Preparing Your McMaster Teaching Portfolio

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OUTLINE & OUTCOMES

Outline:

- Background
    - Teaching Portfolios: What, Why & How
    - Teaching Culture at McMaster
- The Components of a Teaching Portfolio
    - SPS B2: McMaster's Teaching Portfolio policy
    - Review each SPS B2 section
    - Articulate your teaching beliefs/values
- How to approach your Portfolio as a new faculty

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OUTLINE & OUTCOMES

Intended Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Describe the purpose and components of a teaching portfolio

- Describe elements of McMaster's teaching culture

- Familiarize yourself with SPS B2's teaching portfolio requirements

- Reflect on the underlying values that shape your teaching

- Create an "evidence wish list" to guide your teaching development efforts

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KEY RESOURCES

Preparing a Teaching Portfolio

A companion to McMaster's Supplementary Policy Statement B2: Teaching Portfolios

MacPherson Institute Guidebook

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BRIGHTER WORLD

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Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Complete Policy Title
Teaching Portfolios

Policy Number (if applicable):
SPS B2

Approved by
**Senate /
Board of Governors**

Date of Most Recent Approval
**March 11, 2020 /
April 16, 2020**

Date of Original Approval(s)

Supersedes/Amends Policy dated
December 14, 2011 / December 15, 2011

April 8, 2009 (SPS 10)

Responsible Executive
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Policy Specific Enquiries
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

General Policy Enquiries
Policy (University Secretariat)

DISCLAIMER: *If there is a Discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.*

WHAT IS A TEACHING PORTFOLIO?

A teaching portfolio is a **reflective and developmental tool** used to:

- Articulate your **beliefs** about teaching, learning, and students;

- Demonstrate your **growth** as an educator; and

- Support these claims with a record of your teaching **methods**, **accomplishments** and **goals**.

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BENEFITS OF A TEACHING PORTFOLIO

- It can help you **develop, reflect on, and enhance** your teaching and the student learning experience

- It provides a space to meaningfully reflect on your **successes, failures, goals and growth**

- It can facilitate and **support annual career review conversations** with your Chair, or during **Peer Observations** of Teaching discussions

- It's required when you apply for **promotion, permanence, or tenure** at McMaster

- Often required when applying for a **teaching award**

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MCMASTER'S T&L CULTURE

McMaster's 2021 Partnered in Teaching & Learning Strategy: "Inspire and support excellence in teaching and learning"

Themes include:
- Diverse and expansive ways of knowing
- Experience-based learning
- Whole student experience
- Student belonging and inclusion
- Teaching as a professional and innovative practice
- Assessment and evaluation of student learning
- Digital learning

ENCOURAGING PARTNERED AND INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

SUPPORTING A HOLISTIC AND PERSONALIZED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

FOSTERING INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AND SCHOLARLY TEACHING

DEVELOPING ACTIVE AND FLEXIBLE LEARNING SPACES

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MCMASTER'S T&L CULTURE
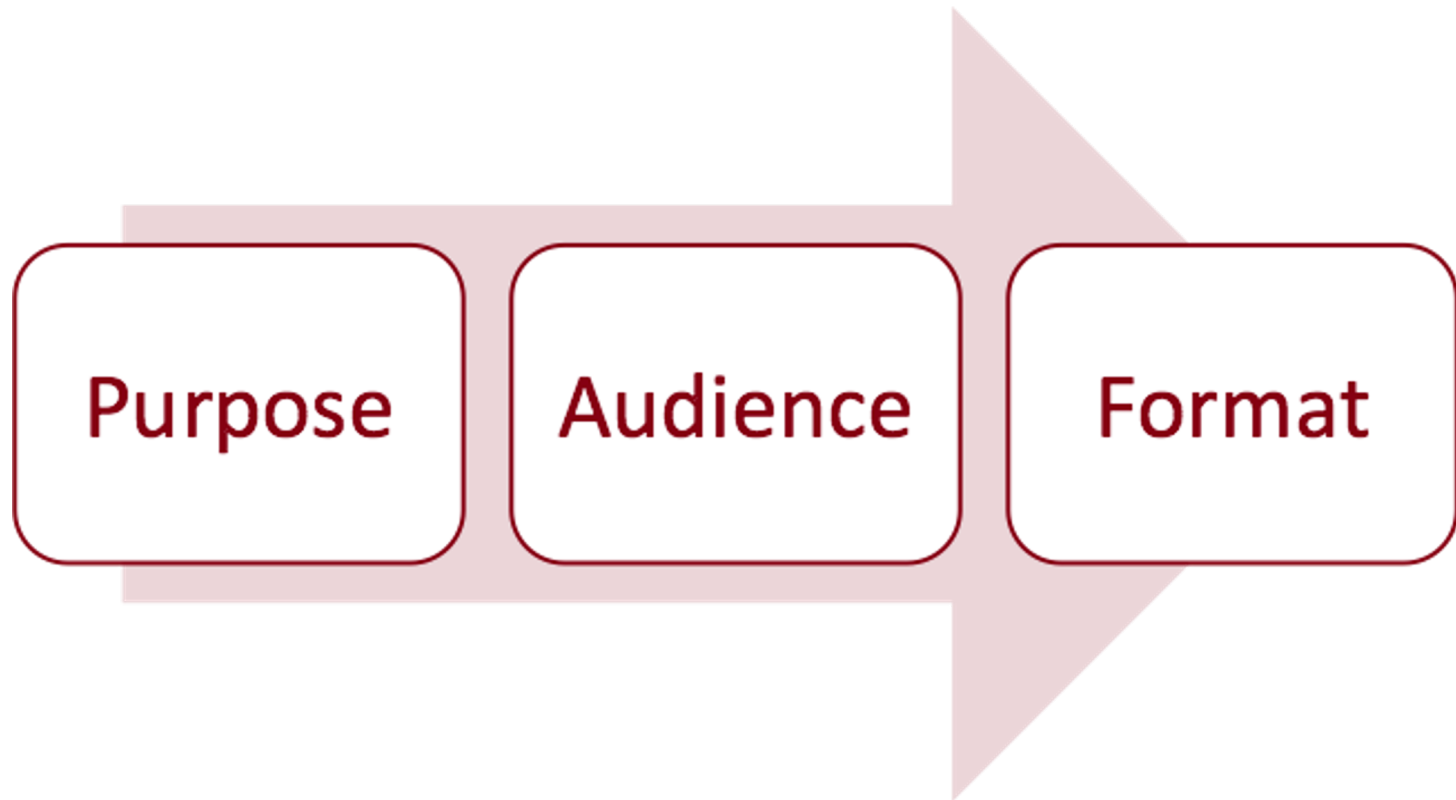
Evaluation of Teaching in the strategy:

- *Objective*: Refine policies and processes to **demonstrate that teaching is valued** and recognized as a professional practice

- *Objective*: Build a culture that values **innovative, experimental and playful mindsets**

- "Evaluation of teaching needs to be **multi-faceted** and include self-reflection, peer observations, and student voices. We are committed to ensuring that **quality, relevance, and impact of teaching** is valued."

McMaster's culture also emphasizes **scholarly teaching**, acknowledges that simple methods for evaluation of teaching are biased, and views evaluation of teaching as a **constructive professional development process**

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THE COMPONENTS OF A TEACHING PORTFOLIO

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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Purpose   Audience   Format

MCMASTER CONSIDERATIONS

SPS B2

✓   ✓   ✓

| Purpose | Audience | Format |

https://tinyurl.com/SPSB2McMaster

(note: upper/lower case matters when typing in the URL)

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HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR MCMASTER TEACHING PORTFOLIO

First things first…

- Title page

- Table of contents

- Each section starts on a new page

Then…

SPS B2 specifies 2 major structural pieces:

- Part A – Executive Summary

- Part B – Supporting Documentation

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BREAKDOWN OF SPS B2 – PART A:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

i. Description of responsibilities and mechanism of evaluation as per appointment letter (1 page max)

ii. Description of teaching approach/philosophy (~1 page)

iii. Description of teaching practice (1-2 pages)

iv. Description of contributions to teaching (~1 page)

v. Complete details of responses to the summative question in the student feedback on all courses taught over the past five years >>Evidence of teaching effectiveness

FOCUS ON:

PART A i. RESPONSIBILITIES

- Straightforward reiteration of what's described in your appointment letter - ex. 40% research, 40% teaching, 20% service.

- If applicable, include any formal updates made to your appointment

- Typically less than a page in length

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FOCUS ON:

PART A ii. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

- The teaching philosophy is a personal statement that formulates the foundation on which you will build the rest of your portfolio.

- It documents your teaching:
  - Beliefs (What do you think?)
  - Strategies (What do you do?)
  - Impact (What is the effect on learners, self, colleagues?)
  - Goals (How do you plan to improve?)

- The rest of your portfolio should provide evidence to back the statements you have made in your philosophy.

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FOCUS ON:

PART A ii. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Typically:

- About 1 page, single-spaced

- Written in first person

- Structured and organized – but there isn't one template

- Honest and authentic

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ACTIVITY:

PHILOSOPHY VALUES & BELIEFS

Independently, spend 10 minutes answering one or more of the following:

- What are your beliefs about… Teaching and learning? Your role as a teacher? The role of a student? The teacher-student relationship?

- What core values inform your teaching approaches? (i.e. what are the major tenets to your teaching philosophy?)

- Where does your teaching philosophy align with values articulated in McMaster's Partnered in Teaching & Learning Strategy

- 5 years from now, what do you want your students, your colleagues, your Chair, your Faculty, your Institution to say about you as a teacher?

You may handwrite, draw, type, voice record, etc.

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FOCUS ON:

PART A ii. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Common structure formats:

- Metaphor

- Narrative

- Pillars

- Characteristics

- Quotes

Tip: Authenticity is key!

To see examples, visit University of Calgary's sample philosophies: http://tinyurl.com/UCPhilosophies

Structure Examples:
- Narrative: Ken MacMillan
- Pillars: Kyla Flanagan
- Characteristics: Susanne Cote
- Quotes: Heather Addy
- What else do you see?

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FOCUS ON:

PART A ii. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Tips:

- Do not read other teaching philosophies as a 'starting point'

- Once you've written a draft, self-evaluate using *Schönwetter et al., 2002*
  Dieter J. Schönwetter, Laura Sokal, Marcia Friesen & K. Lynn Taylor (2002): *Teaching philosophies reconsidered: A conceptual model for the development and evaluation of teaching philosophy statements*. International Journal for Academic Development, 7:1, 83-97. Link: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13601440210156501

- Do have your statement reviewed by a trusted colleague

- Do check for alignment

- Do share how you plan to grow

- Do revisit your philosophy statement on an annual basis

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FOCUS ON:

PART A iii. DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICE

- Whereas your Philosophy is about your *beliefs* and contains few examples in little depth, in contrast, **your Description of Practice is about what you actually *do* and contains in-depth examples**

- Ultimately, it describes how your philosophy is realized and documents your growth

- One to two pages, single-spaced

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FOCUS ON:

PART A iii. DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICE

Your Description of Practice should showcase:

- How you teach (characterize your key approaches) and why you do it that way

- Your assessment strategies and how they align with your teaching approach

- How you ensure your teaching is accessible and inclusive

- How you adapt your teaching in different situations

- What your greatest teaching successes and failures been, and what you learned from them

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FOCUS ON:

PART A iv. CONTRIBUTIONS TO TEACHING

- Practices beyond your course-based teaching that fosters growth in curriculum, students, colleagues, etc:

  - Contributions to curriculum and other design initiatives

  - Significant challenges and how you addressed them

  - Presentations or professional development sessions you facilitated related to teaching and learning

  - Pedagogical research/SoTL, presentations and reports

  - Examples of teaching and learning leadership

- About 1 page, single-spaced

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FOCUS ON:

PART A iv. CONTRIBUTIONS TO TEACHING

What this doesn't mean:

- A list of courses you've taught

- Attendance at workshops & development efforts. However, you could briefly say at the end of this section "I have also done a lot to develop myself, please see Appendix __".

- Your CV

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FOCUS ON:

PART A v. EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- For each course taught over the last 5 years, provide:

  - Course title

  - Course code

  - Term

  - Number of students enrolled

  - Number of responses to the course evaluation

  - *Complete details of responses to the summative question in the student feedback on all courses taught over the past five years, set in the context of all teaching done in the Department (data to be provided by the Chair)*

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FOCUS ON:

PART A v. EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- 3+ years ago the question was about rating instruction – now it is about rating the learning experience

- The context and practice around what to include for evidence of teaching effectiveness continues to evolve at McMaster

- While you might be provided with numerical data for the updated question, it is advised that you do the following:

  - Reflect upon and consider what the data means to you and your teaching

  - Talk to your Chair about how to include the data, how to acknowledge the change in question, and how to best provide your reflection

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BREAKDOWN OF SPS B2 – PART B:

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Part B = Appendices, the contents of which are up to you!

Directly from SPS B2:

- Part B "is optional and may contain additional material compiled by the faculty member in support of Part A"

Tip: Plan to include a Part B

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BREAKDOWN OF SPS B2 – PART B:

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices to Consider including:

- Professional Development such as workshops and courses

- Copies of teaching certificates earned

- Sample course materials: syllabi, assessments, evaluation frameworks

- Letters of support

- SoTL publications

- If applicable, address aberrations

ALIGNMENT TIP: Ensure everything you include in Part B is referred to somewhere within Part A

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HOW TO APPROACH YOUR PORTFOLIO
…as a new faculty member

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Process in a Nutshell: Putting Together your McMaster Teaching Portfolio

01

Step 1: Consider your context

Reflect on how you contribute to McMaster's culture of teaching excellence and how you are situated in relation to the University's strategic priorities. Review McMaster's Supplementary Policy Statement SPS B2: Teaching Portfolios.

02

Step 2: Collect supporting evidence

Select items that best demonstrate your accomplishments as an instructor, and contact your Chair for contextual data needed for your portfolio's Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness section (Part A.v.), as well as any other departmental evidence or recommendations they may have.

03

Step 3: Construct an argument

1. First, shape the narrative about your teaching by writing your Description of Teaching Philosophy (Part A.ii.) for your portfolio's Executive Summary (Part A)

2. Next, describe what you actually do as an instructor to realize your philosophy in your Description of Teaching Practice (Part A.iii.)

3. Then, continue with the remaining sections of your Executive Summary, from slowest to fastest to develop: Contributions to Teaching (Part A.iv.), Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness (Part A.v.), and Description of Teaching Responsibilities and Experiences (Part A.i.)

   As you complete these first three steps, keep track of evidence you might wish to include in your Supporting Documentation (Part B) to support these claims.

4. Finally, organize the evidence you've chosen to include into separate appendices in your Supporting Documentation, and double check that each of these appendices are referenced somewhere in the Executive Summary of your portfolio.

04

Step 4: Review and Revise

Review your portfolio for clarity, internal alignment, persuasiveness, and whether it paints an accurate picture of yourself as an instructor. Consider asking colleagues, your Chair, or the MacPherson Institute to read and provide feedback.

05

Step 5: Update, with Input

Update your Portfolio annually to revise the Executive Summary (Part A) and add or replace evidence (in Part B) with newer, stronger examples. Complete this before your annual review with your Department Chair as it will help you reflect on your accomplishments before meeting, as well as conveniently keep your portfolio up-to-date!

1. Consider your context
2. Collect supporting evidence
3. Construct an argument
4. Review and revise
5. Update with input

(this excerpt is from MI's Preparing a Teaching Portfolio Guidebook)

Process in a Nutshell: Putting Together your McMaster Teaching Portfolio

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1. **Consider your context**
2. Collect supporting evidence
3. **Construct an argument**
4. Review and revise
5. Update with input
! **Plan ahead**

(this excerpt is from MI's Preparing a Teaching Portfolio Guidebook)

PROTECT TIME FOR DEVELOPMENT!

- Book time in your calendar:
  - …to document your **reflections following critical moments** such as the end of teaching a course, after you've just tried something new in the classroom, after an important mentorship moment with a graduate student, etc.

  - …to review **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning** and plan how this will inform your teaching moving forward

  - …to **connect** with your colleagues or Chair to discuss teaching ideas, goals, interests, and possible initiatives

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ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

- Check in with your colleagues and Chair to glean local culture

- Consider how your philosophy / priorities shift (if at all) in this new teaching context

- Align, align, align

- If you have any questions during your preparation process: Ask your Chair!

- Ask colleagues to see their Portfolios

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ACTIVITY: CULTURE & CONTEXT

- Spend 5 minutes writing down questions you have about the teaching and learning context:

  - At McMaster

  - Within the Faculty of Engineering

  - Within your Department

- For each question, write down how you will find out the answer. E.g. search McMaster's website, ask your Chair, ask a colleague, ask students, etc…

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ACTIVITY: INTENTIONAL ALIGNMENT

- Pair up with someone

- One at a time, share one of your core teaching philosophy beliefs/values

- Ask your partner to brainstorm some ways they might expect to see that belief in practice elsewhere in your portfolio

  For example, if your value is inclusive teaching, evidence of that value in practice could look like redesigning an assessment to UDL principles, or working with co-instructors to approach a course in an equitable way for students

- Then switch roles!

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ACTIVITY: PLAN & PRIORITIZE

- Check out the lists of different types of contributions and evidence on pages 8, 10 & 11 of the *Preparing a Teaching Portfolio Guide*

- What types of projects/evidence speak to you? What teaching development-related initiatives might you like to pursue between now and when you apply for tenure/permanence/promotion?

- Prioritize your ideas and plan who you might want to speak to about what interests you have (hint: your Chair!!)

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THE MACPHERSON INSTITUTE CAN HELP!

- Check out the MacPherson Institute's newly-updated **Preparing a Teaching Portfolio Guidebook:** https://tinyurl.com/MacPortfolioGuidebook

- Book a teaching philosophy statement or teaching portfolio **consultation** and **review** (once you're ready)

- Take the self-paced **Teaching Portfolios at McMaster** asynchronous workshop, available via the MacPherson Institute's **Learning Catalogue**: https://mi.mcmaster.ca/learning-catalogue/

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Questions?

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