

# The Teaching Portfolio

## Preparing Future Faculty Fellow Seminar

**March 21, 2003**

Peter Seldin, the author of *The Teaching Portfolio*<sup>1</sup>, will be on campus early this summer, and PFF Fellows will have the opportunity to participate in the activities planned for faculty development at that time. Copies of his book will be provided to the Year 1 and Year 2 PFF fellows and their Faculty Mentors at the end of this semester to assist in preparing their own Teaching Portfolios during their PFF Fellowship tenure. The following material is excerpted chapter 1 in his book and lists potential items grouped under three main categories that you might consider including in your teaching portfolio. As Seldin notes, no two portfolios will be alike because they are highly personalized products. The items on these lists seem to appear most frequently in a review of hundreds of portfolios he has reviewed.

### ***Choosing Items for the Teaching Portfolio***

#### **Material From Oneself**

- Statement of teaching responsibilities, including course titles, numbers, enrollments, and a brief statement about whether the course is required or elective, graduate or undergraduate
- A reflective statement by the faculty member, describing his or her personal teaching philosophy, strategies and objectives, methodologies
- Representative course syllabi detailing course content and objectives, teaching methods, readings, homework assignments
- Participation in programs on sharpening instructional skill
- Description of curricular revisions, including new course projects, materials, and class assignments
- Instructional innovations and assessment of their effectiveness
- A personal statement by the professor, describing teaching goals for the next five years
- Description of steps taken to evaluate and improve one's teaching, including changes resulting from self-evaluation, time spent reading journals on improving teaching

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<sup>1</sup> Seldin, Peter, 1997, *Teaching Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Improved Performance and Promotion/Tenure Decisions*, Anker Publishing Company, Inc.: Bolton, MA

## **Material From Others**

- Statements from colleagues who have observed the professor in the classroom
- Statements from colleagues who have reviewed the professor's teaching materials, such as course syllabi, assignments, testing and grading practices
- Student course or teaching evaluation data which produce an overall rating of effectiveness or suggest improvements
- Honors or other recognition from colleagues, such as a distinguished teaching or student advising award
- Documentation of teaching development activity through the campus center for teaching and learning
- Statements by alumni on the quality of instruction

## **The Products of Teaching/Student Learning**

- Student scores on pre- and post-course examinations
- Examples of graded student essays along with the professor's comments on why they were so graded
- A record of students who succeed in advanced study in the field
- Student publications or conference presentations on course-related work
- Successive drafts of student papers along with the professor's comments on how each draft could be improved
- Information about the effect of the professor and his or her courses on student career choices or help given by the professor to secure student employment or graduate school admission.

Seldin cautions, "These are the most commonly selected items, but they are not the only ones to appear in portfolios. Some professors, for reasons of academic discipline, teaching style, or institutional preference, choose a different content mix." (p.6)

Here is a list of items that sometimes appear in portfolios:

- Evidence of help given to colleagues leading to improvement of their teaching
- A videotape of the professor teaching a typical class
- Invitations to present a paper on teaching one's discipline
- Self-evaluation of teaching-related activities
- Participation in off-campus activities relating to teaching
- A statement by the department chair, assessing the faculty member's teaching contribution to the department
- Description of how computers, films and other nonprint materials are used in teaching
- Contribution to, or editing, a professional journal on teaching the professor's discipline
- Performance reviews as a faculty advisor

(These latter items are probably most appropriate in the portfolio one prepares for promotion decisions rather than initial job interviews.)