

## Guidance: Tenure Teaching Portfolio

Note: Please be aware that the following guidelines are meant to be helpful but do not supersede in any way the *Faculty Handbook*, which remains the ultimate authoritative source regarding promotion, tenure, and review.

Since teaching is the most important of the three areas evaluated for tenure, you should be thoughtful about how you organize your teaching portfolio. The teaching portfolio is the place where you can give a sense of what goes on in your classroom, studio, or lab to those who have not observed you in action. The following advice is intended to give a context for the teaching portfolio and to provide suggestions on how to assemble it.

### What the Teaching Portfolio Is and Is Not

Rest assured, you do not need to dredge up a comprehensive record of every instance of exemplary student learning or innovative pedagogy that has transpired in your time at Lafayette! You have already had the opportunity to discuss your teaching at length in your self-evaluation. The self-evaluation is where your case for distinction in teaching is made.

As such, the teaching portfolio is an important supplement to your self-evaluation, but it is not a stand-alone document. It should give your audiences a set of well-curated examples to illustrate the claims you are already making and supporting with other forms of evidence in your self-evaluation of teaching. The set of examples in the portfolio should have a clear structure that is easy for your readers to follow and to which they can refer after having read (or while reading) your self-evaluation of teaching. Anything you can do to make the teaching portfolio's structure clear, whether merging documents into a single PDF with a table of contents, or bookmarking your PDF for easy navigation, is helpful.

### What to include

The *Faculty Handbook* gives explicit language about what to include in the teaching portfolio, as follows:

4.3.4.3 Teaching Portfolio An integral part of the peer review process, the teaching portfolio is designed to help provide a clear and accurate picture of the individual faculty member's teaching responsibilities, goals, strategies, achievements, and plans.

To that end, the faculty member should include in the teaching portfolio:

- a. a record of sections of courses taught, with enrollments
- b. representative syllabi for all courses taught
- c. a representative sampling of course materials that exemplifies the faculty member's teaching, particularly in relation to the College's teaching standards, rather than a comprehensive collection
- d. a statement, including numbers, of academic advising responsibilities
- e. a list of consulting projects, when it can be demonstrated that such consulting enhanced teaching effectiveness.

### What does representative mean in “a representative sampling”?

There is no set length for portfolios, but it should be clear and organized. Please give yourself permission to omit redundant examples. Representative means “not all” but enough to illustrate your claims in your self-evaluation. For example, if you have revised your syllabus in a way that you describe in your narrative, include the original and a revised syllabus, but not every iteration. Or, if you discuss a different approach to testing in lower- and upper-division courses, you might include one intro-level exam and one upper-level exam, but you need not include midterms and finals for each of your courses. Every page of the entire portfolio will be read by experienced teachers who have already read many pages of material about your teaching. Your portfolio should focus on the case you have made. If PTR or your Department/Program would like additional information or further examples, they will ask for it.

### Organization, organization, organization

There is no specific organization you must follow, but there are a couple of options for structuring your portfolio. You might link your set of materials to themes about your teaching, or with the characteristics of distinction in teaching from *Faculty Handbook* 4.2.1, or by going course-by-course. The choice is yours and will largely depend on what makes the most sense given the way you have structured the teaching portion of your self-evaluation. Regardless of your organizational choice, keep in mind that you are only providing representative examples, not a complete record of your teaching.

### What you can omit

While the evidence in a teaching portfolio may take many forms, some types of materials are too lengthy for a teaching portfolio or give little meaningful information about specific aspects of your teaching to an outside observer. “Proof” of events or awards are unnecessary if they have been mentioned in your self-evaluation and/or your CV.

For these reasons, there is no need to include items such as:

- Thank you notes from students
- Printouts of student awards or recognition
- Comprehensive printouts of nested webpages
- Moodle or course site printouts that do not illustrate a particular claim
- Flyers for lectures or films you organized for a course
- Entire lectures/PowerPoints/story maps that do not illustrate a particular claim made in your self-evaluation

### Including and omitting student work

Note that the *Faculty Handbook* does not mention the inclusion of student work. If student work provides evidence of how you have met the characteristics of distinction in teaching, you may by all means include it. However, be judicious in your inclusion of student work in the portfolio and omit examples that do not illustrate a particular claim made in your self-evaluation. Be sure to remove students’ names from their work. Readers may find it helpful to see your comments and feedback on graded student work as well as a brief explanation putting these assignments in context. Seminar papers and honors theses are far too long to include in their entirety. Of course, you may discuss your thesis supervision in your self-evaluation. If you choose to include student work, make sure it clearly connects to at least one of your points in the self-evaluation.