



In our faculty conversation, we will share steps and strategies for identifying your achievements, selecting supporting documents, and writing statements to more fully represent your teaching accomplishments.

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My Opening Idea or Definitions

Provide a 50-150 word opening statement with your understanding of the most interesting or important aspects of this topic (to you and your teaching).

Some of the things that we do as teachers are easy to display -- a metric on student evaluations, an example of a paper prompt, a list of courses taught, but of course we know that's not the whole story of what we do. A good portfolio (and a good accompanying system for evaluation of those portfolios) should be holistic -- we need to be able to provide a complete view of all that we do, in and outside the classroom. Think of all the time we spend mentoring students or new colleagues, whether formally or informally, the research we do to keep our curriculum and texts current, the new preps created for new classes or methods of delivery -- your portfolio should represent all the work you do to contribute to the Mason community.

What Have I Tried?

Summarize 3-4 approaches, emphases, scenarios, or assignments, each briefly explained (50-100 words each) so that participants can envision your past and/or current teaching experiences, whether successful or still evolving.

Professional: A lot of semesters, we as teachers are bogged down -- new preps, full teaching load, thousands of pages to read and grade, so it can be hard (impossible) to take on new ventures. You think "this winter break I'm going to redesign my syllabus" but maybe the fall term drags on a little longer than you planned, or you get sick, or you have a new prep for spring that is taking a lot of work. It's hard to keep growing and innovating when we already do so much.

A few semesters ago, I found myself, for the first time in my teaching career, in a position I'd previously thought unattainable -- I had a little extra time on my hands. I was also, at this time, feeling like my classes (and my teaching) were in a bit of a rut. I decided that fall semester, I was just going to say "yes" to every new opportunity that was presented to me. Note: this was a mistake!

Want to be on this Assessment Committee? Yes. Want to present at a conference? Okay! Want to try an Active Learning Classroom? Sure! Want to be on a task force? Why not! I learned a lot of things that year. First (and maybe most importantly), I learned that I had spread myself way too thin and that we as teachers (especially contingent faculty) need to jealously guard our personal time if we want to keep being good teachers and happy humans. But I also learned a lot about different avenues that I could take to become a part of the mason community. As an adjunct, I definitely had times where I felt more like a teaching-mercenary than a teacher, and, again, I definitely do not recommend doing all of this at once, but if you have the time and energy, there are a lot of ways that you can both grow your portfolio/professional development and be a part of the university community. I learned a lot of things about research and publishing, about curriculum development, about labor conditions, etc. that I'm really glad to know and has helped me improve my portfolio and my versatility.

Pedagogical: With the demolition of Robinson A, the ENGH Department / Composition program lost a lot of physical class space. I worked closely with colleagues (namely Jessie Matthews and Billy Howell from ENGH, and Ying-Ying Kuo from ODL) to collectively build Mason's first entirely online First Year Composition program. We've been piloting/teaching 101-DL now for 2 years and each semester it is a new learning experience. I spent a lot of time in the construction of my course considering the "losses" of shifting a face-to-face curriculum to a DL delivery method. Of course you cannot simply take a face-to-face lesson/assignment/activity and post it online, so having to reconsider and revise a course from the ground up with entirely new constraints really taught me a lot about how my students learn and how I teach. This is work that I feel made me a stronger teacher and work that I felt made my portfolio a better representative document to my teaching. If we aren't good advocates for ourselves and for one another, a lot of our accomplishments can be overlooked. On paper, in my portfolio, this all might just look like I switched from teaching a class face to face to teaching online, but we need to find room in the portfolio to make our labor narratives clear.

Finally, I've also been working on "double-dipping" my time -- my research is related to the classwork I teach. I've tried to find ways to get double-value out time spent researching. While I'm working on a research project, I'm thinking about how I can get some new assignments or texts or lesson-plans out of it. It helps me innovate my classes and also lessens the "guilt" of spending time on research when I've got papers to grade!

What Am I Exploring? What Am I Interested In?

Provide a list of 3-4 questions, activities, or options that you have been considering as you build your teaching portfolio.

- **Research and pedagogy:** My current research project is the Archive of Workplace Writing Experiences -- an archive focused on writing transfer from classroom to workplace. I've been spending a lot of time using my research to help develop course work and lesson plans that can emphasize more authentic writing forms to better prepare students for the kinds of writing modes they might experience in the workplace. I've also been exploring the different roles that reflective and metacognitive writing can play in transferability.
- **Also, my entirely online ENGH 101 is still very much a work in progress.** I'm currently working on a paper with Dr. Kuo in the ODL and trying to explore how online course structures and technology/tools can best deliver our first year composition courses. I'm most interested in trying to combine asynchronous and synchronous elements to close a bit of the "social gap" in my 101 classes.
- **Professional:** As part of the Term Faculty Task Force, I was a big proponent of developing clear and consistent pathways for growth and promotion for contingent faculty. It's really important to me (and to you, I'm sure) that non-tenured faculty can view their work as a career -- this means clear career paths and room for growth for our teachers. I'm going to continue to explore new avenues for growth for our non-tenure track/tenured teachers.
- **Finally, I'm taking part in a program-wide assessment of student writing with several colleagues.** I'm hoping that we/I will learn a lot about how to best meet the needs of our diverse student body as they enter our 302 program. I'm already learning a lot about curricular design/development and program evaluation. -

What are some Best Practices, Tips, or Resources I'd Like to Share with Other Faculty?

If you could recommend a list of 3 core values, teaching tips, and/or resources (articles, books, and links) that faculty across disciplines could find helpful to support multilingual learners, what would your list include?

- **Advocate for yourself and your strengths!** Do you do a dozen little things for your department? Make sure you show them in your portfolio. Are you a good teacher with a 4x4 load and can't find time to extra research/do service? Focus on all the work you do to research your course, your grading and comments/feedback, your office hours, the materials you produce, etc. There are a lot of ways of being a great teacher; your portfolio should shine light on your way.

- **Find space in the portfolio documents or your framing documents to emphasize all the work you do that contributes to your teaching, service, and/or research.** It might not explicitly list holiday thank you cards from former students in the portfolio documents or students who switched majors because of your class, but find a place for it! A week or two before you complete the documents for your portfolio, write down all the things you do that aren't teaching. Even if they are in informal capacities and not in your contract. Think about the time you take to review textbooks, the advising and mentorship of your students, the ways you contribute to meetings or committees, research you do even if you aren't publishing, letters of thanks you get from former students, the letters you write advocating for them, etc. Your time is valuable and the things you do to fill it are valuable too.
- **Find a new, small way to be active in your community.** Observe a colleague -- being observed is always very helpful to me, but if you have a free period, sit in on a colleague's class and learn something new about their style or texts or classroom presence. Post a reading you like on your program listserv, exchange assignment prompts, and ask advice on new technologies. Make connections and keep growing.



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