TEACHING PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES & EVALUATION CRITERIA

ONLINE TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD 2020
George Mason University

GUIDELINES

An effective teaching portfolio captures the scope and complexities of your teaching, documenting the various approaches, successes, ongoing refinement, and excellence of your educational work. It is a carefully crafted document that presents your teaching through a particular lens, which you define. This is an opportunity to share what is unique about your online teaching in relation to your discipline and the learning of your students. Your goal is to capture what makes your work worthy of recognition. Most important is evidence of the impact you have on your students' learning and achievement. The four criteria that will be used to evaluate your teaching portfolio are described later in these guidelines.

Your portfolio must include the following Four Portfolio Sections. We include the maximum number of pages for each section, so follow those closely. Single-spaced text is acceptable. If you prepare your portfolio in document format, each section of your portfolio must be submitted as pdf. Your documents should include appropriate use of pictures, graphics, and charts. These can help make the material easier to understand. You are encouraged to include screenshots and other artifacts (*e.g.*, rubrics, videos, activities, assignments) from your online course, which highlight your best online teaching practices. **Please note that we will <u>not</u> be reviewing or accessing your online course(s), therefore you must curate, select, present, and describe evidence from your online course(s) thoughtfully.**

Faculty also are encouraged to submit (or supplement) their teaching portfolios in an alternative (*i.e.*, innovative) format, if they wish. Alternative formats may include a video, multimedia presentation, or digital portfolio.

Four Portfolio Sections

1) **<u>Philosophy of Teaching and Mentoring</u> (maximum 3 pages):** This document should express the philosophies and practices that shape your teaching and include a reflection on your professional growth and development as an online educator.

2) **<u>Teaching Vita</u> (maximum 2 pages):** This document should include your contact information and employment history with a list of courses taught (please note which sections were 100% online); you may also list any students mentored, any curriculum design projects participated in, and/or any scholarly presentations or publications directly related to course design or pedagogy. See our website for

info about how to prepare a Teaching Vita.

3) <u>**Evidence of Teaching Excellence & Innovation**</u> **(maximum 30 pages):** Present evidence from <u>at least one</u> online course to illustrate how you meet the evaluation of teaching excellence criteria. Faculty who have taught more than one fully online course at Mason may provide evidence from <u>multiple online courses</u> in their OTEA Teaching Portfolio, as long as one of the online courses was taught during past academic year. In addition to the syllabus/syllabi (*required, but does not count as part of your page limit*), you also may include documents such as: reflection on your online course development and evolution; illustrative course materials such as major assignment descriptions, exercises, activities, student resources or hand-outs, exam questions, or homework assignments; sample feedback to students; screenshots of stand-out features of your online course; links to videos or multimedia which you created for your online course. **It is important that you provide commentary within all documents to contextualize your materials, explain how they serve as evidence for the evaluation criteria, and how they illustrate key principles and practices of your teaching.**

4) **Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness & Impact:**
   a) Summary of measurable, empirical **evidence** of teaching effectiveness and impact **(maximum 2 pages)**. Evidence includes:
      - Student ratings from all university evaluations from your 4 most recent semesters of online teaching at Mason; summary should indicate class sizes.
      - Other empirical evidence of student learning in your online course. For example, if you implemented a change in your course, what were the measurable results on student learning? Did test scores improve? Can you share examples of student work that shows increased understanding or proficiency? Please present the evidence for student learning in your online course.
      - Present the ratings and results in summary graphs or tables, as well as narratives.

   b) Two support letters from colleagues, administrators (department chair, program director, teaching unit coordinator, dean, etc.), or former students or mentees. At least one must be from a colleague or administrator informed by observations of your online teaching. **Please note that The Stearns Center cannot provide such support letters for you.**

   c) Closing Statement: Reflection and commentary on parts a & b (**maximum 2 pages**)

You will submit your portfolio documents (as electronic pdf files) to a special Blackboard course site. Access to this special Bb site will not occur until late-January 2020. The Stearns Center (Digital Learning) will provide eligible nominees with additional instructions about how to submit portfolio documents to the special Blackboard site. As you prepare your portfolio, we encourage faculty to schedule an individual consultation with [Assistant Director Darlene Smucny](), to review portfolio criteria & how to present evidence of online teaching excellence in your portfolios. **Please schedule consultations during January 2020.**

Remember that the purposes of this portfolio are to record your efforts and achievements as an educator; to show evidence of reflective practice and consequent improvement of both your online teaching and student learning; and to document your online teaching for the award selection committee. Whatever material you include as evidence of teaching excellence, particularly in part 3, should be accompanied by annotation, explanation or reflection. **Please be sure that it is clear to your reader <u>why</u> you have included particular artifacts and materials in your portfolio.**

Your portfolio should paint a compelling picture of you as an online teacher while demonstrating clear & strong evidence of the evaluation criteria for the portfolio.

If you have any questions about the preparation of your Teaching Portfolio, please contact Dr. Darlene Smucny, Assistant Director for Digital Learning, The Stearns Center for Teaching & Learning, [dsmucny@gmu.edu]() ; 703-993-1907.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

In the table **"Teaching Portfolio Criteria and Examples of Evidence"** (found on the last pages of this document) you will find descriptions for **the four criteria** that will be used to evaluate your Teaching Portfolio. **These criteria should be demonstrated in the evidence you present in your portfolio.** The selection committee will be paying special attention to the clarity and quality of your evidence, so be deliberate and selective in your choices.

For ideas about the diverse ways to provide this evidence, please see Stearns Center website for information about documenting teaching and preparing a teaching portfolio.

Please keep in mind the following as you frame your case for teaching excellence.

- o **Consider your audience.** The OTEA selection committee consists of faculty members from diverse backgrounds and disciplines who are experienced online instructors, who share your enthusiasm for online teaching, but may not share your subject matter expertise.
- o **Be authentic**. Just as in your online classroom, being yourself in your portfolio is critical.
- o **Write with as much clarity as possible**. It is important to portray a clear sense of purpose, engagement and passion, while consistently communicating your key ideas. Your portfolio should be coherent and present a lucid and cohesive picture of you as an excellent online instructor.

Teaching Portfolio Criteria and Examples of Evidence

<u>NOTE</u>: This list of evidence is <u>not</u> meant to be exhaustive, <u>nor</u> are nominees expected to address each piece of evidence listed.

Criterion #1	Possible Examples of Evidence *An excellent online instructor…*	Where You Might Include Evidence for Criterion # 1 in Your Teaching Portfolio?
Evidence of Growth and Reflective Practice as an Online Educator One of the purposes of the portfolio is to track the evolution and enhancement of your online teaching and learning practices. Each of you has had a unique set of experiences, key learning moments, and challenges you have encountered; this criterion affords you the opportunity to provide a dynamic portfolio of who you are as an online educator and how/why you have come to be that person.	• Displays openness to online education. • Demonstrates self-awareness of values, strengths and weaknesses as online educator. • Explores new, creative, and innovative strategies, tools, & technologies, guided by learning outcomes. • Seeks feedback from students and peers to improve quality in online course design and online teaching (i.e., engages in cycle of continuous course improvements). • Participates in professional development for teaching and learning, particularly regarding online teaching.	Section 1) Philosophy of Teaching and Mentoring Section 2) Teaching Vita (listing professional development for online teaching & learning) Section 3) Evidence of Teaching Excellence & Innovation Section 4) Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness & Impact
Criterion #2	**Possible Examples of Evidence** *An excellent online instructor…*	**Where You Might Include Evidence for Criterion # 2 in Your Teaching Portfolio?**
Online Student and Learner Engagement Research has shown us that learning is significantly enhanced when students are engaged with the course, the subject areas and the online learning environment. The selection committee will be looking for evidence of your approaches to ensuring student and learner engagement.	• Creates an accessible online course that follows universal design standards. • Provides opportunities for instructor-student, student-student, and student content interaction, to foster mastery and application of course material. • Demonstrates online instructor presence by engaging actively and frequently with learners throughout the online course. • Builds an online learning community, creating an inclusive, supportive, and engaging climate for learning. • Facilitates positive communication and respectful interaction in the online course, with clear expectations for participation and interaction.	Section 1) Philosophy of Teaching and Mentoring Section 3) Evidence of Teaching Excellence & Innovation Section 4) Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness & Impact

Criterion #3	Possible Examples of Evidence *An excellent online instructor…*	Where You Might Include Evidence for Criterion #3 in Your Teaching Portfolio?
Assessment of Online Student Learning and Achievement One of the most difficult tasks for us as educators is to provide evidence of student learning and achievement. That is, what knowledge, competencies, practices, and meaning are students taking away from our time spent teaching, advising, and mentoring? How do you know?	• Designs and implements activities, assignments, and assessments that are meaningful, purposeful, and relevant to the course learning outcomes • Includes activities, assignments, and assessments that leverage the online environment. • Uses a variety of methods to assess student learning & mastery of content. • Uses formative and summative assessments. • Makes evaluation criteria clear to students (*e.g.*, use of rubrics; tutorials; models of exemplary assignments). • Provides prompt, clear, useful and constructive feedback to online students. • Shows how learning was transformative in the online course.	Section 3) Evidence of Teaching Excellence & Innovation Section 4) Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness & Impact
Criterion #4	Possible Examples of Evidence *An excellent online instructor…*	Where You Might Include Evidence for Criterion # 4 in Your Teaching Portfolio?
Online Teaching Effectiveness and Impact Teaching effectiveness is ideally demonstrated through the examination of multiple sources, including feedback from students, peer/colleagues, supervisors, and/or community members. The selection committee is interested in the evidence you include in this section as well as your reflection/commentary on your choices.	• Receives favorable student ratings from university evaluations, and positive student feedback & comments. • Includes summary of student ratings from university evaluations for at least four semesters of online teaching, noting class size. • Provides an example of quality online course design and teaching to Mason faculty. • Impacts online quality at Mason through service to the Mason online faculty community (*e.g.*, mentoring other online faculty, serving as online course reviewer, sharing best practices for online teaching with Mason online faculty). • Demonstrates quality indicators and standards for online teaching excellence, such as those developed by Online Learning Consortium (OLC), Quality Matters (QM) and other recognized online quality rubrics. • Includes two support letters which make a strong case for online teaching effectiveness. • Provides a clear closing statement, reflecting on summary of student ratings & support letters.	Section 1) Philosophy of Teaching and Mentoring Section 2) Teaching Vita (listing professional development for online teaching & learning) Section 3) Evidence of Teaching Excellence & Innovation Section 4) Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness & Impact