit increases. The teaching portfolio enables faculty and departments to insure that an instructor's work in teaching is judged using multiple forms of evaluation, seen by multiple eyes. This is important, since no one perspective can accurately represent faculty teaching. For instance, students can evaluate certain aspects of teaching that focus on classroom interactions, such as organization, rapport, and ability to stimulate discussion. On the other hand, faculty colleagues are in a position to judge items that are beyond the expertise of students, such as how up-to-date material is, how well a course is integrated into the curriculum, etc.

Self-evaluation and reflection are also important, especially for providing a context for understanding data about teaching effectiveness. The portfolio as a whole gives individual faculty a sense of control over the evaluation process. In addition, departments that encourage faculty to

submit portfolios will need to have discussions about what, if any, documents will be required and what will be left up to the individual faculty; how long the document can (or should) be; and how much reflection is required. Such discussions provide a useful venue for creating a shared sense of what constitutes good teaching in a department.

Graduate student portfolios

Graduate students who apply for faculty positions commonly use portfolios because many colleges and universities now require job applicants to provide some proof of teaching experience. Graduate students are turning to the portfolio as a way of organizing their work in this area. Currently, the requirements vary widely among schools. Some require just a list of courses taught or a reflective statement on teaching, and some ask for specific items (such as proposed syllabi for certain types of courses, student ratings, demonstrations of commitment to undergraduate research, etc.). The earlier in their teaching careers that graduate students begin to think about their portfolios, the more chance they will have to retrieve the documents they find most representative of their accomplishments. Aside from its value for the job market, the portfolio often represents the first time graduate students have had the opportunity to reflect on their teaching, which they often find both challenging and rewarding.

An Alternative to the Teaching Portfolio: Course Portfolios

A variation on the teaching portfolio is a course portfolio. As the name implies, these documents focus on a specific course, with a special emphasis on student learning. A course portfolio, therefore, is analogous to a scholarly project. It includes sections on goals (intended student learning outcomes), methods (teaching approaches used to achieve outcomes), and results (evidence of student learning) for a specific course.

Moreover, it is the relationship or congruence among these elements that makes for effectiveness. We expect a research project to shed light on the questions and issues that shape it; we expect the methods used in carrying out the project to be congruent with the outcomes sought. And the same can be said of teaching.

By encompassing and connecting all three elements – planning, implementation, and results – the course portfolio has the distinctive advantage of representing the intellectual integrity of teaching. (Cerbin, 1993, p. 51)

Course portfolios offer advantages for the person developing them as well as for the curriculum. For the faculty member developing the portfolio, the advantages are similar to those of assembling a teaching portfolio (e.g., self-reflection and a chance to compare intentions with outcomes), but with more in-depth insight into the impact of teaching on students. For departments, course portfolios can provide continuity and reveal gaps in the curriculum. For example, a course portfolio becomes a record of the purpose and results of a course that can be passed on to the next person in charge of that course or to the faculty member who teaches the next course in a sequence. By examining a set of course portfolios, a curriculum committee can gain an overview of what students are learning and what is missing, which could help with the process of curriculum revision.

How are Portfolios Evaluated?

Just as there is no one model for a teaching portfolio, there is no one method for evaluation. Again, this is a strength of the portfolio, since it means that individual units will need to develop criteria for evaluation and make them relevant to faculty in that unit. The process of deciding on criteria can also help to clarify what faculty in that unit value with respect to teaching. For one example of an evaluation scheme, see Appendix B.

As units develop criteria for evaluating portfolios, they should first consider the ways they plan to use the portfolio. Will portfolios be limited to faculty being considered for tenure or promotion or for instructors nominated for teaching awards, or will all faculty prepare a course portfolio in preparation for a department-wide curriculum review? These purposes differ and so should the requirements for the portfolios involved.

Once the purpose is clear, faculty will probably want to create guidelines for assembling portfolios. While it is important to maintain the flexibility of the portfolio, it is also necessary to insure some degree of consistency in order to make evaluation fairer and more reliable.

Faculty might establish consensus on required items, such as a page limit for the overall size of the portfolio, the focus (a single course, an overview of teaching, or a combination), opportunities for reflection, or a template (so that faculty do not need to worry about format and can concentrate instead on the content). Ideally, such guidelines will be established with input from potential reviewers in the unit as well as those faculty who will be under review.

Advantages of Portfolios

In the AAHE monograph *The Teaching Portfolio: Capturing the Scholarship of Teaching*, the authors describe four main benefits of the teaching portfolio (Edgerton, Hutchings, & Quinlan, 1991, pp. 4-6). Course portfolios have similar attributes.

1. Capturing the complexity of teaching

- Portfolios contain evidence and reflection in the context of what is being taught to whom under what conditions.
- The portfolio can present a view of a teacher's development over time.
- Entries in the portfolio can be annotated to explain their significance for the faculty member's teaching.

2. Placing responsibility for evaluation in the hands of faculty

- Faculty are actively involved in presenting their own teaching accomplishments so that evaluation is not something done "to" them.
- Portfolios extend evaluation beyond student ratings and encourage peer review and collaboration.
- The need to evaluate portfolios can lead to discussions on standards for effective teaching.

3. Encouraging improvement and reflection

- Assembling a portfolio involves reflection.
- Because they involve reflection, portfolios allow faculty to compare their ideals with their actions, a first step in efforts to improve.
- A faculty member's portfolio reveals both products (evidence) and processes (reflection) of teaching to colleagues who read it.

4. Fostering a culture of teaching

- Portfolios can provide a rich and contextualized source of evidence about teaching achievements that can be used for a variety of purposes, including evaluation, improvement, summary of faculty careers, and defining "good teaching" in a department.

How Can Faculty Get Started?

Faculty can begin at any time to collect materials for their portfolios. At first, this process might entail simply saving relevant materials related to teaching so that they are readily accessible for review. At some point the faculty member will need to sort through the materials and decide which ones best represent his or her teaching accomplishments. Often this process is enhanced when faculty collaborate with each other as they build their portfolios.

CRLT offers campus-wide workshops on teaching and course portfolios, and we can bring a customized workshop to departments. The focus of the workshop is to help faculty develop a clear idea of what a portfolio is and what items it might include and to give faculty an opportunity to begin a reflective statement on teaching. When workshops are conducted in a department, faculty can begin to answer the question, "What is good teaching in our department?" CRLT also provides one-on-one consultations for individual faculty who are working on their portfolios and for units as they develop a systematic approach to portfolios.

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Possible items for inclusion

Faculty members should recognize which of the items which might be included in a teaching dossier would most effectively give a favorable impression of teaching competence and which might better be used for self-evaluation and improvement. The dossier should be compiled to make the best possible case for teaching effectiveness.

THE PRODUCTS OF GOOD TEACHING

1. Students' scores on teacher-made or standardized tests, possibly before and after a course has been taken as evidence of learning.
2. Student laboratory workbooks and other kinds of workbooks or logs.
3. Student essays, creative work, and project or field-work reports.
4. Publications by students on course-related work.
5. A record of students who select and succeed in advanced courses of study in the field.
6. A record of students who elect another course with the same professor.
7. Evidence of effective supervision of Honors, Master's or Ph.D. theses.
8. Setting up or running a successful internship program.
9. Documentary evidence of the effect of courses on student career choice.
10. Documentary evidence of help given by the professor to students in securing employment.
11. Evidence of help given to colleagues on teaching improvement.

MATERIAL FROM ONESELF

Descriptive material on current and recent teaching responsibilities and practices.

12. List of course titles and numbers, unit values or credits, enrollments with brief elaboration.
13. List of course materials prepared for students.
14. Information on professor's availability to students.
15. Report on identification of student difficulties and encouragement of student participation in courses or programs.
16. Description of how films, computers or other nonprint materials were used in teaching.
17. Steps taken to emphasize the interrelatedness and relevance of different kinds of learning.

Description of steps taken to evaluate and improve one's teaching.

18. Maintaining a record of the changes resulting from self-evaluation.
19. Reading journals on improving teaching and attempting to implement acquired ideas.
20. Reviewing new teaching materials for possible application.
21. Exchanging course materials with a colleague from another institution.
22. Conducting research on one's own teaching or course.
23. Becoming involved in an association or society concerned with the improvement of teaching and learning.
24. Attempting instructional innovations and evaluating their

effectiveness.

25. Using general support services such as the Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC) in improving one's teaching.

26. Participating in seminars, workshops and professional meetings intended to improve teaching.

27. Participating in course or curriculum development.

28. Pursuing a line of research that contributes directly to teaching.

29. Preparing a textbook or other instructional materials.

30. Editing or contributing to a professional journal on teaching one's subject.

INFORMATION FROM OTHERS

Students:

31. Student course and teaching evaluation data which suggest improvements or produce an overall rating of effectiveness or satisfaction.

32. Written comments from a student committee to evaluate courses and provide feedback.

33. Unstructured (and possibly unsolicited) written evaluations by students, including written comments on exams and letters received after a course has been completed.

34. Documented reports of satisfaction with out-of-class contacts.

35. Interview data collected from students after completion of a course.

36. Honors received from students, such as being elected "teacher of the year".

Colleagues:

37. Statements from colleagues who have observed teaching either as members of a teaching team or as independent observers of a particular course, or who teach other sections of the same course.

38. Written comments from those who teach courses for which a particular course is a prerequisite.

39. Evaluation of contributions to course development and improvement.

40. Statements from colleagues from other institutions on such matters as how well students have been prepared for graduate studies.

41. Honors or recognition such as a distinguished teacher award or election to a committee on teaching.

42. Requests for advice or acknowledgement of advice received by a committee on teaching or similar body.

Other sources:

43. Statements about teaching achievements from administrators at one's own institution or from other institutions.

44. Alumni ratings or other graduate feedback.

45. Comments from parents of students.

46. Reports from employers of students (e.g., in a work-study or "cooperative" program).

47. Invitations to teach for outside agencies.

48. Invitations to contribute to the teaching literature.

49. Other kinds of invitations based on one's reputation as a teacher (for example, a media interview on a successful teaching innovation).

Appendix A

Note: From *The Teaching Dossier: A Guide to Its Preparation and Use* (pp. 14-23) by B. Shore, S. Foster, C. Knapper, G. Nadeau, N. Neill, and V. Sim, 1986, Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Association of University Teachers. Reprinted by permission.

SUGGESTED FORM FOR PEER REVIEW OF UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING BASED ON DOSSIER MATERIALS

QUESTION	DOSSIER MATERIALS	SUGGESTED FOCUS IN EXAMINING DOSSIER MATERIALS
1. What is the quality of materials used in teaching?	Course outline Syllabus Reading list Text used Study guide Description of non-print materials Hand-outs Problem sets Assignments	Are these materials current? Do they represent the best work in the field? Are they adequate and appropriate to course goals? Do they represent superficial or thorough coverage of course content?
Peer Reviewer's Rating: Low _____ Very High _____		
Comments _____		
2. What kind of intellectual tasks were set by the teacher for the students (or did the teacher succeed in getting students to set for themselves). And how did the students perform?	Copies of graded examinations Examples of graded research papers Examples of teacher's feedback to students on written work Grade distribution Descriptions of student performances, e.g., class presentation, etc. Examples of completed assignments	What was the level of intellectual performance achieved by the students? What kind of work was given an A? a B? a C? Did the students learn what the department curriculum expected for this course? How adequately do the tests or assignments represent the kinds of student performance specified in the course objectives?
Peer Reviewer's Rating: Low _____ Very High _____		
Comments _____		
3. How knowledgeable is this faculty member in subjects taught?	Evidence in teaching materials Record of attendance at regional or national meetings Record of colloquia or lectures given	Has the instructor kept in thoughtful contact with developments in his or her field? Is there evidence of acquaintance with the ideas and findings of other scholars? (This question addresses the scholarship necessary to good teaching. It is <i>not</i> concerned with scholarly research publication.)
Peer Reviewer's Rating: Low _____ Very High _____		
Comments _____		
4. Has this faculty member assumed responsibilities related to the department's or University's teaching mission?	Record of service on department curriculum committee, honors program, advising board of teaching support service, special committees (e.g., to examine grading policies, admission standards, etc.) Description of activities in supervising graduate students learning to teach. Evidence of design of new courses.	Has he or she become a departmental or college citizen in regard to teaching responsibilities? Does this faculty member recognize problems that hinder good teaching and does he or she take a responsible part in trying to solve them? Is the involvement of the faculty member appropriate to his or her academic level? (e.g., assistant professors may sometimes become over-involved to the detriment of their scholarly and teaching activities.)
Peer Reviewer's Rating: Low _____ Very High _____		
Comments _____		
5. To what extent is this faculty member trying to achieve excellence in teaching?	Factual statement of what activities the faculty member has engaged in to improve his or her teaching. Examples of questionnaires used for formative purposes. Examples of changes made on the basis of feedback.	Has he or she sought feedback about teaching quality, explored alternative teaching methods, made changes to increase student learning? Has he or she sought aid in trying new teaching ideas? Has he or she developed special teaching materials or participated in cooperative efforts aimed at upgrading teaching quality?
Peer Reviewer's Rating: Low _____ Very High _____		
Comments _____		

GF LAZOVIK 1979
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Peer Reviewer's Signature _____

Date _____

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PART B: HOW SHOULD I WRITE MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY?

Writing a Teaching Philosophy¹

General Points

Consider the goal of your dossier. The dossier is usually used to make a decision. How you write your philosophy depends upon what decision is being made. This does not mean being false. It just depends on what part of your teaching you want to represent. You can conceive of your dossier as an argument, with some similarities to writing a scholarly paper – support your arguments with evidence. In a paper, you would not only supply raw data and expect the reader to do all the analysis on their own.

- a) **For a faculty position** – you will want to represent yourself as competent and normal; if it is a teaching position, you may want to show more than competence.
- b) **For tenure and promotion** – you will want to represent yourself as competent and show development of your teaching over time.
- c) **For a teaching award** – here, it is not enough to be competent. You need to represent yourself as unique; you must stand out from the others.

In short, consider how you want to be represented to the reader. Are you reflective, scholarly, practical, caring, efficient? Start where you are, and with what you know. Identify key characteristics and teaching and learning strengths. Is it disciplinary expertise, or mentorship, or educational leadership, use of innovative teaching methods, learning technologies – what *exactly* makes you an excellent teacher?

Avoid “motherhood” statements. They will ring false unless supported by evidence. For example, “All students have great potential, and my job is to nurture them in the garden of the academy.”

If you are struggling, move to the evidence – what themes can you identify through your course materials, teaching practices, student comments. Sometimes starting at the end helps us find the best beginning.

Guiding Questions

Writing a teaching philosophy can be very daunting. Many instructors find it useful to record themselves answering questions about teaching – people are generally more at ease casually speaking about their teaching rather than articulating their ideas in writing. You can use many of the following questions to help inspire you and get you started.

1. When people ask you, “What do you do for a living?” what do you respond?
2. What do you believe is the primary purpose of education?
3. What do you believe is the primary role of the teacher in the classroom?
4. When are you particularly satisfied with your teaching? *Think of a specific occasion.*
5. Describe a critical incident in your development as a teacher? *A situation that helped you form your opinions, i.e. as a student, as a T.A., as a teacher, or some other situation.*

¹ Material has been adapted from Brookfield, 1995; Kustra, Roy, & Borin, 2007; and Raffoul, Bornais, Hamilton, & Marval, 2014.

6. How do you know you are any good as a teacher?
7. What do you do as an instructor in and out of the class? (Write this down). Now think about why you do it? (Write this down). *Extract from you writing a few general points/principles regarding what you believe about teaching and learning.*
8. Under what circumstances do students learn best?
9. How do you know you are any good as a teacher?
 - a. Are your students learning?
 - b. How do you know you have anything to do with that?
10. What do you do that makes you effective in your dealing with students?
11. What do you do to create conditions that optimize student learning and growth?
12. What would you like my students to say about you when you out of the room?
13. The last time you saw really great teaching was when:
14. Think back. Choose an event that caused you the greatest distress in your life as a teacher, or that made you say, "This is what makes my life as a teacher so difficult."
15. Think back. Choose an event that made you say, "This is what teaching is really about" or "This is a great day in my life as a teacher."
16. Look back at your answers. Extract a few general principles regarding what you believe about teaching *and* learning.

Once Your Philosophy is Written

Strip out any "motherhood" statements (feel-good, general statements without any evidence).

Is the teaching philosophy consistent with your dossier and your course design? For example, if you explain students are very important to you, and yet there are no words from students in your dossier, it doesn't ring true. Or, you claim to promote active learning, but only use traditional lectures and multiple-choice. **Make sure that your philosophy and the rest of the dossier are consistent.**

Support your statements briefly with evidence. Think of this as a way of convincing the reader your philosophy is authentic.

WRITING A STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY FOR THE ACADEMIC JOB SEARCH

Chris O'Neal, Deborah Meizlish, and Matthew Kaplan

*Domestic Environmental Policy and Politics. Lehigh University's year-old Environmental Initiative seeks an Assistant Professor for a tenure track position... To apply, please send a cover letter, current curriculum vitae, syllabi and other evidence of teaching style and effectiveness, a **statement of teaching philosophy**, a sample of scholarship (if available) and three letters of reference.*

*Assistant Professor (tenure track) Specialization in African and Post-Colonial Literatures.... Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, **statement of teaching philosophy**, graduate school transcript, and three letters of recommendation... Northeastern Illinois University is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer.*

*LSU's Department of Chemistry (chemistry.lsu.edu) anticipates filling one or two tenure-track positions in the fields of NMR Spectroscopy (Ref: Log #0184) and Physical Chemistry (Ref: Log #0186), broadly defined.... Applications should consist of a research proposal, a **statement of teaching philosophy**, and a curriculum vitae (including address). Applicants should arrange for submission of three letters of recommendation.*

Introduction

As these recent job ads illustrate, requests for teaching philosophies are common in the academic market. In fact, a survey of 457 search committee chairs in six disciplines (English, history, political science, psychology, biology, and chemistry) found that 57% requested a teaching statement at some point in a job search (Meizlish & Kaplan, in press). These results differed slightly by institutional type, with master's and bachelor's institutions requesting them more often than doctoral institutions. Results also differed by discipline. Surprisingly, requests for teaching philosophies were most frequent in the natural sciences. But the overall message is clear: job applicants in all fields may be asked to submit a teaching philosophy (see also Bruff, in press; Montell, 2003; Schönwetter, Taylor, & Ellis, 2006).

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Teaching philosophies can serve several purposes (e.g., self-reflection, introduction to a teaching portfolio, communication with students), but we focus here on those written for academic job applications. Such statements communicate a job candidate's approach to teaching and learning to a faculty considering whether to make that candidate one of their colleagues. Since a committee cannot possibly observe the teaching of every applicant, the teaching philosophy helps search committee members imagine themselves in each candidate's classroom. What is it like to be one of this instructor's students? Why does she make the pedagogical decisions she does? As a student in this classroom, how would I spend my fifty minutes on a given day? How does the instructor address the challenges and resources of teaching in his particular discipline? Does her teaching style complement our department's philosophy of instruction?

This Occasional Paper is designed to help experienced graduate students write a statement of teaching philosophy. The paper contains four sections. First, we offer suggestions for making a philosophy of teaching explicit and getting it on paper. Second, we discuss research on characteristics of effective statements. Third, we introduce a rubric that can guide the development and crafting of a teaching statement that search committees will value. Finally, we address questions that job candidates often raise about this sometimes perplexing document.

Advice for Getting Started

Just because you have never written a statement of your teaching philosophy does not mean you do not have a philosophy. If you engage a group of learners who are your responsibility, then your behavior in designing their learning environment must follow from your philosophical orientation.... What you need to do is discover what [your philosophy] is and then make it explicit. (Coppola, 2000, p. 1)

Figure 1. Some general guidelines for writing the teaching philosophy (adapted from Chism, 1998):

- Keep it brief (1–2 pages).
- Use a narrative, first person approach.
- Make it reflective and personal.
- Discuss your goals for your students, the methods you use to achieve those goals, and the assessments you use to find out if students have met your expectations.
- Explain your specific disciplinary context and use specific examples of your practice.
- Showcase your strengths and accomplishments.

Beginning the teaching philosophy is often the hardest part of writing one. The motivations behind the decisions we make in the classroom can be surprisingly elusive when we try to put them on paper. Since there is no single approach that will work for all writers, we offer three strategies for getting started:

1. Goodyear and Allchin (1998) found that thinking about the “big” questions of teaching helped instructors articulate their philosophies:
 - What motivates me to learn about this subject?
 - What do I expect to be the outcomes of my teaching?
 - How do I know when I've taught successfully?
2. In workshops and seminars at U-M, we have found that some graduate students prefer to approach a statement by thinking about more concrete and manageable "fragments" of teaching that can then be assembled into a holistic essay. The following questions are designed to get you started:
 - Why do you teach?
 - What do you believe or value about teaching and student learning?
 - If you had to choose a metaphor for teaching/learning, what would it be?
 - How do your research and disciplinary context influence your teaching?
 - How do your identity/background and your students' identities/backgrounds affect teaching and learning in your classes?
 - How do you utilize multiple pedagogical approaches in your teaching?
 - What is your approach to evaluating and assessing students?
3. Finally, some instructors find it most useful to begin by simply looking at examples of others' philosophies. CRLT has posted sample statements from a variety of disciplines at <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tstpum.html>. When looking at others' philosophies, you will likely note considerable variation, both in terms of content and format, and you will likely find some approaches that resonate with you. While there is no single approach to a teaching philosophy, Figure 1 provides some general guidelines for those statements written for the academic job market.

Once you've articulated a first draft, you can begin shaping and polishing it for the search committees who will be reading it. In the following section, we discuss characteristics of successful teaching philosophy statements and provide a rubric for evaluating a teaching statement and aiming it at the right audience.

What Constitutes a Good Statement?

In their survey of search committee chairs, Meizlish and Kaplan (in press) found broad agreement on the desirable characteristics of a statement of teaching philosophy. Specifically, chairs described successful teaching statements as having the following characteristics:

- *They offer evidence of practice.* Search committee chairs want to understand how candidates enact their teaching philosophies. In particular, they want to see specific and personal examples and experiences rather than vague references to educational jargon or formulaic statements.
- *They convey reflectiveness.* Search committees want to know that a candidate is a thoughtful instructor. They are interested in candidates who can discuss their approach to instructional challenges and their plans for future pedagogical development.
- *They communicate that teaching is valued.* Search chairs appreciate a tone or language that conveys a candidate's enthusiasm and commitment to teaching. They are wary of candidates who talk about teaching as a burden or a requirement that is less important than research.
- *They are student- or learning-centered, attuned to differences in student abilities, background knowledge, or levels.* Search committee chairs want concrete evidence of a candidate's attentiveness to student learning (rather than just content) and awareness of and ability to deal with student differences in the classroom.

They are well written, clear, and readable. Search chairs draw conclusions about candidates from all elements of the application packet. Candidates can be undermined by carelessness in their teaching statements.

A Rubric to Evaluate the Teaching Philosophy

Based on survey responses from search committee chairs, our own experience reading hundreds of teaching philosophies, and research on best practices in teaching and learning, we constructed a rubric to help graduate students write and evaluate statements of teaching philosophy (Figure 2). The rubric can be used as a starting point for revising first drafts of your philosophy. The rubric consists of the following five categories:

1. Goals for student learning
2. Enactment of goals
3. Assessment of goals
4. Creating an inclusive learning environment
5. Structure, rhetoric, and language

The first three categories of the rubric were purposefully framed to encourage instructors to think about the alignment of their goals, methods, and assessments. Research suggests that aligning intended outcomes (goals), instructional methods, and testing can lead to significant gains in student learning. Instructional alignment is more important for tasks involving higher-order thinking skills, and it has a particularly strong impact on the performance of lower aptitude students (Cohen, 1987).

In terms of writing a teaching statement, focusing on alignment raises a number of useful questions about your approach to teaching and student learning: What do you want students to learn (and why)? What approach will you take to help students acquire the desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and how can you best test students to determine whether they have reached these goals? Reflecting on these issues in a systematic fashion allows you to develop a clear sense of why you take the approach you do, often one of the most difficult aspects of writing a teaching statement. It also has the potential to reveal areas of misalignment, providing clear direction for future development and ensuring that the teaching statement is not merely a rhetorical exercise, but a useful contribution to your development as a teacher.

The fourth category reflects our belief that pedagogical practices that reach students at the margins of the classroom are beneficial for all students. As Kardia (1998) writes,

Attention to race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other student characteristics is consistent

with an improved learning environment for all students. For example, an instructor who provides more lead time with assignments in response to the needs of a student with a physical disability will be appreciated by all students, even though the majority of the students might have been able to find ways to compensate for the lack of lead time. (p. 19)

Research has confirmed the benefits of diversity for promoting student learning and development. For example, studies conducted at U-M on the impact of racial diversity on student learning and attitudes confirm that positive classroom interactions across racial difference can lead to increased student motivation, critical thinking skills, and social engagement. Obviously, it is up to faculty to create positive learning experiences in order to take advantage of diversity. "Students, indeed, acquire a very broad range of skills, motivations, values, and cognitive capacities from diverse peers when provided with the appropriate opportunities to do so" (Gurin, 1999, Conclusion). Future faculty need to demonstrate that they have thought carefully about these issues.

The last category addresses some of the most common complaints search committee chairs voiced about teaching statements. Chairs complained about teaching jargon that alienates many readers and weak thematic structures that make reading difficult. Obviously, search committees are more likely to have a positive view of a well-written teaching philosophy than a poorly written one.

A common component running through all of these categories is a focus on specificity, disciplinary context, and rich, illustrative examples. The importance of this component is based on the finding that search committees want to read about specific examples of how candidates enact their teaching philosophies. What does this mean in practice? Rather than saying, "I use active learning in my teaching," write about a *specific* exercise you use in your class that engages students actively. Why do you use it? How were students different after the activity? Thinking about your students, what do they typically find most challenging about that activity? How do you know that the activity worked?

Below we provide excerpts from teaching philosophies written by U-M graduate students that exemplify each of the rubric's first four categories (the fifth, by necessity, is illustrated by each example).

Goals for student learning

At the heart of most teaching philosophies is a set of goals for what an instructor hopes to accomplish in the classroom. An instructor's goals should describe how students will be different after leaving that instructor's class. What will they be capable of doing that they could not before? What will they know that they did not before? How will they see the world differently? Goals in a teaching philosophy should be clearly written to describe the ways students will develop, as well as to convey the context of the instructor's discipline.

In this description of goals, a social work graduate student instructor (GSI) talks about the transformative nature of social work education. Her goals for her students are lifelong and directly tied to the mission of social work as a discipline. Note the specificity of the skills she hopes students will attain.

Social work education should foster students' critical consciousness – the ability "to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against those oppressive elements" (Freire)... Through creative and interactive activities in and outside of my classroom, students learn to recognize, analyze, and work to change dynamics of privilege and oppression when engaging with others in all areas of practice – individual, group, community, or state.

Enactment and assessment of goals

A teaching philosophy cannot rest solely on an instructor's learning goals. For it to be useful in the job search, it must also communicate how instructors will achieve those goals, and how they will know that they have achieved them. Specificity is compelling when talking about teaching methods and assessments. Likewise, the more closely the methods and assessments are grounded in disciplinary pedagogies, the more they will resonate with readers in that field. The first example below describes the teaching methods used by a GSI in Germanic Languages and Literatures. The second describes how an electrical engineering GSI assesses student learning.

While confronting my students with the challenge of learning new languages and cultures, I encourage them to reflect on their own beliefs and try to open their minds to new ways of seeing things. For example, in my

fourth-semester German class that focused on the lives of and work of the Brothers Grimm, we often engaged in discussion of original, European fairy tales, comparing them to their well-known Disney versions. Such comparisons helped my students not only to learn about important aspects of German literature, but also encouraged them to step back and reflect on the values of their own culture.

In order to solve new problems, engineers should be able to think through them. The final solution to a problem is rarely obvious and, as such, the thinking process must be developed and refined with practice. In a term, I assign several individual and group projects that incorporate multiple ideas and first principles. Projects early in a term are broken down with milestones such that students can begin to learn how to approach a multifaceted problem on their own.... In addition to projects, students use their critical thinking skills on a more regular basis during weekly timed quizzes. The quizzes are not designed to test memorization...rather, they are designed to test problem solving, as each quiz cannot be completed if not approached properly.

Creating an inclusive learning environment

This category emphasizes the integration of inclusive teaching and learning throughout the statement, thereby avoiding the isolated “diversity paragraph.” In the following quotations, the authors connect inclusive teaching to their goals for their courses and their understandings of their disciplines.

Parallel to the idea of discovering new things as an engineer is the idea of discovering new minds and cultures. Similarly, learning analytical and evaluation skills as an engineer parallels learning to understand and/or tolerate other points of view.... In my classes I try to expose the students to different situations to help them gain these skills, including interacting with classmates with different backgrounds (race, ethnicity, gender, technical knowledge...), taking different roles when working in teams (leader, note taker, report writer, etc.), and taking different roles when working individually (presenter or evaluator). By doing so, I hope to provide the students the opportunity to learn not only the theory of mechanical engineering and

problem solving skills, but also to realize that around them there is much to learn as well. (GSI in Mechanical Engineering)

My ideal classroom is primarily a safe and comfortable place where students of diverse background and experience are encouraged to clarify their thoughts and expose their assumptions...for mutual examination.... On whichever level I teach, I intend that my courses are enriching to my students of diverse background in various ways that will suit their particular academic and personal needs. Specifically, through the activities discussed above, I hope that those students of general North American cultural background broaden their intellectual and spiritual horizon by critically reflecting upon their own cultural assumptions and beliefs, and the students of Asian ancestry who are curious about their own philosophical and religious traditions can enrich themselves by learning more about their roots. (GSI in Asian Languages and Culture)

A statement need not achieve a rating of “excellent” in each of the categories described in the rubric to be a good teaching statement. We encourage you to seek input on your teaching statement in much the same way you would solicit feedback on a scholarly paper. Faculty in your department can provide feedback based on their own experience serving on search committees and reading application materials. Keep in mind, however, that the qualities that serve a job candidate well at U-M may not match those at a different institution. For a different perspective, you might ask for feedback from peers in your program who have graduated and are now faculty elsewhere or from mentors at your undergraduate institution.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I have to write a new teaching philosophy for every school?

An individual's core teaching philosophy probably will not change based on the school to which he or she is applying for a position. That said, search committees are attentive to the match or mismatch between the priorities of their institution or department and the priorities implied by a job candidate's teaching statement and other application materials. It is worth considering the range of positions to

which you are applying and thinking carefully about whether some degree of customization (based on institutional type, focus of the position, etc.) is appropriate.

2. What should I do if I don't have a lot of teaching experience upon which to base my statement of teaching philosophy?

This is not an uncommon situation, particularly in some disciplines where teaching opportunities for graduates are rare. Regardless of your experience as an instructor, you have years of experience as a student in your discipline that you can draw from. Additionally, you may have some experience mentoring students in the lab, independent study, or elsewhere. Talk about your approach to teaching in these settings and the lessons you would take to your own classroom.

3. Can sending an unsolicited teaching philosophy hurt me when I'm applying for faculty positions?

Meizlish and Kaplan asked search committees this very question. The conclusion was clear: submitting an unsolicited teaching statement is viewed positively by most search committee chairs.

4. Should I reference or include student ratings and comments?

A teaching statement is a brief overview of your approach to teaching supported by rich examples drawn from your practice. As a result, support materials such as student ratings and comments would be out of place in a teaching statement. Consider instead constructing a teaching portfolio to highlight these materials. Teaching portfolios are organized, annotated collections of the “evidence” that supports your philosophy. They can include student evaluations, samples of assignments, letters of recommendation, samples of student work, etc. Note that teaching portfolios are rarely requested by search committees. For more information, see CRLT Occasional Paper No. 11, *The Teaching Portfolio* (available at <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/resources/occasional>).

5. Are teaching philosophies original work? Couldn't I adopt someone else's philosophy if I completely agree with what they're saying?

Teaching philosophies are original work, just like anything else you or someone else writes. Copying others' philosophies is plagiarism. Besides, a well-written philosophy should be rooted in your own practice and illuminated by specific examples from your own work. No one else has had exactly your experiences in the classroom.

6. Will this be the last time I write a teaching philosophy?

Teaching philosophies are becoming a common component of tenure and promotion packages at colleges and universities. If you continue in academia as a tenured or untenured faculty member, a teaching statement will likely be one of the ways in which your performance is assessed. Fortunately, having written one for the job search, you will have a head start. Remember, however, that the teaching philosophy is an evolving document, changing as you gain more experience as a teacher and your beliefs about effective teaching and learning evolve. Returning to the teaching philosophy statement throughout your career is a useful reflective exercise that can help to make your current teaching practice more explicit and deliberate.

7. Where can I learn more about teaching philosophies?

The CRLT Teaching Strategies website contains a section on teaching statements (<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tstpts.html>) with useful articles and sample statements from a variety of disciplines. CRLT offers workshops on writing teaching statements at a one-day Preparing Future Faculty Conference each fall. Graduate students interested in a more intensive experience can apply to participate in a month-long Preparing Future Faculty Seminar that is co-sponsored by Rackham and offered every May. (See <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/pff.html> for more information about these programs.) CRLT's Graduate Teaching Consultants are also available to consult one-on-one about teaching philosophies. You can contact CRLT (764-0505, crlt@umich.edu) to set up a consultation.

Figure 2. Rubric for composing and evaluating a statement of teaching philosophy

Categories	Excellent	Needs Some Revision	Unsatisfactory
Goals for student learning: What knowledge, skills, and attitudes are important for student success in your discipline? What are you preparing students for? What are key challenges in the teaching-learning process?	Goals are clearly articulated, specific, and go beyond knowledge level, including skills, attitudes, career goals, etc. Goals are sensitive to the context of the instructor's discipline. They are concise, not exhaustive.	Goals are articulated but may be too broad or not specific to the discipline. Goals focus on basic knowledge, ignoring skills acquisition and affective change.	Articulation of goals is unfocused, incomplete, or missing.
Enactment of goals (teaching methods): What teaching methods do you use? How do these methods contribute to your goals for students? Why are these methods appropriate for use in your discipline?	Enactment of goals is specific and thoughtful. Includes details and rationale for teaching methods. The methods are clearly connected to specific goals and are appropriate for those goals. Specific examples of the methods in use within the disciplinary context are given.	Description of teaching methods not clearly connected to goals, or if connected, not well developed (seems like a list of what is done in the classroom). Methods are described, but generically; no example of the instructor's use of the methods within the discipline is communicated.	Enactment of goals is not articulated. If there is an attempt at articulating teaching methods, it is basic and unreflective.
Assessment of goals (measuring student learning): How do you know your goals for students are being met? What sorts of assessment tools do you use (e.g., tests, papers, portfolios, journals), and why? How do assessments contribute to student learning? How do assessments communicate disciplinary priorities?	Specific examples of assessment tools are clearly described. Assessment tools are aligned with teaching goals and teaching methods. Assessments reinforce the priorities and context of the discipline both in content and type.	Assessments are described, but not connected to goals and teaching methods. Description is too general, with no reference to the motivation behind the assessments. There is no clear connection between the assessments and the priorities of the discipline.	Assessment of goals is not articulated or mentioned only in passing.
Creating an inclusive learning environment, addressing one or more of the following questions: How do your own and your students' identities (e.g., race, gender, class), backgrounds, experiences, and levels of privilege affect the classroom? How do you use multiple teaching approaches? How do you integrate diverse perspectives into your teaching?	Portrays a coherent philosophy of inclusive education that is integrated throughout the statement. Makes space for diverse ways of knowing and/or teaching approaches. Discussion of roles is sensitive to historically underrepresented students. Demonstrates awareness of issues of equity within the discipline.	Inclusive teaching is addressed but in a cursory manner or in a way that isolates it from the rest of the philosophy. Author briefly connects identity issues to aspects of his/her teaching.	Issues of inclusion are not addressed or addressed in an awkward manner. There is no connection to teaching practices.
Structure, rhetoric and language: How is the reader engaged? Is the language used appropriate to the discipline? How is the statement thematically structured?	The statement has a guiding structure and/or theme that engages the reader and organizes the goals, methods, and assessments articulated in the statement. Jargon is avoided and teaching terms (e.g., critical thinking) are given specific definitions that apply to the instructor's disciplinary context. Grammar and spelling are correct.	The statement has a structure and/or theme that is not connected to the ideas actually discussed in the statement, or, organizing structure is weak and does not resonate within the disciplinary context. The statement contains some jargon.	No overall structure present. Statement is a collection of disconnected statements about teaching. Jargon is used liberally and not supported by specific definitions or examples. Needs much revision.

Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT), University of Michigan

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Special Report

Philosophy of Teaching Statements: Examples and Tips on How to Write a Teaching Philosophy Statement

May 2009

Philosophy of Teaching Statements: Examples and Tips on How to Write a Teaching Philosophy Statement

For most educators, writing a philosophy of teaching statement is a daunting task. Sure they can motivate the most lackadaisical of students, juggle a seemingly endless list of responsibilities, make theory and applications of gas chromatography come alive for students, all the while finding time to offer a few words of encouragement to a homesick freshman. But articulating their teaching philosophy? It's enough to give even English professors a case of writer's block.

Traditionally part of the teaching portfolio in the tenure review process, an increasing number of higher education institutions are now requiring a philosophy of teaching statement from job applicants as well. For beginning instructors, putting their philosophy into words is particularly challenging. For one thing they aren't even sure they have a philosophy yet. Then there's the added pressure of writing one that's good enough to help them land their first teaching job.

This *Faculty Focus* special report is designed to take the mystery out of writing teaching philosophy statements, and includes both examples and how-to articles written by educators from various disciplines and at various stages of their professional careers.

Some of the articles you will find in the report include:

- How to Write a Philosophy of Teaching and Learning Statement
- A Teaching Philosophy Built on Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Curiosity
- My Teaching Philosophy: A Dynamic Interaction Between Pedagogy and Personality
- Writing the "Syllabus Version" of Your Philosophy of Teaching
- My Philosophy of Teaching: Make Learning Fun

As contributor Adam Chapnick writes, "There is no style that suits everyone, but there is almost certainly one that will make you more comfortable. And while there is no measurable way to know when you have got it 'right,' in my experience, you will know it when you see it!"

Mary Bart
Content Manager
Faculty Focus

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How to Write a Philosophy of Teaching and Learning Statement

By Adam Chapnick, PhD

Writing a philosophy of teaching and learning statement isn't meant to be easy. Self-reflection can be awkward, and the teaching and learning environment evokes feelings and emotions that don't necessarily translate well into words. Nevertheless, creating a philosophy of teaching and learning statement is ultimately both personally and professionally rewarding, and is therefore well worth the effort.

Expressing your philosophy of teaching and learning in print serves two main purposes:

1. It presents a capsule summary of your understanding of the value and purpose of teaching and learning to current and prospective employers, students, and colleagues; and
2. It encourages deep self-reflection that in turn enhances your ability to contribute positively to your learning community.

Statements generally proceed in one of two directions. They are either:

- subject- or discipline-specific (a philosophy of teaching history or of teaching physics), and focused on practical, specialized strategies; or
- broader statements of general aims and ideas, focused more on your students themselves than on what they're learning in the classroom.

Neither approach is necessarily better, but one of them generally suits each teacher more than the other. Single-discipline instructors, for example, are more likely to think about teaching and learning in the context of their field. Teachers whose work crosses traditional academic boundaries more regularly, or who combine theoretical study with public policy analysis, might be more apt to take a broader view.

Having determined which approach fits you best, the next issue to consider is style. Teaching and learning philosophies generally come in two forms:

1. Some are constructed as a series of personal paragraphs, drawing attention to the teacher's own thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and values. They tend to include personal anecdotes and examples, and are inevitably written in the first person. This style is the more common of the two, particularly in subject-specific statements.
2. Other teachers write more formally, listing – perhaps through a series of bullets – a set of ideas and opinions that form the basis of the author's understanding of the teaching and learning process. This approach will likely resonate more in task-oriented disciplines and individuals who tend to emphasize accuracy and specificity.

Again, neither approach is inherently superior: the key is to find the one that better reflects who you are and what you believe in. Teachers whose greatest pleasure comes from inspiring their students' creative abilities are more likely to present their philosophy in a less structured manner. Just like they encourage their students not to feel constricted by popular standards or expectations, their prose should flow freely and naturally.

Other teachers, whose excellence is based on their organizational abilities, their clarity inside and outside of the classroom, and the transparency of their attitudes and beliefs, often prefer the uniformity and imposed discipline of a series of bulleted or numbered thoughts and ideas.

Regardless, an effective philosophy of teaching and learning should aim to answer the following questions:

- why do I teach?
- what does good teaching mean to me?
- what does effective learning mean to me?
- do I have a particular teaching style or approach? If so, how would I describe it?
- what makes me unique as a teacher?
- what do I expect from my students?
- what can my students expect from me?
- what do I do to continue to improve?

These questions are in no particular order, and are not exclusive. Subject specific teaching philosophies, for example, will almost certainly answer additional questions such as:

- why am I so passionate about my discipline?
- what strategies make teaching

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and learning in my discipline come to life?

- how do effective teaching and learning in my discipline contribute to society?

Most 21st century teaching philosophies will also at least mention the author's approach to diversity in the classroom (defined broadly or narrowly) as well as the role of academic technology in the teaching and learning process. In the contemporary educational environment, it is difficult to imagine a classroom – real or virtual – that does not have to take these two factors into consideration.

The standard length of a teaching and learning philosophy is 250-750

words but, ideally, you should aim to develop a version that can fit on a single page. Keeping in mind that one of the purposes of creating a statement of teaching and learning philosophy is to explain yourself to a prospective employer, it makes sense to have an iteration of your statement that adheres to the same basic rules as the standard resume (1 or 2 pages, depending on your degree of specialization or expertise).

It is therefore fairly common for aspiring teachers to create two versions of their philosophies:

- one that is as long as it takes for them to express themselves comfortably; and
- another that can be included in applications that stipulate word and space limitations.

Similarly, some find it easier to develop two entirely separate statements:

- one that is discipline-specific; and
- another that is broader and perhaps more abstract.

There is no style that suits everyone, but there is almost certainly one that will make you more comfortable. And while there is no measurable way to know when you have got it 'right,' in my experience, you will know it when you see it!

Dr. Adam Chapnick is an assistant professor and deputy director of education at Canadian Forces College.



A Teaching Philosophy Built on Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Curiosity

By Susan Judd Casciani

I believe that success – whether personal or professional – is generated from three critical building blocks: knowledge, critical thinking, and curiosity. These building blocks have an enduring, cyclical relationship; knowledge helps us to understand the world around us as well as ourselves, critical thinking gives us the ability to incorporate knowledge and apply it endlessly, and curiosity, which is the result of realizing the limitations of current knowledge, drives us to acquire additional knowledge.

I see my role as a teacher as one of

transferring a fundamental knowledge of course content to students while cultivating their critical thinking skills through the application of theory and concepts to current health-, economic-, and industry-related issues. Through this application, areas that are void of knowledge will ultimately emerge. As a teacher, I will strive to instill a sense of curiosity in my students that will challenge them to fill this void, whether for themselves or for all of us. I will do this by serving as a role model in the sense that I too am searching for knowledge – for me, for them and for the future.

I will demonstrate my own critical thinking skills and share my curiosity for the unexplained or unexamined. I will value the individual backgrounds and experiences of my students, and encourage them to teach me as I teach them.

I expect that my students will have a variety of levels of desire for learning. I will strive to nurture an environment that will encourage them to seek areas that excite them, for I believe that true learning occurs best when it is most meaningful. I will expect my students to understand and

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utilize their rights for a quality education, and to fulfill their responsibilities to themselves, to me and to each other in our collective efforts to learn and discover.

My ultimate goal in teaching is to

provide requisite knowledge, encourage and develop critical thinking skills, and stimulate natural curiosity that will guide students in their efforts of pursuing success. By accomplishing this, I will satisfy the need within myself to somehow make a difference.

Susan Judd Casciani is a clinical assistant professor and program director of the Health Care Management Program at Towson University. ●

My Teaching Philosophy: A Dynamic Interaction Between Pedagogy and Personality

By B. Jean Mandernach, PhD

My philosophy of teaching can better be described as a philosophy of learning. In order to be an effective instructor, I must focus on student learning and adjust my teaching strategies in response to the pace and depth of student understanding. I view teaching as an interaction between an instructor and a student; thus, the impact of this interaction on learning, rather than my activities as an instructor, is of primary importance. Approaching teaching as a scholarly activity with continual evaluations and adjustments allows me to maintain a focus on student learning and continually improve my instruction. By utilizing flexible teaching strategies, rather than strict adherence to a particular teaching style, I am able to adjust my instruction to match the abilities and preexisting knowledge that each student brings to the classroom. Thus, my primary role as an instructor is to create interactions which foster interest and understanding for individual students.

This approach to learning empha-

sizes a cognitive developmental perspective. As highlighted by developmental theorists, students learn best by actively exploring their environments. This type of “trial-and-error” learning can then be fostered by having a support structure in place to facilitate understanding. The self-paced nature of exploratory learning relies on the notion that effective learning environments actively engage students with the material and promote meaningful associations between new material and information already known. As an instructor, it is my responsibility to help students generate their own context for meaning through the application of new material to their everyday lives.

Reflecting upon the dynamic interaction between pedagogy and personality, my teaching style is best described as applied, mastery instruction. While the specific learning goals of a course are dependent upon the nature of the course, the education level of the students, the purpose of the course within the department, and the relationship between the

course and related courses, I have three overarching goals for any course that I teach: 1) to foster critical thinking so that students may become effective consumers of psychological information, 2) to promote mastery of course content, and 3) to encourage application of course materials to real-world contexts.

Since most students, including psychology majors, will not become psychologists, it is important to teach students information that is relevant to their lives and their futures. The media is full of psychologically-based information; my goal as a psychology instructor is to teach students how to critically examine this information, make decisions about its accuracy/relevance, and utilize the information in their own lives. For example, after a recent university shooting rampage, my Introductory Psychology class spent a considerable amount of time locating information (TV, magazines, newspapers, websites, etc.) about the shootings and examining how this event, and

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the information surrounding it, can be interpreted in light of psychological theories (parenting styles, adolescent development, group decision making, stereotypes, personality, stress, etc.). This type of active, applied learning has several advantages: 1) it allows students to actively engage with the material which promotes general interest in psychology; 2) it assists students in developing critical thinking skills; 3) it promotes a deeper understanding of how theories are utilized in a real-world context; and 4) it enhances retention of material through active processing and the interrelationship of information.

My second broad goal as an instructor is to promote mastery of the course material. While there is a considerable amount of research concerning the educational benefits of mastery instruction, mastery learning is not often utilized due to the increased time and effort required for this type of instruction. I feel that as an instructor, it is my responsibility to determine exactly what I expect students to understand after completing my course, then to facilitate student learning so that every student reaches this level. This perspective implies that I can articulate my specific learning goals, develop assessments that effectively measure these goals, and have a support structure in place to help students reach this level of understanding. In addition, mastery learning requires flexibility in instruction as different students will master the material at different rates, and different students will require different types of assistance (examples, demonstrations, activities, case studies, etc.) to foster learning.

In order to create a classroom that promotes mastery, application, and

critical thinking, it is important to incorporate a variety of specific teaching strategies that help direct the learning process yet allow students the freedom of active learning. Advances in instructional technology have allowed me to move many of the basic instructional tasks out of the classroom so that valuable class time is available for more integrated, applied learning. Specifically, I use web-based resources in order to administer study questions prior to

I feel that as an instructor, it is my responsibility to determine exactly what I expect students to understand after completing my course, then to facilitate student learning so that every student reaches this level.

class and provide tutorials/discussion questions. In this way, students can use study questions to ensure that they understand (and have completed) the readings, and I can use the results of the study questions to identify aspects of the readings that students are having difficulties with. I can then tailor class time to target areas of confusion and spend less time reviewing easily understood topics. Providing the discussion questions in advance via the web allows students to think more in-depth about selected topics and to be prepared to actively participate in class discussions.

In addition to providing preparation materials, testing is also administered via the web. The web-based format allows students to easily review past tests and study questions. I also like to use web-based discussion threads to promote critical thinking and interactive learning. Through discussion threads, students (or the instructor) can pose questions/comments to which others can respond. While these web-based resources do not provide any unique teaching opportunity that cannot be imitated in the classroom, they allow many activities to be completed outside of regular class time so that limited class time can be dedicated to more advanced activities. Further, web-based resources are invaluable for connecting the instructor to individual students in a large lecture class. Students who would not voice questions in a large lecture setting may be more likely to express concerns via email or participation in an online discussion.

In summary, teaching at this level puts me in the unique position of working with college students who are in the last stage of their formal education. Thus, before they venture into the "real world," my goal is to ensure students have a basic understanding of psychological concepts and theories so that they may apply this information to their own lives and become effective, critical consumers of psychological information.

B. Jean Mandernach is an associate professor of psychology and research associate for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Park University. ●

Teaching Philosophy and Assumptions

By Adam Chapnick, PhD

Teaching combines knowledge, skill, passion, and compassion. I believe:

1. *Students are people.* They are proud, confident, eager to learn, but also insecure. They respond to people who make them feel listened to and respected; people who challenge them and inspire them to question; people who reward their successes and encourage them to improve.

2. *Teachers are role models both in the classroom and in the community.* Students look up to teachers whom they respect, and good teachers take pride in learning from their students.

3. *Preparation and enthusiasm are cornerstones of effective teaching.* They are contagious and inspire success. Successful teachers are committed and dedicated to improving themselves and their students.

4. *Good teachers always try to be fair.* They do not ask from their students that which they would not ask from themselves. They communicate high, yet realistic and achievable expectations, and then encourage students to over-achieve. They recognize that students learn in different ways and respond differently to a variety of forms of instruction

and assessment. They develop lessons and evaluate student progress with the diversity of student learning styles and backgrounds in mind.

5. *Students learn best when they are aware of not only what is required of them, but also what is fair to require from their teachers.*

Preparation and enthusiasm are cornerstones of effective teaching. They are contagious and inspire success. Successful teachers are committed and dedicated to improving themselves and their students.

Just as students must meet strict analytical and temporal expectations, teachers should mark thoroughly and return assignments promptly. Feedback should be detailed, and means of improvement should be outlined specifically. Students should be congratulated for their achievements, and shown how to learn from their mistakes.

6. *Effective teaching requires flexibility.* Teachers must try to make themselves available to meet with students and explore their concerns both inside and outside of the classroom. Students are more likely to require assistance when assignments are due, and teachers should endeavor as best they can to schedule academic and personal commitments accordingly.

7. *Teaching can always be improved.* Professional development – remaining abreast of pedagogical advancements in the field, taking advantage of changes in academic technology, promoting the importance of teaching in the community, and maintaining a research program which expands the depth and breadth of knowledge of the teaching subject matter – is crucial to an instructor's long term effectiveness. Academic colleagues, teaching assistants, and student evaluations are all invaluable sources of assistance.

Dr. Adam Chapnick is an assistant professor and deputy director of education at Canadian Forces College. ●

Writing the “Syllabus Version” of Your Philosophy of Teaching

By B. Jean Mandernach, PhD

Every teacher has a philosophy of teaching...whether they know it or not. Simply put, a philosophy of teaching is your conceptualization of the teaching and learning process. While some people have very explicit and clear teaching philosophies, others have invested less time in formulating a concrete picture of their position on the teaching-learning dynamic.

Despite the fact that you typically don't craft your philosophy of teaching with a student audience in mind, there is value in creating a modified, “syllabus version,” of your teaching philosophy.

There are many reasons to articulate your philosophy of teaching, some reasons driven by external requirements and others by the personal or pedagogical value inherent in reflecting on your approach to teaching. You may be asked to prepare your teaching philosophy as a component of your application for an academic position, as supportive documentation in your portfolio for promotion/tenure consideration, or as a portion of an application for teaching awards/grants (Montell, 2003). Alternatively, you may elect to articulate your philosophy of teaching as a reflective activity to clarify your role as a teacher, examine the relationship between your theoretical approach to teaching and your classroom practices, or highlight personal instructional and educational goals (Brookfield, 1990; Goodyear & Allchin, 1998).

But, beyond personal insight or academic requirements, there is another reason – an equally, if not more, important reason – to articulate your philosophy of teaching: *to provide guidance and direction to the students in your*

classes. Despite the fact that you typically don't craft your philosophy of teaching with a student audience in mind, there is value in creating a modified, “syllabus version,” of your teaching philosophy.

In contrast to the one-to-two page, theoretically-driven, fully-justified, rationally-supported philosophy of teaching that is geared toward your academic peers, the “syllabus version” of your teaching philosophy is a condensed description that highlights the key components of your personal philosophy with a particular emphasis on the implications of your philosophy for your students. Students don't need- or want- to know the evolution of your conceptualization of teaching, nor are they highly invested in understanding the nuances of why you select particular instructional strategies or the theoretical underpinnings of your pedagogical endeavors. Rather, they need to know your perspective on your role as the teacher and how this translates into your expectations for your students.

With this in mind, how do you modify your philosophy of teaching for inclusion in the syllabus?

1) Start by crafting your “complete” philosophy of teaching.

There are a number of ways to go about conceptualizing and creating your personal philosophy of teaching; see Chism (1998) or Goodyear and Allchin (1998) for popular models. In addition, the Internet is filled with guidelines and recommendations for writing an effective philosophy of teaching; see

- <http://ftad.osu.edu/portfolio/philosophy/Philosophy.html>,
- <http://www.cofc.edu/~cetl/Essays/DevelopingAPhilosophyofTeaching.html>,
- <http://chronicle.com/jobs/news/2003/03/2003032702c.htm>,
- <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/philosophy.html> or
- <http://www.lll.hawaii.edu/sltcc/tips/philosophy.html> for detailed information about how to write a teaching philosophy- and what to avoid when doing so.

2) Reflect on your philosophy by asking yourself “What does this mean for my students?”

As you review your teaching philosophy, focus on the implications for students. In three or four sentences, summarize the key components of your philosophy as it applies to your classroom and/or the expected interactions between you and your students. In essence, the “syllabus version” of your philosophy of teaching starts by explaining to the students your general view on teaching/learning and your rationale for structuring their educational experience in the manner that you do.

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- 3) *Clearly define your role in the classroom and the learning process.* In one or two sentences, define for your students how you will approach learning activities and what behaviors they can expect from you in relation to your philosophy.
- 4) *Highlight your expectations for your students in relation to your philosophy of teaching.* In one or two sentences, describe the behaviors you expect from your students as it relates to your approach to their educational experience. Be concrete and explicit so that your expectations serve as a guide to direct student activity in the course.

The key in crafting the “syllabus version” of your philosophy is not to try to capture or convey the complexities surrounding your philosophy of the teaching-learning interaction. Rather, you should strive to maintain a student focus and integrate only the aspects of your philosophy that are central for the learner. With this in mind, keep the following considerations in mind when adapting your philosophy of teaching for inclusion in the syllabus:

- *Be brief, clear, and concise.* Students cannot benefit from a teaching philosophy that they do not read or that they do not understand.
- *Utilize student-centered language.* Write the “syllabus version” of your teaching philosophy in a manner that talks to the student rather than about them.
- *Avoid using pedagogical jargon.* Again, students can’t benefit from a philosophy that they don’t understand; utilize language relevant to the student population.
- *Adjust the “syllabus version” to be relevant to each class.* While your philosophy of teaching is stable, your expectations of students in relation to your philosophy may change according to class level, course content or student characteristics; it is important to adjust the “syllabus version” of your teaching philosophy accordingly.

Because teaching philosophies are often composed to meet institutional requirements for tenure and promotion, or as part of the job search process, they rarely reflect a student audience. Revising your teaching philosophy into a “syllabus version” is an ideal way to test our theory-driven proclamations about teaching against the realities of classroom teaching. [Editor’s note: see sidebar for an example of a syllabus version.]

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Student-centered Statement of Teaching Philosophy

My philosophy of teaching can better be described as a philosophy of learning. So, what does this mean for you? I consider this course to be an equal collaboration between you and me. As such, it is my responsibility to be an effective instructor; this means that it is my job to monitor your learning and adjust my teaching strategies in response to the pace and depth of your understanding. But as, with all successful collaborations, my involvement is only half of the equation; in order for this to be a valuable educational experience, you must be an effective student. What you will gain from this course depends upon your investment in learning. Learning relies upon the interaction between you, me and the course material; thus, it is your investment in this interaction that will drive your mastery of course material.

As we progress through this course, I will utilize a range of instructional strategies to target the abilities and preexisting knowledge that each of you brings to the classroom. I will strive to create interactions which foster interest and understanding for each of you. In exchange, I expect you to invest full effort in all learning activities, engage in the course material and apply yourself to a deeper understanding of course material. ●

Education as Becoming: A Philosophy of Teaching

By Ralph S. Stevens III, PhD

In a lecture in my world literature courses I talk to my students about why we read literature. These students are not taking the course because they want to read Homer and Sophocles. They are taking it because we tell them they have to. World lit is a degree requirement. But why do we require it?

My answer is based on a distinction between education and training. Training, I say, is learning to do. Education is learning to become. Both are important, and each is part of what we call “a college education.” Together they are what I think of as teaching.

I am training my students when I teach them how to do things like unpack a metaphor or identify the climax in the plot of a Greek tragedy; showing them how to use secondary sources in a documented essay, or how to resolve a paradox in a metaphysical poem. Successful teaching results in students being able to do such things.

Education is different. I point out that the word “education” comes from the Latin *e-ducere*, meaning “to lead out” and I say that for me this means leading out the best in a student. Here, teaching means exciting the affections and the imagination. It means leading out of a student not her inherent ability to do something—that’s training—but her capacity to respond to something so as to know the value it has, for her, for her community. Education, by this definition, “leads out” the ability to feel horror at the

horrible and disgust at the disgusting, pleasure at the pleasing and joy at things that are good.

This is why we read literature, I tell them. We read to develop the imagination, so as to recognize the nature of things and people. We read to develop the affections, in learning to respond to what we imagine. A work of literature invites us to enter and imagine a world both strange and familiar. My students have never known the characters, or been to the places, they read about. They don’t know what it’s like to be an epic hero like Odysseus. The world of the Trojan War is a strange one. But they can imagine what it would be like for a man to stand alone on a strange island, as Odysseus does at the nadir of his adventures, pleading for hospitality from a teenage girl doing her laundry with her friends.

This is education, the act of becoming whole people by developing the affections and the imagination. It is the other part of teaching. But training and education, are not separate. Teaching as training brings me into contact with, not a machine to be programmed to do certain things, but that whole person who is the concern of education. My teaching to do can be conducted so as to be learning to become, appealing to the best in each of my students.

But how? I begin with communication as the foundation of good teaching, because through effective communication I can reach the whole person. The principles I follow are

simple: be accessible to students and treat them with respect. Accessibility means being available not just during class and office hours, but at any reasonable time. I encourage them to call me at home, and I promise them a response to email messages within 24 hours.

As important as being accessible is being respectful. I make it a principle to avoid anything sarcastic, disparaging or condescending in my communication, and to be always courteous and encouraging. It is the best way to “lead out” the best in a person.

Good communication is the foundation of instruction. Instruction itself is student-centered. I once heard an experienced teacher say that learning begins with questions and “there is knowledge in the room.” No one comes to a lesson without some knowledge, and students who ask questions already have some grasp of what they are trying to learn. I try to include in my each assignment something that will elicit knowledge and questions. When introducing a new work of literature, for example, I ask students to discuss what it was like for them to read that work. I use threaded discussions in our course platform, Blackboard, and make active participation a third of the course grade, with high standards for participation. I participate and am able to see, from students’ posts, what they know (“there is knowledge in the room”) and what their questions are (“learning begins with questions”). What I learn from discussions then informs what I present in my lectures.

In these ways and others, I make the student, rather than the subject matter, the center of my teaching. The extent to which these methods succeed is the extent to which I can educate, leading out the best in my students.

Ralph S. Stevens III, Ph.D. is an associate professor of English at Coppin State University. ●

A Nurse Educator's Philosophy of Teaching

By Frostenia Milner

....we learn from one another how to be human by identifying ourselves with others, finding their dilemmas in ourselves. What we all learn from it is self-knowledge. The self we learn about ...is every self. IT is universal - the human self. We learn to recognize ourselves in others... (It) keeps alive our common humanity and avoids reducing self or other to the moral status of object (Watson, 1985/1988, pp. 59-60).

I am a novice to baccalaureate nursing education. My goal is to participate in preparing nursing students to practice as generalist within the health care social environment. It is my responsibility to create a student-centered classroom that fosters the practice of critical thinking, the development of clinical thinking, and life-long learning. The classroom is where caring in nursing is role modeled for the student. Caring is demonstrated when there is acknowledgment that students come to the classroom with a variety of educational experiences, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles. I believe that education is a two-way proposition. The student's part of the proposition is to come to class prepared to learn and my part is to create an interactive environment that engages the student in the learning process in and out of the classroom.

Nursing is a dynamic discipline. Life-long learning is integral to

survival with ever changing technologies and therapies. My teaching methods incorporate argument mapping to develop clarity of

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reasoning based on supporting evidence and to come to a conclusion, which in the case of nursing is the most appropriate clinical decision (Billings, 2008). Through this guided process the content to be taught is discovered as the student works through the problem. I use problem-based learning which is a well established strategy for developing critical thinking (Rogal and Snider, 2008). Case studies are used to simulate experiences allowing the student to crit-

ically analyze their actions, reflect on their own skill sets, and critique the clinical decisions of others (Jeffries, 2007). Learning from these methods are evaluated using multiple choice tests, debriefing, discussion and observation.

My teaching philosophy is in its infancy. I will use humor to engage my students and include their feedback as I continue to learn and grow, for I want to live this philosophy.

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Teaching and Advising Philosophy and Style

By W. Stephen Damron

For me, the most important part of teaching, advising, and mentoring students is caring. It all begins with caring for students and what becomes of them. They are real people. They have needs and wants, strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, hopes and dreams. I am part of the hopes and dreams because I help them with the education that they have factored into their futures. That leap-of-faith on their part vests me with enormous interest in what becomes of them. It makes me a better person, a better teacher, and a better mentor. As long as caring is there, I find I can dislike them, be angry with them, hurt by them, perplexed, exasperated, put out, or just generally disgruntled with them and still teach them. What I do not feel I could ever do is be indifferent to them and still be effective. Besides, caring for them has its perks. I find that when I care they care back, and I like that.

Listening is next to caring. The people I presume to teach deserve my ear above all others except my wife and children. Even if that were not so, I simply could not teach without listening. The success of my classroom style depends on feedback during class, after class, and on evaluations. Practicing a listening attitude is essential or that feedback will not happen in a way that helps us. Listening also means listening to the non-verbal responses from the group.

I try to read the level of understanding they are achieving from my explanations and make adjustments or even start over if necessary. Listening

I have discovered through the years that a very important thing I can do for my students (and myself) is to share the real me, warts and all, with them. How can I expect them to be honest with me unless I am willing to be honest with them?

is especially important in advising. Good advising depends on hearing what the advisee says, and sometimes what isn't being said as well. It depends on asking the right questions and patience to wait for the real answer, not just the one that comes out first. Good listening also requires thinking about what I've heard before responding to it.

As in so much of life, time on task is required. I owe my students my time, which includes time spent with them and time spent on their behalf.

For me to be a complete teaching professional, I must offer time for a conversation in the hall. I need to be in the classroom before class begins and stick around after class is over. My office door needs to be open, with me inside as much as possible for students to stop by or call for my help, advice or whatever they need. I owe them the time to read a resume and offer constructive comments. I owe them the time to discuss career alternatives they may be wrestling with, or personal problems they may bring to me. I owe my students the time necessary to write the best lectures my skills will allow. I owe them the time required to write a good, thoughtful, honest letter of recommendation when they ask. I also owe them time in thought, thinking about how I might do my job better and serve them more effectively. Good teaching is time consuming.

I have discovered through the years that a very important thing I can do for my students (and myself) is to share the real me, warts and all, with them. Part of the reason for this is that I feel they deserve to relate to a person genuinely willing to expose his feelings, values, and a distinctive viewpoint about his society and the world. The other less noble reason is that students recognize when I try to fake it. How can I expect them to be honest with me unless I am willing to be honest with them? What my students get is the real me. I never try to hide a bad mood, or the fact that they've angered me, or hurt me, or failed to meet my expectations. If I am insecure about a lecture or class activity, I don't try and fake it. I tell them. I find they are more than willing to forgive me a commonplace lecture or activity if I don't press on as if it were good. Similarly, I tell them if I feel they did a good job on

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an exam or if they especially pleased me in a day's discussion session. I am human too and they need to know that. There is freedom in just being me that helps teaching and learning to happen. There is an honesty that becomes a part of one-on-one relationships that can be achieved no other way.

I owe it to my students to challenge them. That commitment is rooted deeply in my own experiences. As my life has progressed, I have become increasingly aware that the people who have held me to higher standards are the ones I hold in increasingly higher regard. In my own teaching, I prefer respect in the long term than to always have their fond regard in the short term, and thus I challenge them. If there is one thing that practicing this craft has taught me, it is that I rarely get more by asking for less. Thus, my courses are rigorous and demanding. I consider myself a lifelong learner and promote that attitude with my students. People need to learn the value of reading, writing, and reflective thought. They also need to practice. I provide opportunities. I feel that is a responsibility to them, my colleagues, and to society.

I hope I leave my students stronger after they interact with me. Students should leave my class with the basis for a new perspective or with a question to mull or a curiosity to satisfy. An advisee should leave my office with confidence that together we are charting the path he/she wants, or at least making progress toward finding a path. A student looking for a new major should feel he/she has an honest and fairly presented picture of my discipline and thus be enabled to make such an important decision. Even a student with whom I am in disagreement

should feel empowered by the respect and honesty with which I deal with them during the disagreement.

Learning is serious business and I do my best to convey that attitude with my actions. I establish policies in my class that I feel actively promote responsibility and I run a tight ship in my classroom. My students and I have such little time

As a teacher, it is my job to stimulate and encourage thinking rather than to provide answers and resolve problems.

together that there is no time to waste with disruptive behaviors or busy work. However, learning is best accomplished when enjoyed, so I keep my classroom atmosphere light with humor and by encouraging student participation. I also explain the rules up front and stick to them. I have found that I can ask and receive a great deal from students if I am open, fair in what I expect, and equitable in my treatment of them.

I try always to convey a sense of wonder and adventure about learning. When I was in graduate school, I took Mineral Nutrition from Dr. Jane Savage. Mineral nutrition had never been one of my favorite topics until then. One day while reviewing a journal article in class Dr. Savage commented, "I think this is so interesting!" Earth shaking commentary it was not. Yet, I will never forget that statement or that wonderful lady and teacher. It was not what she said but the fact that we all knew she meant what she said. She made the

room come alive with excitement over the topic by the simple willingness to share her own enthusiasm. It occurred to me that not only were the intricacies of the topic at hand indeed interesting but so was the entire topic of mineral nutrition. My enthusiasm for the topic persists to this day. What a gift! I try to give others that same gift.

As a teacher, it is my job to stimulate and encourage thinking rather than to provide answers and resolve problems. It is my obligation to give students professional competency, energy, demand of excellence, and fair treatment. It is my job to touch lives and challenge them to learn how to use their inherent capabilities and their knowledge base to resolve problems for themselves. To do this, I have to ask questions they must work hard to answer. The great pay off in that is when they ask questions I must work hard to answer.

I am not a man of many or varied causes. I simply believe that the only hope for mankind and our world is for as many of us as possible to know as much as possible about that world and ourselves. Helping with the knowing is what I do. I teach.

W. Stephen Damron is a professor and teaching coordinator in the Animal Science Department at Oklahoma State University. ●

My Teaching Philosophy: Make Learning Fun

By David E. E. Sloane, PhD

My teaching philosophy is that all learning experiences should be fun and exciting, and if they aren't, the teaching modality needs to seek and adapt new strategies, whether game playing, behaviors, model test cases, or lecture-discussion combinations that shake up the lecture model. Then, the learning process should be narrowed down to specific behaviors which can be demystified, easily practiced, easily replicated, and, at base, subject to easy memorization around key words. I have organized an online Mark Twain course around four words beginning with E, for example. Everybody starts from the same reference point to document, illustrate, or argue.

My classroom is a nutty place, especially in the speaking and writing courses I am thinking about here. Every nutty thing I do is intended to help students recall the connected ideas or behaviors. I circulate a candy bowl while I'm talking; chocolate is an added retrieval cue, and a real atmosphere-relaxer. They remember what we were talking about when they remember the chocolate. I sing the prepositions to "Yankee Doodle," accompanied by my banjo. They beg for more—who wants to hear more about prepositions!? What it boils down to is fitting specific knowledge, behaviors, and actions around key organizing ideas, and I make them easy to remember and fun to play with. We often repeat the keywords as a

drill exercise, and "own" them absolutely.

I build larger skills and concepts around keywords. I ask my students to chant them when we review the material, and I ask a random student to explain one or another—always simply, always citing simple behaviors. By the end of a given course in Business Writing, Technical Writing, or Advanced Public Speaking, students have explained and chanted many times. The drilling is fun, as well, because they can shout. Yes, I have a noisy classroom, but they remember the associated skills and techniques, and they have to say them until they can say them with assurance. Learning gets to be a little like cheerleading. It works for them, so it works for me.

My biggest target is students achieving both holistic organization and behavioral mastery of the atomistic individual skills. An example from a speaking course might be helpful. The course is built around six rules. Rule 1 is "Control Your Environment." This allows me to introduce the theories of Maslow about self actualization and relate them to a speaking environment. The atomistic behaviors develop into a list of 15 specific actions each student can do—control the temperature, move desks and chairs, make a seating chart, greet entering audience members individually, and so on. Fearful undergraduates and withdrawn graduate students become

dynamic confident speakers when they have named behaviors to perform. The focus is on a concept, behaviors to fulfill the concept, and the experience of executing the concept, with its simple keywords, in various situations. Focusing on holistic/atomistic goal setting and achievement is also a skill that generalizes to all areas of life—which is what I urge them to remember. By the end of the course, each student can provide six holistic concepts organized into 40-50 or more atomistic behaviors and tell which ones they will use, and why. Giving students de-mystified behaviors at the center of the course gives them so much to do positively and actively that they don't have time for stage fright or other negatives.

It's fair to ask if this can be generalized. Yes. Students use a book and index cards. First, they bring three cards with a sentence from the reading. Any sentence is correct! This is process. The next day I ask another student to explain the first student's sentence. I look for volunteers, then I ask fail-safe questions to model the explanation behavior. Everyone's sense of idea-sentences grows. Building through a course like this, students amass hundreds of index cards; they are allowed to use them on tests. The reward is attractive. It highly motivates especially those students who are "lost" but yearning for a key to getting good grades. They willingly do the hard work of taking intense notes on their reading because they know there is a pay-back. By repetition, students get to pick better and better sentences, often making more than three cards. I eliminate the mystery factor and the guessing factor, and reward plain systematic hard work.

In English literature courses, I try to do the same. My students get a

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worksheet that identifies a wide number of minor forms in poetry. Before we talk about "meaning," where the untestable generalities flourish, we count nouns, verbs, and adjectives to see if the poem is concrete, emotional, or active, since these traits correlate with eras and modes of English poetry, we learn to discover mechanical things about

poems. I am applying ideas of Josephine Miles and Kenneth Burke, but I am adding the sense that a poem is a machine like a motorcycle, and they can take it apart in much the same way as mechanics work on an engine.

For me, teaching is about what the students take away with them that they can always bring back as a simple behavior. The things they

study may be mysteries—wonderful ones—but the procedures they apply should be simple and easily performed, not mysterious. I love teaching like this.

David E.E. Sloane, PhD., is a professor of English and Education at the University of New Haven. ●

Teaching Philosophy Statements Prepared by Faculty Candidates

By Maryellen Weimer

Typically, teaching philosophy statements are prepared as part of promotion and tenure dossiers or for teaching awards. However, increasingly they are being requested by those interviewing for open faculty positions. The article referenced below documents the extent to which that is happening in one discipline.

What should faculty reviewers look for in a teaching philosophy statement of a candidate? What should those applying for academic positions put in a teaching philosophy statement? The author of this article suggests models of teaching and learning. Of learning, he writes, "Candidates should demonstrate knowledge of models of how students learn, how best to encourage learning, and how to assess whether learning has occurred." (p. 336) It is equally important that candidates be able to discuss how they would apply their written philosophy in different teaching situations. The importance

of the philosophy statement and of teaching itself is reinforced when candidates are asked to discuss them with those conducting the interview.

As for what a new faculty member should put in the teaching philosophy statement being used as part of an application packet, the author makes a number of recommendations. Along with ideas about how students learn, those activities that the candidate believes promote learning, some recognition of variations in approaches to learning, and a discussion of factors related to learning should be included. Also important is the kind of feedback that will be provided to students, and how their learning will be assessed. Content that relates to teaching, including expectations for students, preferred learning environments, favored instructional methods, and the nature of relationships with students that foster learning, should be discussed.

The author recommends that teaching philosophy statements

include references so that the candidate can demonstrate a knowledge of literature relevant to college-level teaching and learning. The philosophy statement should show that the candidate is interested in teaching and expects to grow and develop further as a teacher.

Teaching continues to be an important part of virtually all academic positions. As the author points out, search committees often are more comfortable assessing the research history and potential of candidates than they are evaluating what kind of teacher the candidate will be. Careful analysis of a teaching philosophy statement, coupled with follow-up questions on its content, can provide much revealing information about a candidate's potential. To ensure that all candidates start from the same place, it is appropriate to provide a list of areas that review committees would like the teaching philosophy statement to address. This

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article proposes a structure and a series of questions that can be used as a starting place. It also contains a link to a sample philosophy statement that follows the proposed structure. If an institution wants to

show a candidate that it takes teaching seriously, one of the best times to convey that message is during the interview process.

Reference: Eierman, R.J. (2008). The teaching philosophy statement:

Purposes and organizational structure. *Journal of Chemical Education*, 85 (3), 336-339.

Reprinted from *The Teaching Professor*, May 2008. ●

Writing a Teaching Philosophy Statement: Why, What and How

By P. N. Ramani, PhD

Most teachers applying for academic positions in colleges and universities are often asked to submit a statement that explains their teaching philosophy. People responsible for selecting and recruiting teachers, however, are divided in their opinions about why such a statement is required or how it is used (Montell, 2003).

While some institutions use the statement to weed out those who are not committed to teaching as a vocation and also those who may be good researchers but poor teachers, most candidates consider the requirement as a potential stumbling block in their job search. The statement is sometimes seen as a way of letting the applicants know about the importance of sound teaching principles and practices. In other words, the institution would expect to have an indication of whether the candidate has thought seriously about teaching and learning. (Montell, 2003).

Even if academics do not agree on the importance of a teaching statement in the hiring or tenure process, every practising teacher should be able to write a statement

A teaching philosophy statement is a kind of personal "mission statement" for anyone who is committed to teaching. It demonstrates that you are reflective and purposeful about your teaching, and helps to communicate your goals as a teacher and your corresponding actions in the classroom.

discussing coherently what they do in the classroom and why.

Content

A teaching philosophy statement is a kind of personal "mission statement" for anyone who is committed to teaching. It demonstrates that you are reflective and purposeful about your teaching, and helps to communicate your goals as a teacher and your corresponding actions in the classroom.

Key elements

A teaching philosophy statement usually includes:

- Your goals and values – your personal values as a teacher and goals for your students,
- Your description of how you teach – the approaches and methods (unique to you and specific to your discipline) you use to achieve those objectives,
- Your assumptions about teaching and learning – your justification for why you teach the way you teach, and
- Your discussion of how you intend to measure through self and student assessment your effectiveness vis-à-vis the objectives and methods you have outlined.

The statement may describe how you want to make a difference in the lives of your students and your path to professional improvement (Chism, 1998; Haugen, 1998; Mihram & Anderson, 2004).

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Benefits

A well articulated teaching philosophy statement offers several benefits to the teacher, at both personal and professional levels. At the personal level, it helps preserve "your personal sanity and morale" as it helps clarify to yourself why you are doing what you are doing (Brookfield, 1990, p. 16).

At the professional level, as mentioned before, it helps you to discuss coherently what you do in the classroom and why you do it in that way. It helps you to be clear about the effect you are having "on students and their learning" (Brookfield, 1990, pp. 18-19). It also sets the benchmark for measuring the appropriateness of your instructional methods, the scope of your activities in and out of the classroom, the assessment of student learning, and the effectiveness of your teaching.

Moreover, the statement "provides stability, continuity, and long-term guidance" and helps you "remain focused on teaching goals and to appreciate the personal and professional rewards of teaching." (Goodyear and Allchin, 1998, pp. 106-7) It can thus lead to a change in your teaching behaviors and ultimately foster professional and personal growth.

Developing a teaching philosophy statement

There is no one formula or a set format for writing a teaching philosophy statement. You may use a question/answer format or use visuals and quotes. It is generally 1-2 pages long and written in first-person, mostly using the present tense. It is written in a language that can be easily understood by the readers. You may seek guidance from someone in your field on the discipline-specific jargon and issues to

include in, or exclude from, your statement. (<http://ftad.osu.edu>)

Key questions to ask of yourself

As a first step towards developing a teaching philosophy statement, Chism (1998) suggests asking oneself some basic questions, such as the following. The answers to these may be incorporated in your teaching philosophy statement.

- What are my concepts or views on how people (like my students) learn and how can I facilitate that learning?
- What goals do I have for my students and why?
- How do I transform my concepts about teaching and learning and goals for my students into classroom practices?
- How do I know that my classroom practices are effective?

By including specific examples of teaching strategies and techniques, your statement will help your readers visualize the rich learning environment you want to create for your students.

Own your teaching philosophy

This is your teaching philosophy, not someone else's. You will have a sense of "ownership" of the teaching philosophy statement by writing about your own beliefs and experiences. It is better to avoid dogmatic statements, such as "students learn effectively only through group work" or "the best way to teach is through the problem-based learning method". In this way, you appear open to other

ideas about teaching and learning.

Use metaphors

In describing your concept of the teaching-learning process, you may use metaphors, such as "container-receptacle or vessel", "journey-guide", "master-disciple", "filling station", "coach", "gardener", or "choreographer", as a way of articulating your ideas. Your readers will have a clearer understanding of how you see your role vis-à-vis your students in the teaching-learning process (Grasha, 1996). Metaphors also help demonstrate your understanding of the purpose of education and the role of a teacher in the educational process.

Make it memorable and unique

A teaching philosophy statement should set you apart from others. It should create a vivid impression of one who demonstrates clear thinking, unique teaching practices, and commitment to the vocation of teaching. By including specific examples of teaching strategies and techniques, your statement will help your readers visualize the rich learning environment you want to create for your students.

Key questions others will ask in reviewing

- Are the concepts and views presented clearly and lucidly?
- Does the approach to teaching and learning demonstrate reflective thinking and careful planning or flexibility when appropriate?
- Does it address fully the institutional context of teaching and learning, and scholarly research in the field?
- Does the statement show awareness of the conventions and expectations of the discipline?

- Is the statement modest or ambitious? (Mihram & Anderson, 2004;
http://www.usc.edu/programs/cet/resources/teaching_philosophy/)

Conclusion

A teaching philosophy statement is a living document that evolves over time. It need not be comprehensive, but should be interesting to read. It should essentially state what you actually believe in and practice.

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Teaching Statements Are Bunk

By Kevin D. Haggerty FEBRUARY 19, 2010

The Chronicle of Higher Education, <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Teaching-Statements-Are-Bunk/64152>

Although I am well along in my academic career and have regularly taught graduate and undergraduate courses, a series of professional idiosyncrasies have meant that until last year I had never written a teaching statement.

As a faculty member at a research university, I was certainly acquainted with the ostensible purposes of those documents. For reasons that will become apparent, however, it had been some time since I could work up the enthusiasm to read one from beginning to end.

A preliminary clarification is in order. When I disparage "teaching philosophies" or "teaching statements," I am referring to those accounts that faculty members and job candidates are expected to produce to detail their approach to teaching. The statements are typically demanded at key moments in our professional lives, such as when we apply for jobs, tenure, or promotion. So I am concerned here with formal institutional documents, not self-motivated reflections about teaching.

When informed I had to produce a teaching statement in order to apply for promotion to full professor, I did my research. I scrutinized the dossiers of applicants and read a cross section of sample teaching philosophies posted on the Web sites of disciplinary societies. Along the way I learned a few new things and had some suspicions reinforced.

The first insight was that, as a literary genre, these documents are as drab as they are predictable. The majority are dominated by abstract appeals to unobjectionable ambitions. They ritualistically invoke a desire to teach "critical thinking," but offer little concrete guidance as to how that might be accomplished. Their authors disavow assuming the status of "expert." They appeal to collaborative learning, embrace "diverse learning styles," bring their own research into the classroom, disdain established canons, incorporate marginalized voices, recount personal teaching epiphanies, and acknowledge personal mentors, most of whom would be unknown to the committee members reading the file.

In five minutes, anyone who has spent time in academe could compile a comparable list of such platitudes, the worst of which veer toward sentimental treacle. The themes are so generic that I flirted with simply passing off someone else's teaching philosophy as my own. Who would notice? Indeed, many sample statements are explicitly presented as models for others to "emulate."

The first suspicion that there is something insincere about teaching statements derives from the fact that almost every author professes to love teaching. Cumulatively, this pandemic of instructional ardor strikes a dissonant note when compared with the routine activities of academics, many of whom spend an inordinate amount of energy trying to secure release time

from teaching. That is, when they're not complaining about the petty hassles of coordinating teaching assistants, dealing with "grade grubbers," writing reference letters for undergraduates they could barely identify in a police lineup, evaluating essays, ordering textbooks, completing copyright permission forms, revising syllabi, learning the latest instructional software, and worrying about the time all of that takes away from other academic pursuits. Such grumblings dominate the hallway conversations of most faculty members I know.

Teaching statements are justified as a mechanism to evaluate classroom ability but are poorly suited for that purpose. Indeed, it is hard to imagine how someone could ever get one wrong. How horrible would a teaching philosophy have to be for it to be a principal factor in precluding an applicant from securing a job or being promoted?

The most intractable problem with teaching philosophies is that they are literary exercises, and it is an open question as to whether someone who writes an inspiring one is actually a good teacher. Authors of impressive statements have demonstrated that they are good at the keyboard, not necessarily in the classroom.

In the interest of honesty it is best to acknowledge that teaching statements are an opportunity—both an invitation and a compulsion—for academics to speak for their institution. Teaching philosophies are a performance, a ritualized symbolic moment in which professors are expected to articulate the university's proclaimed values in its preferred rhetoric.

Such ceremonies are commonplace in academe. This year, for example, I attended a meeting at which our unit was discussing our self-study report. We had included a statement identifying our commitment to "participatory learning." Someone asked what that actually meant, while others chatted about whether nonparticipatory learning was even possible. None of the approximately 18 academics assembled admitted having a clue as to what the concept entailed. But we were informed that our university publicly endorses "participatory learning," and that we would be wise to align ourselves accordingly.

Most complex organizations contain comparable rituals, when members are expected to speak for their institutions. If anything is unique about universities in that regard it is that academics often pride themselves on their antiestablishment orientation and profess to see such bureaucratic dictates for what they are. How is it, then, that so many smart and often intractable people fall into lock step and produce barely distinguishable teaching statements?

Part of the answer pertains to the fact that the documents are demanded only when academics are evaluated for jobs or career advancement. People in such contexts naturally tend to be risk averse. Moments of high-stakes decision making produce a built-in incentive for applicants to reproduce familiar ways of saying unobjectionable things. If a candidate's file is otherwise acceptable, why court disaster by straying from the teaching-philosophy script? That tendency makes the documents both uncontroversial and innocuous.

Another reason that teaching statements err on the side of homogeneity is that they are more important to the institution than to the individual. At a time when administrators face increased consumerist pressures, the simple existence of a requirement that instructors produce teaching statements is fundamentally important. Administrators can point to the documents as further

evidence that their university takes teaching seriously. Thus, a key purpose of the statements is performed long before any faculty member sits down to write one.

Still, teaching statements could provide an opportunity for instructors to formally reflect on their aims, strategies, and tactics in the classroom. They could conceivably tell us a good deal about each individual while also providing pragmatic tips that could be used by other instructors.

Unfortunately, the abstraction that predominates in teaching statements works against their being more useful. The abstraction could flow from their being characterized as a "philosophy," or it might simply reflect tendencies in the social sciences and humanities more generally. Either way, all of the decontextualized claims about the aims and nature of teaching point us in the wrong direction. Implicit in writing these statements is the assumption that we can ruminate on the truths and ideal forms of teaching from the confines of our offices, and that once we have solved teaching as an intellectual puzzle, we can go forth into the real world to make our philosophy real.

But the inescapable fact is that teaching is a highly contextual and increasingly constrained activity.

There are too many constraints to list them all here, but some examples will make the point. University teaching is constrained by tables bolted to classroom floors; hundreds of students in a classroom; the need to evaluate students, and for them to evaluate us; unrelenting grade escalation; official requirements to produce increasingly formal, legalistic, and binding course outlines; increasing numbers of students who also hold paying jobs; research-ethics protocols that make it more difficult for students to conduct self-directed research on topics they find personally interesting; a sense that it has become anathema to fail students; exasperating appeal procedures for students caught cheating; and the fact that teaching is only one thing for which professors are evaluated.

I am not making a naïve, anarchic appeal here to remove all factors that structure how we teach. I'm making a plea to put such factors in the foreground, to take them seriously when thinking about university teaching. These are the real-world contexts in which teaching occurs. They are what instructors work with, around, and sometimes against.

Rather than write statements that offer unobjectionable but not very useful bromides, why not start to recognize the craftlike attributes of teaching? This promises to be a more useful strategy because the knowledge possessed by artisans is knowledge in practice. Artisans must think concretely about how to work with assorted textures, forces, and tensions inherent in their materials, deploying skills developed through repeated practice and working with tools designed with specific uses in mind.

As instructors, what tools and materials are at our disposal? Which tactics are useful, when, and why? Instructors couldn't just say they encourage collaborative learning. Instead, they need to say, specifically, how that is accomplished. What mix of moral suasion, coercion, personal demeanor, clock management, spatial arrangements, and so on allow an instructor to make collaboration work, for both our wide-eyed and deeply cynical students?

This, then, is a plea for greater specificity in reflections on the techniques and tactics used in teaching. I have learned almost nothing useful from the smattering of statements that I have read, but my students and I have benefited enormously from pragmatic lessons that colleagues have passed along about how they coordinate assignments over the course of a term, train teaching assistants, craft course outlines, remember students' names, and organize online resources.

As to my own predilections, I will not profess to love teaching. Teaching is something that only the most Panglossian can love *tout court*. It is a multidimensional activity comprised of countless diverse tasks. Some of those undertakings I enjoy immensely, others are tedium defined, and still others produce what I fear will be life-shortening aggravation.

My hope is that we can reduce one such aggravation by transforming the empty "teaching philosophy" ritual into an evolving set of useful, nitty-gritty reflections on how to best teach university students. Such a change could make one instance of academic busywork a genuinely meaningful exercise.

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PART C: HOW SHOULD I SELECT EVIDENCE?

Teaching Dossier Overall Presentation

Remember that the readers is likely reading or scanning MANY, so do what you can to make it easier to read and find the information that they need and to remember the dossier. **Provide the reader with the message that you want them to take away.**

1. Have a clear layout.
2. Aim to keep the body of the dossier short (4-8 pages for job applications) and make it clear that the rest is Appendix.
3. Include a table of contents to help guide the reader.
4. You can use dividers to make the sections clear. Use tabs to make it easier for the reader to find sections (consider labelling the tabs).
5. Use headings for the different sections.
6. Can use colour to guide the reader, i.e. different sections have different colours.
7. Have a consistent typeface to improve the presentation, and to guide the reader to areas that are most important. If you are using a different font for headings, make sure you are consistent.
8. Make sure that the font is large enough for the easy reading.
9. Use changes in font, boxes etc. to highlight particularly important information.
10. You can use graphics to highlight or demonstrate things.
11. Use white space well to make the presentation clearer.
12. Consider putting the dossier in something that is professional looking (i.e. binder, online).
13. You can use different paper (i.e. bond, lightly-coloured) to change the look of the dossier.

Presenting Student Evaluations*

Make sure that the **message** that you want the reader to take away is clear, do not assume that a reader will draw the same conclusions as you from looking at your data.

1. Student evaluations should show the results from the global question, “How effective was the teacher overall”, because this is the most useful summative information.
2. Do NOT include all the raw data.
3. Summarize the data in a way that is clear and easy to read ex. tables, charts, graphs.
4. Make it easy for the reader to get the answers that they need.
5. Have the overall presentation clear and nice for the reader to look at.
6. Include headings or labels for your tables, charts, columns or graphs.
7. Show the units (e.g. percentages, averages).
8. Show the questions that were asked clearly, with the range of possible answers (e.g.. 1-4).
9. Show where the information comes from, e.g. university standard form or self-made form.
10. Don’t just include comments as a list without any context or explanation, because they do not give much information (unclear whether you are including all comments or just those that make you look good, and if you include an off-the wall bad one, it can affect the way the rest of your dossier is viewed). If you include comments, include them within the text of the dossier as a quote to support a statement that you make, or to explain why you changed some aspect of the course.

*Examples are available on Tab E, Page 2.

Erika Kustra, Dale Roy, Paola Borin, 2007 McMaster University (Revised 2017)

Presenting Student Evaluation of Teaching Data: Examples

Student ratings of instruction, which we call Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) at the University of Windsor, are one of many kinds of evidence that can be used to document instructional excellence. Like any kind of data, SETs should be organized, presented, and appropriately contextualized. Student ratings should not be submitted in the form of raw questionnaires or computer printouts. Instead, you can summarize the evidence in one or both of the following ways:

1. Provide SET instructor scores for the credit-courses the instructor has taught in a table. Include the following:

- course name,
- course level,
- semester,
- year,
- total enrolment, and
- Weighted average instructor score (included on the SET form).

The table would look something like this:

Courses Taught, Enrolment, and Evaluation: Winter 2011-Fall 2016

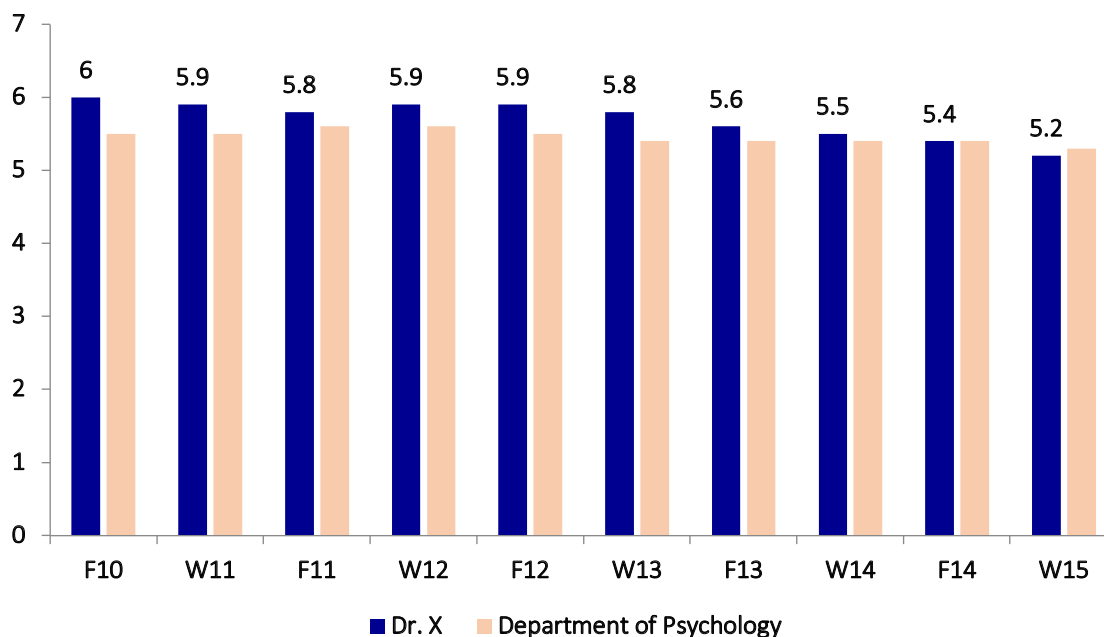
Course	Level	Semester	Year	Enrolment	SET Score
<i>Sociology I</i>	First Year	Winter	2016	232	6 / 7
			2015	250	5.5 / 7
			2014	243	5.3 / 7
			2013	242	5.1 / 7
			2012	241	5 / 7
			2011	220	4.5 / 7
<i>Sociology II</i>	First Year	Fall	2016	267	5.9 / 7
			2015	266	5.7 / 7
			2014	245	4.5 / 7
			2013	232	5.4 / 7
			2012	220	5.2 / 7
			2011	210	5 / 7

This information provides the reader with a clear sense of the instructor's teaching load, typical teaching responsibilities, and the overall student perspective on the instructor's effectiveness.

Jessica Raffoul, University of Windsor, 2017

2. Provide an average SET instructor score for each semester, with a comparison to a peer group's or department's average SET score for that semester. The purpose of this is to put the instructor's scores in context. One way to provide this information is in graphic form:

Professor X's and Department of Psychology's SET Scores: Fall 2010-Winter 2015



Note: You can provide a brief contextualizing statement summarizing the evidence shown in SET scores, as well as any significant contextualizing evidence. Large-enrolment and required courses could be identified, for example, particularly if they are courses that are traditionally unpopular or difficult. Account for irregularities in the data (low ratings that result from significant changes to a course or other unforeseen situations, gaps in ratings due to a leave of absence or special assignment, or reduced teaching responsibilities). This can include a statement about whether the instructor is teaching a normal course load for the department, and if not, why.

Evidencing Your Claims

The following chart illustrates some of the common forms of evidence that might be used to support the claims in your teaching dossier. When selecting evidence, it is worth keeping in mind that contextual factors are critical to interpretation. Possible factors to consider when articulating your story:

- How would I describe the organizational features of my teaching assignment to someone outside my AAU? (For example: number of TAs, lab hours, training provided to assistants and/or sessional instructors etc.)
- What courses have I developed or substantially revised – how many new courses over what period of time?
- Class sizes
- What levels of teaching am I engaged with?
- To what degree have the courses I've taught been within my areas of core expertise?
- How many departments am I teaching in?
- Mix of online/face-to-face; required/options; large/small enrolment
- Factors such as experiential learning
- Courses that are of an unusual nature in their programs
- Experimentation with new teaching methods and class innovations
- My role in program design and development

Design and Plan Effective Courses & Learning Activities	Possible Sources of Evidence
▪ Plans learning activities designed to develop the students' learning ▪ Sound knowledge of the course content and material ▪ Course outline clearly details learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment	▪ Course outlines ▪ Sample course material ▪ Peer feedback ▪ Peer review of course materials by course/course coordinator ▪ Evidence of Adoption of teaching/curriculum materials by others ▪ Letters or notes from students / alumni Relevant SET Questions: Course outlines B1. How effective was the course outline in communicating goals and requirements of the course? Learning outcomes alignment B2. How consistently did the stated course goals match what was being taught in the course? Organization of class A1. Presented material in an organized, well-planned manner B3. How appropriate was the course format for the subject matter? Course materials B8. How well did the instructional materials (readings, audio-visual materials, etc.) facilitate your learning? B9. How well did the instructional activities (lectures, labs, tutorials, practica, field trips, etc.) facilitate your learning? B10. How reasonable was the level of difficulty of the course material? B11. How reasonable was the volume of the work required in the course?

Adapted from the University of Windsor Teaching Evaluation Framework (2016).

<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/provost/sites/uwindsor.ca/provost/files/Teaching%20Evaluation%20Framework.pdf>

Employ Effective Instructional Methods	Possible Sources of Evidence
▪ Learning-centred approach to teaching ▪ Use effective teaching and learning support methods ▪ Clarity of communication and explanation ▪ Stimulates interest ▪ Encourages student-faculty interaction ▪ Encourages student-student interaction ▪ Supports students to develop and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes	▪ Teaching practices summary ▪ Sample course activities and/or lessons ▪ Peer review of course materials by course/course coordinator ▪ Peer review of classroom teaching by colleague ▪ Student comments ▪ Teaching awards or nominations Relevant SET Questions A1. Presented material in an organized, informed manner A2. used instructional time well A3. explained content clearly with appropriate use of examples A4. was a clear and effective speaker A5. communicated enthusiasm and interest in the course material A6. stimulated your interest in the subject and motivated your learning A7. attended to students' questions and answered them clearly and effectively A8. was open to students' comments and suggestions A9. was sensitive to students' difficulties B13/B14. Your level of enthusiasm for taking this course at the time of initial registration/at the conclusion of the course
Supports Students & Creates a Positive Environment	Possible Sources of Evidence
▪ Creates effective learning environments (in classroom/online/work placement etc.) ▪ Directs students to appropriate support and services ▪ Demonstrates respect and requires students to demonstrate respect for others ▪ Available for consultation (e.g. email, online, face-to-face or telephone)	▪ Teaching practices summary ▪ Teaching Development ▪ Course outlines and early course materials or welcomes including LMS use ▪ Peer observation of class ▪ Sample feedback/ comments to and from students SET Questions A8. Was open to students' comments and suggestions A9. Was sensitive to student difficulties A10. Was approachable for additional help A11. Was accessible to students for individual consultation B12. The value of the overall learning experience was

Adapted from the University of Windsor Teaching Evaluation Framework (2016).

<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/provost/sites/uwindsor.ca/provost/files/Teaching%20Evaluation%20Framework.pdf>

Quality Assessments & Feedback	Possible Sources of Evidence
- Quality assessments - Clear - Aligned with learning outcomes - Appropriate level of difficulty - Timely feedback provided to students - Constructive feedback is provided to students	- Teaching practices - Course outlines (showing alignment) - Sample assessments - Tools used in marking (e.g. rubrics) - Peer review of assessments and student work - Peer review of assessments and student work course coordinator - Sample feedback/ comments to students - Development of assessment tools used by others SET Questions B4. How well did the methods of evaluation (e.g., papers, participation, assignments, tests) reflect the subject matter B5. How fair was the grading of work? B6. How timely was the grading of student work? B7. How helpful were comments and feedback on student work?
Reflective Practitioner	Possible Sources of Evidence
- Participates in teaching related professional development - Reflective, assesses self and impact leading to changes in teaching practice	- Teaching practices -- examples of the impact of the change in practice, evidence of reflective practice - Generated record of CTL workshop and course engagement from CTL registration data base - Student surveys, comments and feedback - Evidence of changes in student, peer evaluation - Details of leadership roles in teaching and learning related activities - Details of contribution to the professional development, mentoring of others, and outcomes CV Summary - Professional development undertaken, duration, changes made as a consequence - Examples of leadership contribution in professional development and evaluation SET Questions A8. Was open to students' comments and suggestions A9. Was sensitive to students' difficulties

Adapted from the University of Windsor Teaching Evaluation Framework (2016).
<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/provost/sites/uwindsor.ca/provost/files/Teaching%20Evaluation%20Framework.pdf>

Committed to Scholarly Teaching	Possible Sources of Evidence
- Engages in professional development related to teaching and learning (including engagement in teaching and learning scholarship related to discipline and/or participation in teaching and learning conferences/forums) - Incorporates teaching and learning scholarship into teaching practice and curriculum development	- Generated record of CTL workshop and course engagement from CTL registration data base - Excerpts from course/course materials demonstrating incorporation of current T & L research into teaching activities - Copies of publications and details of contribution and impact - References and letters from peers - Impact of projects, grants and other initiatives for the university or (inter)nationally Selected CV - Details of grants and awards (successful and unsuccessful) and outcomes - Details of conferences and presentations
- Uses current disciplinary research in curriculum and teaching activities - Develops learning activities/course/ course work that supports student engagement in research - Engages students in the research culture and research skills of the discipline	Possible data sources from relevant sections in UWindsor Teaching Dossier template: - Excerpts from course/course materials demonstrating the incorporation of current disciplinary research or the inclusion of research-oriented tasks - Student participation in conferences, presentation of papers and/or publishing - Peer review of curriculum & teaching materials CV Summary - Involvement in undergraduate/graduate supervision with evidence of successful completion (as appropriate) - Receipt of prizes or awards by students supervised (as appropriate)
Uses authentic case studies, integration of industry experience and/or partnerships in teaching	- Excerpts from Course/Course materials demonstrating the integration of case studies and/or industry experience - Feedback from students on experience - Extent of participation by students, industry - Letters or surveys of industry satisfaction on preparation of students for practice Peer review of professional /authentic experience - Invitations to work with industry, letters of support from industry - Feedback from industry partners indicating alignment between industry requirements and learning outcomes - Feedback from industry partners indicating the efficacy of programs in preparing graduates for professional practice

Adapted from the University of Windsor Teaching Evaluation Framework (2016).
<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/provost/sites/uwindsor.ca/provost/files/Teaching%20Evaluation%20Framework.pdf>

Professional, Passionate, & All-around Good Egg	Possible Sources of Evidence
Professional Qualities • Takes ownership and management of teaching role • Responds positively to opportunities and new approaches • Communicates effectively in both formal and informal contexts • Applies professional ethical practices in work and in teaching contexts Personal qualities • Approaches teaching with enthusiasm, passion and confidence • Demonstrates resilience and perseverance in the face of obstacles • Demonstrates time management of self and work to ensure others are not delayed in their work • Demonstrates self-reflective evaluation of practices and relationships • Demonstrates commitment and interest in students and their learning	▪ Collaborative teaching and learning grants, publications ▪ Details of mentoring roles and outcomes ▪ Feedback from staff mentored ▪ Details of leadership roles and confirmation of contributions from peers ▪ Letters of reference and/or thanks ▪ Industry/professional awards CV Summary: ▪ Professional development undertaken, including CTL AAU Head Evaluation ▪ Comments on the effectiveness in promoting students' academic pursuits and stimulating interest in continued study of the discipline ▪ Comments on day-to-day availability to students; and the "demands" placed on him/her by students and the candidate's willingness to assist students outside of formal class hours SET Questions A5. Communicated enthusiasm and interest in the course material A6. stimulated interest in the subject matter and motivated learning B6 How timely was the grading of student work? B13/14. Your level of enthusiasm for taking this course at the time of initial registration/at the conclusion of the course

.dapted from the University of Windsor Teaching Evaluation Framework (2016).
<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/provost/sites/uwindsor.ca.provost/files/Teaching%20Evaluation%20Framework.pdf>

Excerpt from the Canadian Association of University Teachers, CAUT, *Teaching Dossiers, 2nd Edition* (2007) (p. 17-19)

Retrieved from <https://www.caut.ca/docs/default-source/professional-advice/teaching-dossier.pdf>

3.2 Possible items for a teaching dossier

Academic staff members should recognize which of the following items would most effectively enhance a favourable impression of teaching competence and which might better be used for self-evaluation and improvement. The dossier should be compiled to make the best possible case for teaching effectiveness.

3.2.1 Teaching responsibilities and practices

1. List of course titles and numbers, unit values or credits, enrolments with brief elaboration.
2. List of course materials prepared for students.
3. Information on academic's availability to students and evidence of prompt and effective correspondence via e-mail.
4. Report on identification of student difficulties and encouragement of student participation in courses or programs.
5. Steps taken to emphasize the interrelatedness and relevance of different kinds of learning.
6. Statement about quizzes and examination items being keyed to instructional objectives.

3.2.2 Products of good teaching

7. Student scores on teacher-made or standardized tests, possibly before and after a course has been taken as evidence of learning.
8. Student laboratory workbooks and other kinds of work- books or logs.
9. Student essays, creative work, projects and field-work reports.
10. A record of students who select and succeed in advanced courses of study in the field.
11. A record of students who elect another course with the same academic.
12. Evidence of effective supervision of Honour's, Master's or Ph.D. theses.
13. Setting up or running a successful internship program.
14. Evidence of help given to colleagues on teaching improvement.

3.2.3 Evaluating and improving one's teaching

15. Maintaining a record of the changes resulting from self- evaluation.
16. Instructional innovations attempted and evaluation of their effectiveness.
17. Reading journals on improving teaching and attempting to implement acquired ideas.
18. Reviewing new teaching materials for possible application including exchanging course materials with a colleague from another institution.
19. Conducting research on one's own teaching or course.
20. Becoming involved in an association or society concerned with the improvement of teaching and learning.
21. Participating in seminars, workshops and professional meetings intended to improve teaching.

PART D: HOW SHOULD I ASSESS MY TEACHING DOSSIER?

Self and Peer Assessment Checklist

Presentation	
Is the information current?	
Is the dossier well-written, well organized, and easy to navigate?	
Does the dossier address the appropriate audience?	
Evidence	
Are all claims supported by valid documentation and strong evidence?	
Are multiple sources of information provided for each claim?	
Does the teaching dossier balance perspectives from self, from students and colleagues, and from products of student learning?	
Does the evidence indicate that the overall quality of teaching is high?	
Coherence	
Does the evidence indicate that performance is consistent with priorities and stated values?	
Does the structure and organization demonstrate consistency between the articulated philosophy and effective practice?	
Are the structure, evidence and claims all appropriate for the purpose of the dossier?	
Approach to Learning	
Does the dossier make a strong case for the use of specific teaching efforts for specific courses and students?	
Does the evidence show commitment to students and their learning?	
Does the dossier demonstrate instructor's knowledge of the subject and how to teach it? (flexibility & pedagogical knowledge)	
Does the dossier reflect consideration of diverse student learning needs?	
Reflective Practice	
Does the dossier provide evidence of efforts to improve teaching? (Professional development, scholarship of teaching, learning from practice, participation in learning communities)	
Does it present the instructor's specific and unique strengths and abilities?	
Are teaching abilities, as well as potential, reflected?	
Does the dossier demonstrate ways that you have contributed to teaching and learning at the institutional level?	

Creating Credible Teaching Portfolios

Producing a teaching dossier/portfolio is a worthwhile and attainable objective for all college and university professors, regardless of their field, rank, or experience. To reach this goal it takes some reading, recording, time, and help from you and your friends. This checklist is adapted from Dr. Alan Wright's "Notes on C-R-E-D-I-B-L-E Teaching Portfolios." (Concise, Readable, Engaging, Documented, Insightful, Believable, Literate, Edifying)

C-R-E-D-I-B-L-E	The Teaching dossier should: 
C oncise	☐ <u>capture the essence</u> of your activities, accomplishments, and aspirations ☐ be from 5-12 typewritten pages in length ☐ contain a few pages of text, lists, and tables
R eadable	☐ be <u>easy to read</u> with understanding by colleagues of all disciplines ☐ not use the jargon of your field to the extent that your message becomes unclear ☐ be read and checked by an instructor from another academic or professional area
E ngaging	☐ <u>transmit a passion</u> for the subject and the process of teaching and learning ☐ grab the attention of the reader ☐ involve the reader in the story of your professional/pedagogical profile ☐ go beyond the distant, cold listing of activities typical of the traditional c.v.
D ocumented	☐ be <u>supported by documentation</u> for statements and claims made (this evidence appears in the appendices) ☐ include material from: ☐ oneself ☐ colleagues ☐ students ☐ samples of student work ☐ include evidence of the scholarship of teaching ☐ effectively employ brief quotations from the documents in the appendices

C-R-E-D-I-B-L-E	The Teaching dossier should: 🕒
I nsightful	☐ <u>convey your insights</u> into university teaching and learning ☐ communicate your own teaching preferences and strengths ☐ reveal your development as a teacher ☐ guide the reader through the facts so they can interpret your perspectives and understandings
B elievable	☐ <u>include reasonable claims</u> that can be substantiated (pride is normal, exaggerated claims are counterproductive)
L iterate	☐ be <u>well-written and literate</u> ☐ be clear and error-free ☐ be reviewed by someone else before going public ☐ be vetted by two (or more) people [a departmental colleague, a colleague from another department, and/or an educational developer]
E difying	☐ <u>provide an edifying experience</u> for both the dossier writer and the reader ☐ afford the writer with: ○ a new appreciation of his/her teaching accomplishment ○ a new vocabulary for articulating teaching approaches, aspirations, and achievements ☐ give the reader: ○ a new appreciation of the writer's profile as a university teacher ○ an understanding of teaching and learning in the writer's academic or professional field

WORKSHOP HANDOUTS

Teaching Dossier Academy: Reflecting on Your Teaching

	1. What do you do when you teach? (Describe as specifically as possible the types of materials, resources, and approaches you typically use in your teaching)	2. What are your teaching successes? (How did these materials contribute to a successful teaching or learning experience?)	3. What are your teaching failures? (Which of these materials or approaches did not work well? Why not?)	4. What themes are emerging? (Beliefs, values, goals, theories about teaching or learning)
Instructional Materials (textbooks, readings, videos, PPT, etc.)				
Tools & Technology (online quizzes, clickers, simulations, etc.)				
Teaching Techniques (case studies, group work, active learning, service or community based learning, assessments, etc.)				

Teaching Dossier Academy, CTL, University of Windsor – prepared by Allyson Skene, 2015.

Set Tone/Build Rapport (office hours, classroom style, course policies, feedback, motivational tactics)				
Self-Evaluation (how do you measure success; do you collect and analyze feedback on your teaching skills?)				
Professional Development (workshops, courses, insights about teaching from scholarly literature)				
Other Please feel free to add anything that doesn't fit into other categories				

Teaching Dossier Template 1

Teaching Approach

- Teaching Philosophy
- Teaching Practices

Evidence of Teaching Contributions

- Teaching Experience
- Course and/or Program Development
- Educational Material Development
- Student Supervision and Mentoring

Student and Peer Feedback

- Student Evaluations of Teaching
- Student Comments
- Letters From Colleagues and Students

Teaching Awards or Nominations

Teaching-Related Service

- Program Coordination
- Supporting Events Related to Teaching
- Educational Policy

Research on Teaching and Learning

- Peer-Reviewed Publications
- Peer-Reviewed Presentations
- Invited Presentations and Workshops

Teaching Development

- Professional Development Activities

Appendices

- Sample Course Outline
- Sample Assignment
- Feedback

Teaching Dossier Template 2

Teaching Philosophy

Teaching Experience

- Courses Taught
- Workshops
- Guest Lectures
- Teaching Assistantships

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

- Student Evaluations of Teaching
- Colleague Evaluations
- Teaching Award Nominations

Course and Curriculum Development

- Course Design
- Selected Teaching Innovations

Professional Development

- Courses
- Workshops and Conferences
- Certificates

Appendices

- Sample Course Outline
- Sample Assignment
- Feedback

Teaching Dossier Template 3

Teaching Philosophy

Teaching Practices

Teaching Experience

- Workshops
- Guest Lectures
- Teaching Assistantships

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

- Teaching Scores
- Student and Colleague Evaluations

Course Development

- Course Design
- Selected Teaching Innovations

Professional Development

- Workshops Attended
- Certificates

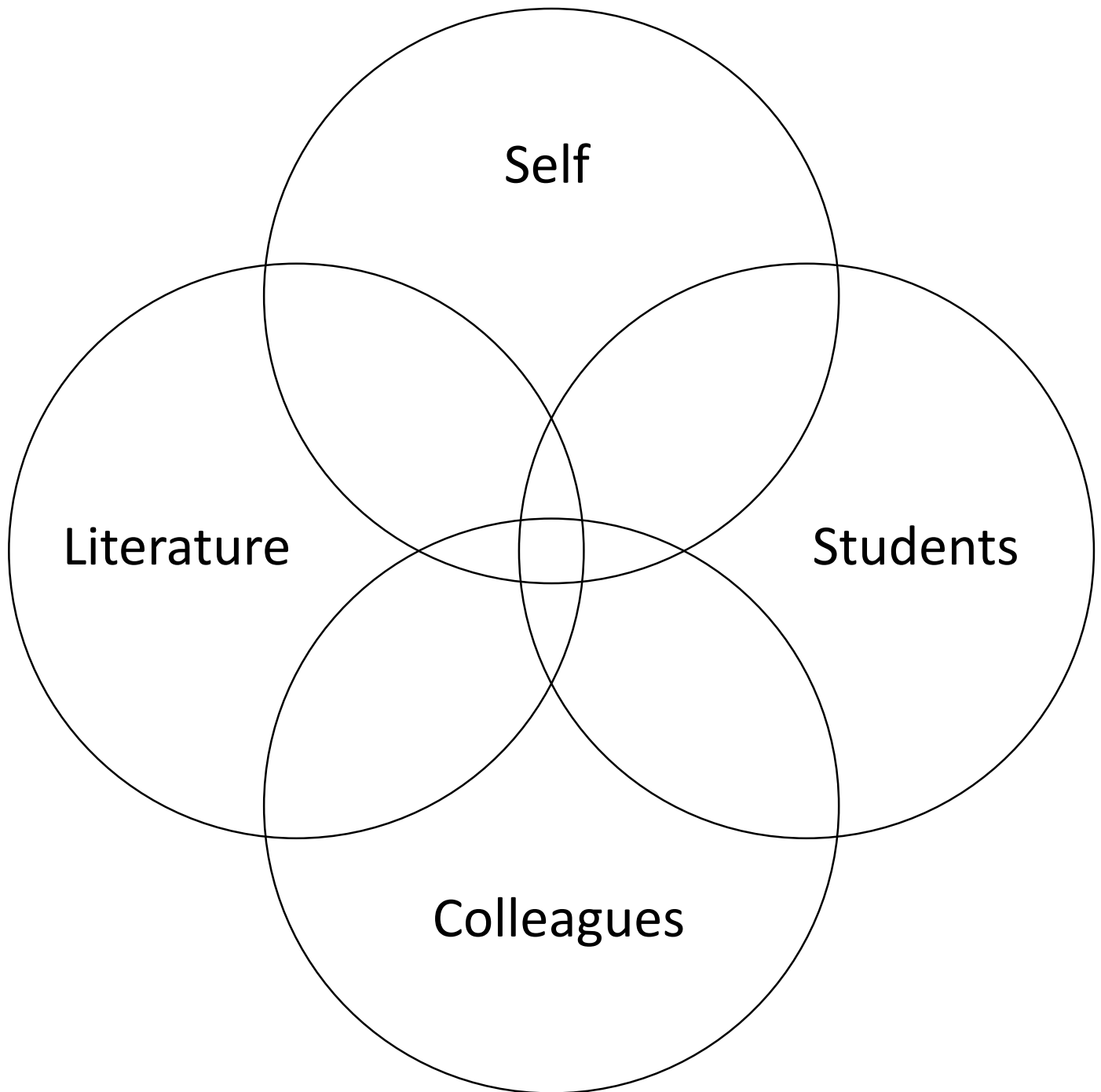
Appendices

- Sample Course Outline
- Sample Assignment

Kinds of Evidence: Lenses of Reflection

(Adpated from Brookfield, S. Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher. San-Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 1995)

What kinds of information could you gather from each lens that might be used as evidence in your teaching dossier?



Teaching Dossier Academy: Reflections on Your Process

1. Reflections on the process of developing my teaching dossier (e.g. What was difficult, helpful, surprising?)
2. What are the next steps you would like to take to further develop your Teaching Dossier?
3. What are the next steps you would like to take to further develop your teaching?