

# University Graduate Teaching Award

## Application Portfolio Preparation Guidelines (Updated 5/09)

The portfolio content requirements are designed to provide you with an opportunity to describe and contextualize your teaching record as well as to articulate your commitment to teaching excellence in your career. The portfolio includes elements that provide opportunities to describe your evolution as a teacher who merits consideration as an award winner. It also provides an opportunity for you to display your strengths as an educator in a broad range of instruction-related activities.

Documentation requirements are reduced from prior years, with greater reliance on a letter from your supervisor to verify your record. However, you are asked to articulate your philosophy, record, development activities, and plans for ongoing development, etc., in brief (2 pages maximum) essays. The length limit requires you to be selective and concise about what you choose to address. Essays should highlight aspects of your teaching record that you believe are most important for an accurate and effective portrayal of your record.

Traditional printed or electronic portfolios are acceptable. Electronic portfolios should be in a widely accessible software format or web-based to facilitate evaluation review. They should also use the same organization as traditional portfolios, again to facilitate review.

Note that the various portfolio components listed below parallel those for the faculty-level portfolios. However, the shorter length of graduate students' teaching records and differences among disciplines mean that graduate student portfolios likely will not include many of the components that would be relevant for a veteran faculty member. Therefore, several of the components have been merged while still retaining a place for nominees to report accomplishments in a wide range of areas as appropriate.

In instances when a nominee has not yet engaged in particular activities for a particular category. In these cases, insert a single page with the title of the section and the phrase "Nothing to report" in place of the essay.

The list of contents that can be included in a portfolio is followed by explanations of each item to guide portfolio preparation.

## Portfolio Contents

1. Table of Contents
2. Teaching Philosophy Statement
3. Summary of Teaching Assignments and Instructional Development
4. Summary and Contextualization of Teaching Evaluation Record
5. Reflection on Teaching Challenge
6. Instructional Development Accomplishments
7. Instruction-Related Recognition
8. Teaching Development Plan
9. Supervisor's Letter
10. Vita

## 11. Selected Artifacts

### Portfolio Components Descriptions

#### 1. Table of Contents (1 page)

Use the list above as your table of contents (even if you do not have materials for each and every section) and to organize your portfolio so that reviewers can find your materials. For printed portfolios, using labeled dividers for each section will help evaluators find pertinent materials. For electronic portfolios, using those topics as primary links will similarly help evaluators find pertinent materials.

#### 2. Teaching Philosophy Statement

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

This is where you identify your foundational beliefs about teaching and learning and to explain how you implement those beliefs into your instructional activities.

#### 3. Summary of teaching assignments and instructional development

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

This narrative should describe the following (when part of your record). Listing some information (e.g., courses and # students) where it makes sense is acceptable.

##### a. Courses taught

Include dates, titles, and number of students for each as well as a brief explanation of the context of the course in department curriculum (e.g., requirement or elective).

##### b. Additional instructional activities with students, peers, faculty on and off campus

Include descriptions of activities such as guest speaker appearances for other classes, non-class instruction such as independent studies and honors projects, and co-curricular teaching-related service. This can also include descriptions of collegial instruction including mentoring, participation in teaching-learning communities, and participation in departmental or campus teaching development activities and events.

#### 4. Summary and contextualization of teaching evaluation record

##### a. Student evaluations

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

Summarize formal and informal student evaluations of your courses. Include information on the instrument(s) used. If evaluations are not numerical, explain evaluation method used and summarize those evaluations. Contextualize the evaluations to help provide a more accurate interpretation.

##### b. Peer and self-evaluations

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

Summarize any other teaching evaluations (formal or informal, formative or summative). These could include peer or supervisor observations of your teaching, reviews of course syllabi and materials, reviews of technology used in instruction such as web sites, etc. This can also include any self-evaluations, which can include narratives completed as a part of annual productivity reports, insights from participating in teaching workshops, reflections based on reviewing video of yourself teaching, or other forms of self-evaluation.

c. Reflection on evaluations

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

Explain what you have learned from the accumulation of evaluations over time and from different perspectives, how those insights have shaped your teaching and you as a teacher, and how you will incorporate the insights into your future teaching.

5. Reflection on a teaching challenge

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

Every teacher, including the best, has failures, crises, difficult situations, etc. The best teachers, however, are distinguished by how they handle and learn from these challenges. This is an opportunity for you to describe a challenge that you have faced as a teacher, how you handled it, what you learned from it, and how the experience shaped your teaching. It could be a single incident or a long-term issue, a temporary problem, or an ongoing difficulty. Choose one that best illustrates who you are as a teacher and how you have become the teacher that you are today.

6. Instructional development accomplishments

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

This narrative should describe your activities encompassing a wide range of instruction development activities. This can include your contributions to revised or new curriculum; implementing instructional innovations, including approaches and strategies as well as technologies; participation in scholarly inquires about teaching (i.e., scholarship of teaching and learning).

7. Instruction-related recognition

*Length: 1 page maximum, single spaced*

This narrative should describe recognition that you have received in your teaching career, such as awards and grants. For awards, identify and contextualize the source and explain the significance. For grants, identify and contextualize the source and explain the significance and the outcomes of the grant.

8. Teaching development plan

*Length: 2 pages maximum, single spaced*

This is an opportunity to describe where you've been as a teacher (and why you were there), where you are now (and what you did to get here), and where you are going as a teacher (and specifically what you intend to do to get there). Organization is up to you, but the plan should include specifics about teaching-related decisions and activities in the past and your plans for your future that describe your evolution as a teacher. As such, it should

provide a specific agenda for your ongoing development as a professional pursuing teaching excellence.

#### 9. Supervisor Letter

A letter of support from the supervising faculty or staff member that is most familiar with your teaching accomplishments (e.g., course director, teaching mentor, department chair, school director) should document the details of the nominee's record. As such, it will be a substantial letter that authoritatively addresses important elements of the nominee's record based on the supervisor's participation in reviewing annual productivity reports and other supervisory activities. The letter should:

- Summarize the nominee's teaching record, including assignments and instructional development activities, adding context where appropriate
- Summarize the nominee's teaching evaluation record, adding context where appropriate
- Summarize the nominee's curriculum development and instructional innovation activities, adding context where appropriate.
- Provide a summary statement about why the nominee deserves recognition for his or her teaching.

#### 10. Vita

#### 11. Selected Artifacts

Nominees may include up to (but no more than) five artifacts or forms of documentation. The small number means that nominees must be selective about what they include, based on their judgment about which items best illustrate, illuminate, support, and reinforce their teaching record as described in the rest of the portfolio.

Effective artifacts demonstrate the effectiveness of your practices and activities by including information and evidence on student outcomes. The most effective artifacts will be those that are cited explicitly and contextualized in the essay(s) relevant to the artifact.

Artifacts can include forms of documentation typically included in a standard teaching portfolio, but can also include other items that nominees believe are important to understanding themselves as teachers. For example, if a nominee has articulated his or her success in course development activities in an essay, materials related to that effort are a possible artifact. If a nominee has articulated his or her emphasis on instructional innovations in an essay, materials related to that effort might be considered as one of the artifacts.

**Note:** Nominees are required to obtain students' permission to include student work in the portfolio and, when appropriate, to remove all identifying information from any student work.