

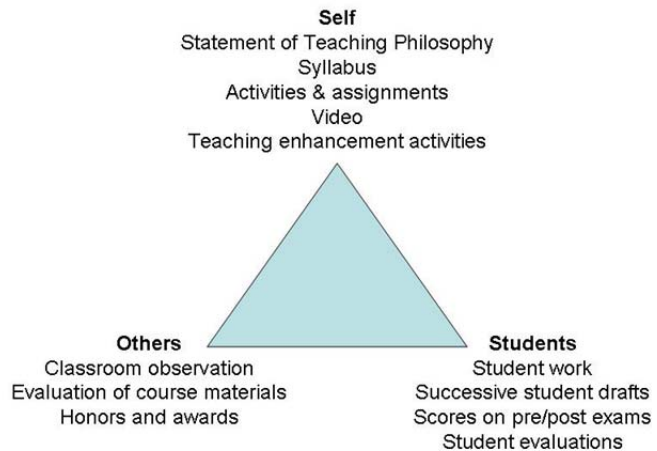
# Teaching Statements and Portfolios: Critical Reflection about Teaching Practice

---

## What is a statement of teaching philosophy (or teaching statement)?

- For graduate students, typically a two-page description of your philosophical and practical approach to teaching: what do I do and why do I do it that way?
- A scholarly argument drawing upon specific sources of teaching evidence (see figure) to demonstrate your success as a teacher.
- A document that encourages your own self-reflection, that highlights for others your best teaching qualities, and that demonstrates your preparedness for the demands of a faculty career.

### Sources of evidence for a teaching statement and portfolio



---

## What questions are addressed in a teaching statement?

### Your learning goals for your students:

- What most interests you about your discipline?
- What do you hope students will appreciate about your discipline?
- What knowledge, skills, and attitudes are important for student success in your discipline?
- How are these disciplinary knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to students' academic, personal, and professional success?

### Your teaching methods and methods for assessing student learning:

- What are specific activities you use to accomplish your learning goals?
- How are these methods connected to your learning goals for students?
- What pedagogical resources and research (disciplinary and general) support your teaching methods?
- How are your methods reflective of your values (the relationship you want with your students, the responsibilities of the students and instructor, attentiveness to diverse student expectations and needs)?
- How do you know your specific activities helped students successfully achieve the learning goals? Describe your learning assessments (e.g., tests, papers, projects, posters, discussion).
- What do these learning assessments and their outcomes say about your teaching?

### Your assessment of your own teaching:

- How do you know that your teaching is effective and that your students are learning? What forms of data do you use to determine your effectiveness as a teacher?
- What do your teaching assessments (e.g., student evaluations, peer evaluations, teaching awards, informal commentary from students) say about your teaching?
- What are your strengths as a teacher? How can you document these strengths?
- How will you improve students' achievement of these learning goals?
- What aspects of your teaching are you working on now?
- What courses and teaching methods would you like to explore in the future?

---

## What materials could you include in a teaching portfolio (or dossier)?

1. **Statement of teaching philosophy (~2 pages)**
2. **Teaching history (1 to 2 pages)**
  - a. Level of course
  - b. Course enrollment
  - c. Major topics/concepts
  - d. Major responsibilities
3. **Course materials**
  - a. Syllabi (2 to 3 courses)
    - i. For courses for which you had the most responsibility
    - ii. At least one course proposal
  - b. Activities/assignments/exams
    - i. 1-2 examples per course
  - c. Sample student work
    - i. 1-2 examples per course
    - ii. Consider successive drafts
    - iii. Ask the student for permission and censure the name
4. **Complete student evaluations**
  - a. From 2 to 3 different courses
  - b. Numerical/quantitative data
    - i. Copy of evaluation services printout from selected sections
  - c. Comments/qualitative
    - i. All comments from selected sections; indicate "complete comments"
5. **Summary student evaluations**
  - a. From all courses taught
  - b. Numerical/quantitative
    - i. Present data in a graph or a table
    - ii. Select 5 rated items
    - iii. Consider data to present: mean score (0-4), percent agree and strongly agree, percentile
  - c. Comments/qualitative
    - i. Select comments that reflect achievement of learning goals
    - ii. Group comments into ~5 categories
    - iii. Present 3 to 5 quotations per category
    - iv. Include course number and semester in brackets after quote
6. **Observation letters**

e.g., supervisors, peers, instructional consultants, and/or other faculty members
7. **Professional development activities**

e.g., pedagogy courses, workshops, institutes
8. **Teaching recognition**

e.g., awards, letters of acknowledgement and thanks

---

## What organizational elements are helpful in a teaching portfolio?

Table of contents

Section dividers or tabs

Content introductions for each section

- What are you showing in this section?
- Why are you showing these elements of your teaching?
- What is important to notice about those elements of your teaching?

---

## Resources

- Get individualized help with writing a teaching statement and preparing a teaching portfolio from Writing Tutorial Services in the Wells Library Information Commons.
- "Writing your Teaching Philosophy: A Step-by-Step Approach." Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Minnesota. <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/philosophy/index.html>.
- Kaplan, M., C. O'Neal, D. Meizlish, R. Carillo, and D. Kardia. 2005. "Rubric for Statements of Teaching Philosophy." Center for Research on Teaching and Learning, University of Michigan. <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/onedayPFF2005/TeachingPhilosophyRubric.pdf>.
- Seldin, P. 2004. The Teaching Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Improved Performance and Promotion/Tenure Decisions, 3rd edition. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.