
CPET CERTIFICATE OF PRACTICE

- TEACHING PORTFOLIO -

This resource provides information on the structure and content of a teaching portfolio; however, the exact format and content of your teaching portfolio will vary depending on your teaching activities and your goals.

What is a Teaching Portfolio?

A Teaching Portfolio is a document that describes and provides evidence for your teaching strengths and accomplishments.¹ It typically contains a Teaching Statement/Philosophy that describes one's views on teaching and learning and how those are used in practice. The rest of the portfolio collectively offers evidence, justifications, and reflections on your teaching practices. Increasingly, academic postings and hiring committees have requested a Teaching Statement/Philosophy from potential candidates, sometimes within the context of an entire Teaching Portfolio. Furthermore, these documents have been used as a component of promotion or tenure portfolios, grant applications or for consideration for teaching awards. The Teaching Portfolio can also be personally useful as a tool for self-guidance or self-evaluation when reflecting on one's teaching practices.

What can the Teaching Portfolio look like?

In *Recasting the Teaching Portfolio*, Kenneth R. Bain and James M. Lang suggest that "... the model for portfolios is the scholarly project: it should contain a thesis statement, pieces of evidence, descriptions and analysis of that evidence, and a conclusion."² In other words, the teaching portfolio is analogous to a scientific research manuscript in some regards (see Table 1). The main difference between the a teaching portfolio and a scientific paper is that teaching portfolios are dynamic – they should constantly change as your teaching experience and style changes, and can change depending on what kind of institution it is prepared for.

Teaching Portfolio	Scientific Manuscript
Teaching Statement	Abstract and Introduction
Pieces of Evidence	Results
Description and analysis of evidence	Discussion
Conclusion	Conclusion
Appendices	Supplementary Information

Table 1: Analogous sections of a Teaching Portfolio and Scientific Manuscript.

Structure of the Teaching Portfolio

As mentioned above, there is no strict format for a Teaching Portfolio. However, we believe that the sections outlined below will allow you to clearly demonstrate your teaching approach and experiences.

Table of Contents

Include a Table of Contents with some short descriptions of what you have included in each section.

Section 1: Statement of Teaching Philosophy

The statement of teaching philosophy (or teaching statement) serves as the foundational document for your teaching portfolio. It gives the reader an overview of your approach to teaching and provides evidence of how you have implemented that approach in your own experiences.

The Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan suggests that an effective teaching statement accomplishes the following tasks:⁶

- Offers evidence of practice – provide specific examples of how you have implemented your philosophy of teaching.
- Convey reflectiveness – discuss any challenges you have encountered in your teaching and how you have adapted your teaching to address those difficulties.
- Communicate that teaching is valued – the tone of your letter should reflect the high value you place on teaching.
- Are student- or learning-centered – how is your teaching approach focused on achieving stated outcomes for students?
- Are well written, clear, and readable – a clear teaching statement illustrates your ability to convey ideas effectively.

Below are a few general guidelines for writing your teaching statement.

- Keep it brief (1-2 pages)
- Use a narrative, first person approach.
- 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.

Section 2: Teaching Activities

This section describes your experience doing activities related to Teaching – these can be formal teaching, research or service-oriented activities.

Example of documentation of formal teaching activities:

TEACHING ASSISTANT, PHYSICAL AND BIOPHYSICAL CHEMISTRY LABORATORY

2010-2014

- Upper- year required chemistry lab with class size of 140 students who were mostly chemistry majors
- My primary roles included leading laboratory sessions, holding office hours, and facilitating recitations
- Experiments included microwave spectroscopy, 2D-NMR, ion trap mass spectrometry, low-energy electron diffraction, electron spin resonance, diode laser spectroscopy, and single molecule spectroscopy
- *include here something unique or special that you contributed in terms of pedagogy, content, guest lectures or anything else significant or notable*

TEACHING ASSISTANT, CHEMICAL EQUILIBRIUM AND ANALYSIS LABORATORY

2013

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Examples of documentation of informal teaching activities:

VOLUNTEER TUTOR, CHEMISTRY RESOURCE CENTER

2009-2010

- Tutored students in first- and second-year undergraduate chemistry courses in one-on-one or small group setting
- *include here something unique or special that you contributed in terms of pedagogy, content, guest lectures or anything else significant or notable*

COMMUNITY SCIENCE EVENT VOLUNTEER

2015

- Prepared demonstrations of a cloud chamber, a homemade spectrophotometer for tablets and smartphones, and a photosynthesis laboratory activity for events focusing on physics, planetary science, and biology, respectively

Section 3: Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

This goal of this section is to demonstrate what you do and give evidence that your strategy works. You can include *summaries* of student/peer/mentor evaluations, certificates, awards, etc. Complete evaluations and copies of certificates and awards can be placed in the *Appendices*. Share the general themes and patterns that you see in student or observers comments and give concrete examples (quotes or numbers) to support your themes/ patterns.

Section 4: Appendices

This section may include copies of evaluations, certificates, awards, authored questions, course notes, slides, or any other information that would support the previous sections of your teaching portfolio. Be sure to give some context for any materials that you have developed that you include here (e.g. how and why you developed them, for what course, what pedagogical strategies you included).

References and Resources

1. *The teaching portfolio: a practical guide to improved performance and promotion/tenure decisions* by Peter Seldin

Recommended reading: Chapter 5 (pp. 19-24) with frequently asked questions about teaching portfolios, and Chapter 11 with numerous examples for multiple disciplines.

2. *The Teaching Portfolio: A handbook for Faculty, Teaching Assistants and Teaching Fellows* by Hannelore Rodriguez-Farrar

This is a short booklet with some sample outlines of Teaching Portfolios published by the Brown University Center for Teaching and Learning available [online](#)

3. *Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching*

This center's website found at <http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teaching-portfolios/#samples> has a plethora of information about preparing teaching portfolios as well as examples using different media.

4. *Writing a Statement of Teaching Philosophy for the Academic Job Search* from the University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching. A great overview of teaching statements, complete with a rubric:

http://www.crlt.umich.edu/sites/default/files/resource_files/CRLT_no23.pdf

5. *The Dreaded Teaching Statement: Eight Pitfalls* by Karen Kelsky

This blog-post by a former tenured Professor at two universities briefly explains what *not* to do when preparing your teaching statement:

<http://theprofessorisin.com/2016/09/12/thedreadedteachingstatement/>