



CENTRE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Preparing a Teaching Dossier

“I have to tell you that one of the things that worked strongly in my favor in getting the UVic job was my teaching. If it wasn't for the workshops, SGS901 and all the other things, I would never have had the confidence and know how to pull it off. They were impressed at how teaching is important for me. I was able to articulate this clearly and convincingly, and when it came to my hour lecture in the context of an undergrad course, I mustered all my knowledge and experience from SGS901 etc. and, apparently, scored very highly on the student evaluations.”

- *Emile de Rosnay PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of French, University of Victoria*
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Collective Agreement Article 29: Assessment and Evaluation of Teaching

29.1 This article applies to the assessment and evaluation of teaching for

- Annual Performance Review
- Renewal
- Tenure
- Continuing Appointment
- Reappointment
- Promotion

29.6 Any member whose teaching performance is being reviewed has the right to submit any information he/she believes to be relevant to the review, including a Teaching Dossier.

29.7 Teaching Dossiers are intended to provide a description of a Member's major teaching accomplishments and strengths in a manner that conveys the scope and quality of the individual's teaching. Responsibility for gathering and collecting the evidence for the dossier is the member's.

A Teaching Dossier is...

- “to teaching what lists of publications, grants and honors are to research and scholarship...It presents thoughtfully chosen information on teaching activities along with indisputable evidence of their effectiveness.”

Peter Seldin, 2004

Seldin, P. 2004. The Teaching Portfolio (Third Edition). Anker Publishing Company Inc., Bolton, MA.

A Teaching Dossier...

Documents **achievement and reflection** through the following information:

- Your beliefs about students, learning and teaching
 - Your learning outcomes, teaching methods, responsibilities, and goals
 - Your contributions to teaching and learning in your field, at your institution, or beyond
 - Evidence of the effects of your teaching.
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Elements of a Teaching Dossier

Essential

- Teaching Philosophy Statement
- Teaching Responsibilities/Activities
- Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness
- Appendices (syllabus; comments; letters)

Biographical Sketch

Optional

- Professional Development
 - Educational Leadership
 - Teaching Scholarship
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Biographical Sketch

- My teaching experience in higher education began when I was a Master's student at Dalhousie University acting as a teaching assistant for *Chemical Engineering Reactor Design*. At Queen's University, I had opportunity to teach and demonstrate in the Chemical Engineering laboratories for students in first, second and third years. I have also had the opportunity to teach introductory Chemistry and Chemical Engineering courses at Loyalist College in Belleville and at St. Lawrence College in Kingston. While my teaching experience is currently limited to undergraduate offerings I would welcome the opportunity to teach similar offerings at the graduate level.
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Biographical Sketch: Free-Write

- Brief history of how you came to your current position
 - Your current overall responsibilities
 - Include the type of courses you currently teach
 - Courses you would like the opportunity to teach/develop
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Teaching Philosophy Statement

“A teaching philosophy statement is a systematic and critical rationale that focuses on the important components defining effective teaching and learning in a particular discipline and/or institutional context”

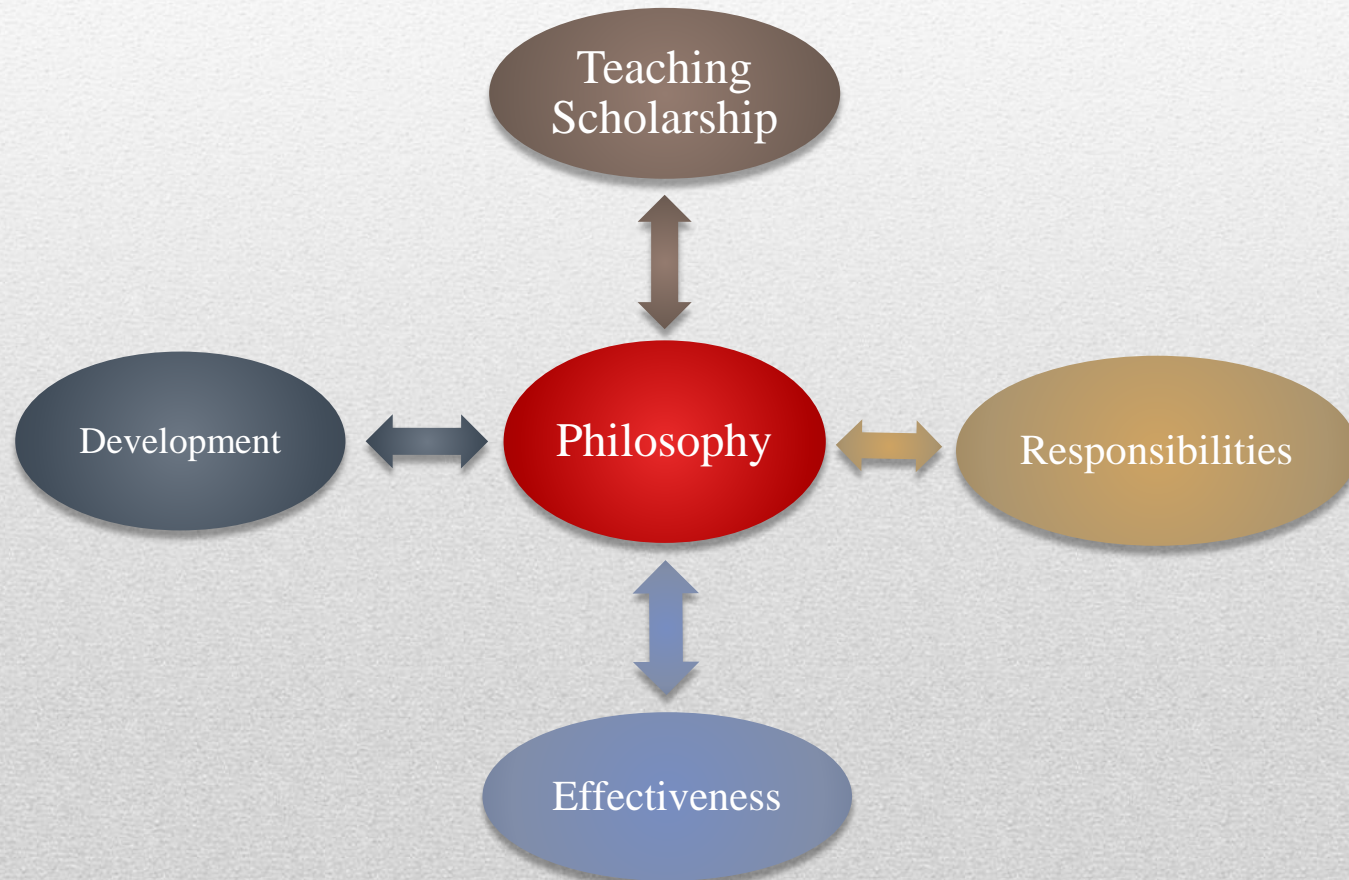
Schönwetter et al, 2002

Schonwetter, D.J., Sokal, L., Friesen, M., and K.L. Taylor (2002) Teaching philosophies reconsidered: a conceptual model for the development and evaluation of teaching philosophy statements. *The International Journal for Academic Development*. 7:83-97.

Framing the Philosophy Statement

- **Thesis statement:** What is most important to you about teaching and learning (values and beliefs)? Use reflection to create a vivid description of your teaching & learning ideas
 - **Provide evidence for your claims:** personalize the approach, draw upon your own experiences; discipline-specific teaching strategies
 - **Conclusion:** Summarize your strengths/goals or discuss your plans for your future as an educator
 - **Format:** usually 1st person, no longer than 2 pages
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Philosophy: The glue that holds the dossier together





How do you want to be represented to the reader? It will depend on the purpose of the dossier (faculty position, tenure, teaching award)?

- Reflective, scholarly, practical, caring, efficient?

Who are my students?

- How do I get to know my students, and their prior knowledge?
- How do I know what are concepts my students commonly struggle with?
- Under what circumstances students learn best?

What are my instructional methods?

- What do you do to create conditions that optimize student learning and growth?
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What makes a Teaching Philosophy Statement Successful?

- **How Important is Teaching? Results of Research on Academic Hiring**

Matthew Kaplan and Deborah Meizlish

Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching

University of Michigan

November, 2005

Statement is individualized and grounded in evidence:

- “The successful statements were detailed but did not merely parrot ideas from textbooks. They conveyed the sense that the candidate had incorporated a coherent pedagogical theory and approach into his or her everyday thinking and practice. They reflected a history of considered modifications, which showed that the candidate had matured beyond the stage of needing to cling to an ideal” – English
 - “Succinct; included examples of enactment of the philosophy; There was an individualized and unique quality about the statement that conveyed genuine commitment rather than rhetoric” – Psychology
 - “Statement are most effective when they include specific and personal examples, experiences, etc. It makes the statement seem more than merely perfunctory” – Political Science
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A variety of instructional strategies:

“Clear expression of methods of instruction that go beyond traditional lecture and testing methodology. Active learning and group problem solving appreciation are two valued components” – Biology

“Focus on teaching students with heterogeneous ability levels/background; ability to revise based upon student needs; importance to student input; responsive to and respect for student viewpoints “ – Psychology

“Something other than the standard lecture format. I look at student involvement, civic engagement, teamwork, classroom presentation, and development of writing skills. I also like to see a professor brag about student accomplishments rather than what was covered in the class. In other words, the students should have an opportunity to apply what they learn through case studies, research projects, publications, conference participation, simulations, etc.”
– Political Science

Statement reveals an applicant who is context-aware:

- “Ability to recognize distinction between undergrad and grad teaching. Recognition of need to use different styles of teaching to meet needs of students with different abilities. Experience and/or philosophy of teaching students from diverse backgrounds” – Psychology
- “The most successful candidates related their interactions with their students as being very important and wrote about how they would approach teaching their courses in a manner that seemed appropriate for our university.” – Chemistry
- “A knowledge of the kind of students we have and a willingness to work with their shortcomings; a candidate’s willingness to teach outside her discipline” – English
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Overall written quality:

“Must be well organized and well written” – Chemistry

“Lively prose helps. One is always looking for a bright, articulate, highly energized person” – English

“The most successful statements were linguistically clear and intellectually interesting” –Biology

Teaching Responsibilities

Consider:

- Workload
 - Courses taught with student numbers/levels/credit hours
 - Details of other academic activity: seminars, research supervision, coaching, advising...
 - Resource materials development
 - Did you or any of your students get an award as a result of your teaching?
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Teaching Responsibilities

■ Teaching Assistantship

ANAT 309 – Functional Histology, 0.5 credit

Logistics:	2 hour laboratory, 82 undergraduate and 9 graduate students
Course description:	An outline of basic mammalian tissues.
Responsibilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher's assistant during modular laboratory sessions• Delivered half hour pre lab talk on histology of gastrointestinal system• Assisted in administration and marking of lab exams

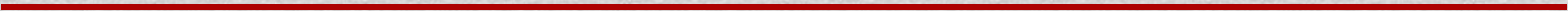
ANAT 216 – Principles of Human Morphology II, 0.5 credit

Logistics:	2 hour laboratory, 250 undergraduate students
Course description:	The general principle of human structure and function as appreciated through a survey of the development, microscopic and gross anatomy of the body systems: cardiovascular, respiratory, immune/lymphatic, endocrine, digestive and genitourinary.
Responsibilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher's assistant during modular laboratory sessions• Delivered 15 minute pre lab demonstration at beginning of each session• Assisted in administration and marking of lab exams



Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

- What sources of data can you use?
- How might you collect, interpret and report on the data you collect?
- What are some informal ways to collect feedback?



Professional Development

Efforts at improving teaching, learning, service...

- Workshops
- Seminars
- Courses
- Certificates
- Membership
- New technology



...related to teaching and learning

Educational Leadership

- Coordinating or Giving Workshops, Seminars etc.
- Mentoring others
- Developing instructional materials
- Advocacy roles
- Committee membership



...on teaching and learning

Teaching Scholarship

- Conference presentations
- Research
- Grants
- Publications



...on teaching and learning

Appendices

- Sample course syllabus
 - Sample lecture
 - Instructional innovations
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Collect, Update, & Seek Feedback



Collect materials
related to your



Document your
teaching as you teach.



Regularly examine
your assumptions

Example

- What were some of the strengths of this Teaching Philosophy Statement?
 - How can it be improved?
 - What do you remember the most about this philosophy statement?
 - What do you want readers of your Teaching Philosophy Statement to remember most?
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Getting Started: Free-Write

Describe a situation or moment when you knew that your teaching was having an impact on your students.

- What was it about the teaching and learning that was meaningful and memorable?
 - What does this story tell you about what is important to you as a teacher?
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