



Teaching Portfolio

Guidelines for creating & maintaining your portfolio



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Structure of the Teaching Portfolio	3
Part A – Executive Summary	3
Part B – Supporting Documentation	3
Benefits of Maintaining the Portfolio	5
How does this Portfolio overlap with other reporting tools?.....	6
Who will benefit from the Teaching Portfolio?	6
Template: Teaching Portfolio.....	7
Appendices.....	13

Introduction

Education is at the heart of the Mission of the Faculty of Health Sciences. Consequently, the personal commitment of faculty members to both teaching and learning is essential. Such commitment is as important as research, clinical activities and administrative service. Performance in education must be recorded and evaluated so that it can be appropriately recognized. The teaching portfolio is intended to facilitate this process by representing your involvement in teaching which will be of assistance to you during Annual Career Reviews and for all other academic reviews.

University policy encourages teaching excellence and acknowledges that evaluation of teaching is central to achieving such excellence. Within the Faculty of Health Sciences, we strongly encourage all faculty members to maintain a teaching portfolio to record your teaching methods, accomplishments and goals. The Teaching Portfolio should be structured according to the guidelines provided in the University policy SPS-B2 – Teaching Portfolios, and a sample of the suggested format is included within this document.

The Teaching Portfolio is owned by you and may contain any and all information that you wish to document. You are responsible for developing, maintaining, and updating your portfolio and are expected to do this as carefully as you would record peer-reviewed research activities and/or scholarly clinical activities.

Structure of the Teaching Portfolio

The portfolio should contain a comprehensive and up to date record of your educational activities. This information should be maintained in two sections: Part A - Executive Summary and Part B – Supporting Documentation.

Part A – Executive Summary

The summary is a comprehensive catalogue of your educational activities and achievements. It is designed to provide evidence of educational involvement, commitment, interest and expertise.

While the summary statement provides you with an opportunity to present your educational philosophy on teaching and learning and your approach to evaluation and professional development, it is not meant to be exhaustive and should be kept at a reasonable length. As well, the information contained in this statement is used to write the Candidate’s Statement required for formal academic reviews.

The summary should contain the following information:

- ❖ description of responsibilities and mechanism of evaluation drawn from the appointment letter, or updates thereto
- ❖ description of teaching approach/philosophy
- ❖ description of teaching practice, including examples of how the approach/philosophy has been realized, or how teaching has been adapted to unusual conditions
- ❖ description of contributions to teaching, for example, course design, publications and research on teaching and learning, presentations on teaching and learning, professional development, educational leadership, reports on issues pertaining to teaching and learning (about one page);
- ❖ complete details of responses to the summative question in the students’ ratings of all courses taught over the past five years. Student comments are not to be included.

Part B – Supporting Documentation

Your supporting documentation can be pulled from a variety of sources including but not limited to:

Educational contributions

The Faculty Education Database (STAR) will provide you with most of the information you require for annual updates. If you notice that your teaching contributions do not appear in the STAR database, please contact the administrator of the relevant educational program for assistance.

In addition, you should maintain a personal record of your educational contributions. Information should be organized in the same manner as the data provided by the Faculty Education Database (STAR) i.e. by program (e.g. Undergraduate, Graduate, Postgraduate), course (HTH SCI 1E06, HRM-721) and

role (tutor, clinical supervisor). This record should be easy to review for the current year or across a number of years. Precision and clarity are key and this should be updated continuously.

The information contained in your personal record should resemble the information available on your CV.

Peer review and letters of support from colleagues

This could include letters/notes from co-tutors, course coordinators, etc.

Performance reviews and letters of appreciation from educational administrators

This could include copies of letters from prior Annual Career Reviews, DEC reviews/discussions and or other peer reviews.

Course evaluations

Completed student evaluations, compiled and presented as tables should be included.

External materials

This would include information on publications and presentations on educational topics, awards, and involvement in educational activities at the national and international levels. Additionally, include non-course related educational activities including but not limited to: educational products you designed (course outlines, booklets, simulated patient material, e-modules etc.) and the strategies you have adopted to respond to feedback, if appropriate. Activities which you have identified as major contributions should always have associated evaluations.

Benefits of Maintaining the Portfolio

Education and teaching are non-negotiable components of all Faculty appointments. The Portfolio will be a repository of the details regarding your educational activities and that are listed in the Education section of your curriculum vitae. Maintaining a portfolio which tracks your educational commitments allows you to provide objective data concerning your educational roles which are essential for ongoing assessment of your academic contributions.

Your Portfolio gives you the control and responsibility for communicating important information about your educational activities to others. It can serve as a basis for discussion and negotiation with your Chair/Associate Dean, Department Education Coordinator (DEC), or others responsible both for faculty career development and the functioning of Faculty programs.

Depending on departmental/school policy, your Department Education Coordinator (DEC) may be a suitable individual to help you develop your Portfolio.

Benefits of Maintaining the Portfolio:

Organizing and Clarifying Educational Commitments & Goals

Maintaining a portfolio helps you to organize your educational goals and clarify your commitments in an environment where there are often competing demands on your time. It captures the complexity of your educational involvement. Accurate recording and updating of educational activities including appropriate evaluations can promote a more reflective and scholarly approach about what you have done and wish to do in education. It can also foster continued renewal and a culture of excellence in education.

Tracking Educational Contributions

Maintaining an up-to-date Portfolio will provide a basis on which to compare the content in the Faculty Education Database (STAR) and facilitate accurate communication with your Chair/Associate Dean.

Academic Reviews

Proper tracking of your commitments and accomplishments will provide valuable material to your Department Chair/Associate Dean and Department Education Coordinator (DEC) during the annual career review process, and for more formal academic reviews for re-appointment, and for tenure and promotion consideration.

At times of annual career review, the full Portfolio may be used as a basis for discussing future educational commitments with your Chair/Associate Dean. The details in the Portfolio should reflect your Mutually Agreed Responsibilities as outlined on the R4 form and serve as the basis for this discussion.

For academic reviews, a complete Portfolio will enable you and your Chair/Associate Dean to summarize the information requested by the Faculty and University within the formal academic review guidelines.

How does this Portfolio overlap with other reporting tools?

- ❖ The Portfolio will be a repository of the details regarding your educational activities and will reflect the roles that are listed in the education section of your curriculum vitae.
- ❖ An annual report is generated for each faculty member by the Faculty Educational Database on his/her educational contributions. Maintaining an up-to-date Portfolio will provide a basis on which to compare the content in the annual report and facilitate accurate communication with your Department Chair/ Associate Dean.
- ❖ At times of annual career review, the full Portfolio may be used as a basis for discussing future educational commitments with your Chair or Associate Dean.
- ❖ For academic reviews, a complete Portfolio will enable you and your Chair/Associate Dean to summarize the information requested by the Faculty and University within the formal academic review guidelines.
- ❖ For those reviewed as Clinician Educators, the information tracked in this Portfolio and the Clinical Activities Portfolio may overlap. In these cases, faculty members are not expected to duplicate the information and are encouraged to combine portions of the dossiers as necessary.
- ❖ The Executive Summary contained in your Portfolio can be used as a starting point when writing the Candidate's Statement that is required for formal academic review.

Who will benefit from the Teaching Portfolio?

1. **You**, as a faculty member will benefit from communicating and being assessed on complete and accurate educational information
2. **Your Chair/Associate Dean**, will benefit by having all the information readily available to make informed recommendations about your career development. An up to date Portfolio will allow for a full assessment of teaching as outlined in SPS B1 - Procedures for the Assessment of Teaching
3. **Your Department Education Coordinator**, who represents the special interests of your Chair/Associate Dean in education, and may be involved in collating and reviewing educational information in consideration for academic review
4. **Faculty programs**, will be able to negotiate more effectively with Departments/Schools and individuals regarding educational roles, if the full range of a faculty member's involvement is understood
5. **The Dean and Associate Dean Education**, who are committed to ensuring that educational involvement and excellence remains central to the Faculty mission

Template: Teaching Portfolio

This template can serve as an outline for cataloguing your educational interests and activities. The size of each section will vary, depending on your particular involvement. Individual schools/departments may choose to add specific content relevant to their programmes and faculty activities.

Part A – Executive Summary

The sections below are meant to provide assistance in organizing your written statement. The information compiled here is drawn from Part B of the Portfolio

Outline your current educational responsibilities. Identify and describe your major educational contributions/roles and describe your involvement in your major educational roles.

Outline your teaching approach/philosophy. This should include career goals with respect to education, how you perceive your strengths as an educator and how you evaluate your progress and the progress of your students and professional development initiatives.

Outline your teaching practice; include examples of how the approach/philosophy has been realized. Describe your professional activities and your plan to augment and strengthen your teaching abilities (especially in relation to any new areas that are of particular interest).

Outline your contributions to teaching. Describe your activities in the development of new initiatives or the revision of old ones. Identify any initiatives you have undertaken to ensure ongoing professional enhancement in education. Explain how these activities have strengthened FHS educational programs.

Provide an overview of your student evaluations. (past 5 years)

Summarize any other pertinent areas of educational activities, not covered above, including mentoring of faculty colleagues.

The information noted above should provide you with some general themes to pursue when writing your summary statement and your Candidate's Statement that is required for formal academic review.

Part B Supporting Documentation

The amount and type of supporting documentation included in the dossier is at the discretion of the individual faculty member. The Faculty of Health Sciences suggests that faculty members include all relevant information to assist their Department in completing a full review of their educational contributions.

This supporting documentation should be arranged in a logical manner, usually by category in chronological order.

Suggested categories include:

- ❖ Annual educational contributions listings from the Faculty Education Database (STAR)
- ❖ Peer reviews and letters of support from colleagues
- ❖ Performance reviews and letters of appreciation from educational administrators
- ❖ Student Evaluations compiled into table format
- ❖ Other materials

Appendices

1. SPS B1 - Procedures for the Assessment of Teaching
2. SPS B2 - Teaching Portfolios

Procedures for the Assessment of Teaching (SPS B1)

Approved by Senate — December 14, 2011

Approved by the Board of Governors — December 15, 2011

I Effective Teaching

Effective teaching is a condition for promotion through the professorial ranks, the granting of tenure or permanence, salary increments based on merit, and University teaching awards (the President's Awards). These processes allow opportunities for the improvement of teaching through formal and informal feedback. Such feedback is particularly important for faculty at the beginning of their teaching careers, where it can and should provide a useful contribution to the development of teaching skills.

The general expectations regarding teaching effectiveness and illustrations of how this can be evaluated are contained in Section III, clauses 4 to 10 of the *Policy and Regulations with Respect to Academic Appointment, Tenure and Promotion* (Tenure and Promotion Policy). Procedures for such assessments are described below. In general, they involve two components: assessment by students and assessment by peers. The process of peer assessment is a cooperative one, involving the faculty member and the Department Chair and possibly other departmental colleagues and/or external assessors.

II Procedures for Student Evaluations of Teaching

It is the responsibility of the Dean of each Faculty to ensure that these procedures are followed.

1. Student evaluation by questionnaire shall be performed for every undergraduate course (including summer courses), toward the end of the course, every time the course is offered. Students should be informed at the beginning of each course that they will be expected to participate in these evaluations.
2. Each Faculty shall develop a standard, Faculty-wide student evaluation questionnaire that shall include as the first question a single summative question common to all university courses. The summative question is: *"Overall for this course, what is your opinion of the effectiveness of the instructor?"* This questionnaire may be customized for the needs of individual instructors and/or departments. At a minimum, the rating of the summative question, with departmental context, must be included in all tenure/permanence and promotion recommendations as part of the Departmental Teaching Evaluation Report (see SPS B8).
3. It should be made clear to the students that the instructor is not involved in the administration or the analysis of student questionnaires.
 - (a) Paper questionnaires should be distributed and collected during class time by someone other than the instructor. The instructor shall not be present during this procedure. Completed questionnaires should be returned by someone other than the instructor to the departmental office.
 - (b) Questionnaires may be administered on-line. On-line questionnaires must be made available to students only during the last two weeks of classes before the commencement of the final examination period and before final course grades are known.
4. Information from the student evaluation questionnaires will be consolidated by the Department or

Senate-approved Program¹ into a report, consisting of a tabulation of the numerical data. Departments will provide all instructors with contextual data (averages and medians, ideally a histogram) for all the courses given in each term. This report will be used by the department as input for promotion, tenure, permanence, and/or salary reviews, and a copy will be given to the instructor after the final grades have been submitted.

III Procedures for Departmental Evaluation of Teaching

Sound evaluation of teaching mandates evaluation by multiple people, on multiple occasions and in multiple contexts. The product of the evaluation process will not be a uniform document, rather teaching is complex and the product of evaluation of teaching may also be complex. Faculty members use a variety of pedagogies and work with students in multiple settings with multiple aids. For this reason, departmental evaluation cannot take the form of a single classroom visit, or an opinion expressed by a single individual after review of a single component of teaching, for research has shown that this method of evaluating teaching is unreliable. Instead, departmental evaluation must adhere to the principles of involving more than one evaluator and more than one site or occasion of evaluation.

A teaching portfolio structured in accordance with SPS B2 or SPS B3 would allow peers to evaluate the appropriateness of the individual's teaching approach, effectiveness of his or her teaching practice, the robustness of the evidence adduced in support of the instructor's effectiveness, and the importance of the individual's teaching contributions. It will also facilitate yearly annual review and discussion of teaching between the Department Chair and each faculty member, as well as the departmental evaluation that is part of tenure, promotion and/or permanence processes.

Conversational interviews about the contents of the portfolio between the instructor and the peer evaluators offer a good practice for evaluation, since they prepare the ground for informed and nuanced assessments of the instructor's teaching. A sound practice would be the review of the teaching portfolio by several colleagues. Colleagues may be experienced individuals who are members of the department or of other departments in the University.

To the extent that the students' ratings feature in the consideration by departments, or in the portfolios prepared for tenure and promotion or permanence, it is critical that these numerical ratings be set in the context of all the teaching done by the department. At a minimum this context should include the averages and medians of the scores for the summative question(s) for all courses, with distinction as appropriate, e.g., by level. It may be appropriate to weight the results for different courses by the number of responses.

It is expected that candidates for re-appointment, permanence, tenure or promotion will have an appropriate review of their teaching portfolios at the department level and that the department will construct a departmental report, incorporating the elements of the teaching portfolio that capture the substance of activities.

IV Departmental Teaching Evaluation Report

The department's submission on the evaluation of teaching for reappointment, tenure, permanence and/or promotion, which forms part of the dossier outlined in SPS B8, is not limited in length and should minimally contain commentary with respect to all of the following elements that are relevant:

1. annual review, and results of subsequent discussion with the candidate, of the Executive Summary (Part A) of the teaching portfolio (see SPS B2). Results of this discussion will be recorded in writing and agreed to by both parties.

¹"Program" means a Senate-approved, interdisciplinary course of study at the undergraduate or graduate level which is not the sole administrative and academic responsibility of any one Department.

2. observations from peers' visits to lectures or other teaching situations and evidence that the observations have been discussed with the colleague.
3. significant contributions to the curriculum. For example, this may take the form of well considered, evidence-based development in one's own course or across the curriculum or evidence of innovative teaching practice.
4. significant contributions to the development of course materials.
5. significant participation in pedagogical discussions with students, colleagues, TAs, in the department or elsewhere.
6. evidence of incorporation of some form of formative evaluation in courses and evidence of response to the concerns of students.
7. information on the common summative question on the student evaluation questionnaire should be provided in tabular form, including for each course, the number of students registered, the response rate, along with the mean, median and standard deviation. These numerical ratings should be set in the context of all the teaching done in the department and should, at a minimum, include the means and medians (better a histogram) of the scores for the summative question for all courses with possible distinctions by level as appropriate. Evaluation information should cover all courses taught during the previous five years of service at McMaster University.

Teaching Portfolios (SPS B2)

Approved by Senate — December 14, 2011
Approved by the Board of Governors — December 15, 2011

A teaching portfolio is a record of a faculty member's teaching methods, accomplishments and goals. One purpose of a teaching portfolio is to represent the faculty member's involvement in teaching to potential reviewers.

Every faculty member should have a teaching portfolio, which he/she updates regularly. The portfolio is owned by the faculty member and may contain any and all information that the faculty member wishes to document.

Structure of Teaching Portfolios

The portfolio consists of two main parts, Part A – Executive Summary, which consists of the items (i) – (v) listed below and Part B – Supporting Documentation, which is optional and may contain additional material compiled by the faculty member in support of Part A.

- (i) description of responsibilities and mechanism of evaluation drawn from the appointment letter, or updates thereto (maximum one page);
- (ii) description of teaching approach/philosophy (about one page);
- (iii) description of teaching practice, including examples of how the approach/philosophy has been realized, or how teaching has been adapted to unusual conditions (one to two pages);
- (iv) description of contributions to teaching, for example, course design, publications and research on teaching and learning, presentations on teaching and learning, professional development, educational leadership, reports on issues pertaining to teaching and learning (about one page);
- (v) complete details of responses to the summative question in the students' ratings of all courses taught over the past five years. The numerical ratings should be set in the context of all the teaching done in the department and should, at a minimum, include the means (better a histogram) of the scores for the summative question for all departmental courses with possible distinctions (e.g., by level). It is the responsibility of the Department Chair to provide all instructors with contextual data for all the courses given in each term.

This structure of the teaching portfolio accords with best practice and will ensure that departmental evaluation of a candidate's teaching can be conducted most effectively. The above elements of Part A constitute, in effect, an "executive" summary of a potentially much larger portfolio. The intent of this summary is to provide a means to manage the larger portfolio rather than to require that all such portfolios have a distinct length and uniformity. For example, the supporting documentation in Part B could record the changes and evolution in the items (i) through (iv) and collect relevant items such as course outlines, exams and assignments.

Students' comments are *not* to be included in the Executive Summary – Part A, or in the Departmental Evaluation Report. Anonymous statements from students are unreliable and typically unverifiable, and a summative evaluation (such as is conducted when candidates are considered for tenure and promotion or permanence) should not be based, in whole or in part, on such comments.

When a candidate is being considered for re-appointment, permanence, tenure or promotion the teaching portfolio will be reviewed at the department level, and the department will construct a departmental report, incorporating the elements of the Executive Summary that capture the substance of activities (see SPS B1).