Creating a Professional Portfolio: Showcasing Your Teaching Strengths

A Distance Learning Graduate Course

Course Syllabus

"Special buzzwords have been rampant in educational circles for the past few years. Terms such as *critical thinking, authenticity, hands-on, student centered, reflection,* and *qualitative assessment* have been right at the head of the list. But perhaps the most provocative among the buzzwords has been *portfolio*. Ironically, a portfolio can easily cover critical thinking, authenticity, hands-on, student centered, reflection, qualitative assessment, and more."

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Robert L. Wyatt III & Sandra Looper
So You have to Have a Portfolio

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Creating a Professional Portfolio

Course Title

"Creating a Professional Portfolio"

Course Description

"Creating a Professional Portfolio" is a three unit graduate course designed to help participants extend the application of what they learned in a previously taken QEP course and in the process gain experience in the creation of a professional portfolio. The portfolio development guidelines in this course are aligned with the standards set by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. In the process of creating their portfolios, participants learn how to effectively describe, analyze, and reflect upon instructional units.

Course Goals

The goals of this course are to have participants:
- Develop an understanding of the theoretical basis for the creation of professional portfolios.
- Gain experience in effectively describing, analyzing, and reflecting upon instructional units.
- Create portfolios based on three instructional units.
- Share their portfolios with colleagues and receive feedback.
- Reflect upon their course experience and plan for future use of knowledge gained.

Course Prerequisites

To enroll in this course, participants must meet the following requirements:
1. Participants must be currently enrolled in or have successfully completed one of the following QEP courses:

      Introduction to Differentiation
      Differentiated Instructional Strategies
      Differentiated Assessment Strategies
      Teaching in the Inclusive Classroom
      Every Student Can Succeed
      Improving Student Achievement
      Teaching Students Responsible Behavior

Responsibility, Respect & Relationships
Dealing With Discipline Problems
Teaching in the 21st Century
Teaching in the Quality Classroom
Co-Operation and the Quality Classroom
Building Home-School Partnerships

2. Participants must have access to the videos provided to them in the learning materials for the previously taken QEP course.

3. Participants must have access to a classroom for the implementation of their teaching units.

Course Overview

This course is organized to reflect the approach to professional portfolio development as adopted by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Specifically, for each of the teaching units required in this course, participants will be required to describe, analyze, and reflect upon their course work.

Description. The description requirement will include two parts. In part one, participants will describe in detail the units that they plan to teach. In part two, they will describe their experience in teaching the units. In the describing unit, participants will address the following questions:

What are the goals of the unit?
How the unit reflects your knowledge of your students?
What concepts will students have to learn to successfully complete the unit activities?
What is your plan to assess student learning at the end of the unit?
In the description of teaching the unit, participants will address the following questions:
What was your experience in teaching the unit?
To what degree did the activities in the unit successfully engage students in the learning process?
What did students do correctly? Incorrectly?
What were the results of your assessment of student learning?

Analysis. After teaching their units, participants will analyze their experience. In their analysis, participants will address these questions:

To what degree were your goals for this unit met?
To what degree do concepts presented in the unit require reteaching or reinforcement?
What were the most successful aspects of the unit? Why?
What were the least successful? Why?

Reflection. In reflecting on their experience and the analysis, participants will consider the implications for future teaching. In the reflection section, participants will address the following questions:

> Based on your analysis of the unit, what might you do next, or differently, or additionally for your students?
> From teaching this unit, what did you learn about your strengths as a teacher?
> If you were to teach this unit again, what would you do differently?
> What did you learn from this unit that could make future instruction more effective?

Course Rubric

The rubric for this course is based on the rubric presented in *Middle Childhood/Generalist Assessment and Scoring Kit* (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1999). The rubric describes four levels of achievement with Level Four being the highest. There are four levels for each of the three key elements of the course: description, analysis, and reflection.

> **Description, Level Four.** Level Four performance provides clear, convincing, and consistent evidence that participants have created teaching units that are based on a knowledge of their students, have clearly defined goals, include instructional strategies and activities to meet those goals, and have a plan to assess student achievement in terms of those goals.

> **Analysis, Level Four.** Level Four performance provides clear, convincing and consistent evidence that the participants have sought to interpret their experience in teaching the unit with respect to were unit goals reached, do some concepts need reteaching or reinforcement, and what were the most successful and least successful aspects of the unit.

> **Reflection, Level Four.** Level Four performance provides clear, convincing and consistent evidence that based on their experience they have considered what they will do next for their students, what they would do differently if they were to teach the unit again, and what implications their experience has for future teaching.

For each of the above elements: Level Three provides "clear evidence," Level Two provides "limited evidence," and Level One provides "little or no evidence."

Course Outline

Session #1 "Professional Portfolios: Understanding the Theory."

Objectives: To have participants examine the theoretical basis for using professional portfolios; to have participants develop an understanding of course rubrics; and to have participants plan for the development of their own portfolios.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text discussions activity, and the development of a personal plan for portfolio development and use.

Session #2 "Creating a Professional Portfolio."

Objectives: To have participants learn the process of creating a professional portfolio; to have participants create and describe in detail an instructional unit that will enhance their students achievement.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #3 "Examining Student Work and Selecting Archives."

Objectives: To have participants learn how to best evaluate student work in selecting archives; to have participants teach the units created in the previous study session.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #4 "The Role of Reflection and the Portfolio Process."

Objectives: To have participants develop an understanding of the key role reflection plays in creating a professional portfolio; to have participants analyze and reflect upon their experience in teaching the unit in the previous study session and to have them collect archives for inclusion in their portfolios.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #5 "Professional Portfolios: Professional Development or Teacher Assessment."

Objectives: To have participants examine the different roles professional portfolios can play in education; to have participants create and describe in detail an instructional unit that will enhance their students achievement..

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #6 "The Power of Self-Directed Inquiry."

Objectives: To have participants examine the value of self-directed inquiry in their professional development; to have participants teach the units created in the previous study session

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #7 "Professional Portfolios: Case Studies."

Objectives: To have participants analyze the portfolio process through case studies; to have participants analyze and reflect upon their experience in teaching the unit in the previous study session and to have them collect archives for inclusion in their portfolios.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #8 "Portfolios and the Assessment of Teaching."

Objectives: To have participants explore how professional portfolios might best be utilized in the assessment of teaching; to have participants create and describe in detail an instructional unit that will enhance their students achievement.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #9 "Portfolios and Teacher Preparation."

Objectives: To have participants examine how portfolios can be part of a teacher's preparation program; to have participants teach the units created in the previous study session

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #10 "Portfolios and Their Consequences."

Objectives: To have participants consider the impact a broader use of professional portfolios might have on our educational system; to have participants analyze and reflect upon their experience in teaching the unit in the previous study session and to have them collect archives for inclusion in their portfolios.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #11, "Portfolios: Documenting Your Effectiveness"

Objectives: To have participants consider portfolios from an administrator's perspective; to have participants make revisions to their portfolios based on a consideration of the needs of their administrator.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #12, "Evaluating Teacher Portfolios"

Objectives: To have participants consider what criteria might be used to evaluate teacher portfolios; to have participants reconsider what has been included in their portfolios based on the results.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #13, "Using a Portfolio for Career Advancement"

Objectives: To have participants consider the how they might best used their portfolios to advance their careers; to have participants consider and prepare to use their portfolios in job interviews.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of videos, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #14, "Collaboration and Feedback"

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of the value of working with colleagues in the creation of a portfolio; to have participants share their portfolios with an administrator or colleague and receive feedback; to have participants make revisions in their portfolios based on feedback received.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Session #15, "Implications for Future Teaching"

Objectives: To have participants consider the impact a broader use of professional portfolios might have on our educational system; to have participants analyze and reflect upon their experience in creating their portfolios; to have partici-

pants consider what implications their experience in creating their portfolios might have on their future teaching.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, discussions activity, and classroom application assignment.

Course Learning Activities

1. In the fifteen (15) sections of this course, participants will complete activities that include:
  a.) Reading the assigned chapters of the course text.
  b.) Reading supplemental articles in the course of study book.
  c.) Completing Discussion/Reflection Activities
      NOTE: While benefits are greatest when participants take this course as a part of a study team, participants can successfully complete course requirements by working with a friend or colleague who is not enrolled in the course; or, by reflecting upon the material and considering how they might use it in their teaching situations.
  d.) Viewing instructional videos.
  e.) Designing and teaching an instructional unit based on assigned reading and video viewing, implement, and evaluate an application of course content in their teaching situation.
  f.) Analyzing and reflecting upon their experience in creating and teaching the instructional unit unit.
  h.) Selecting archives to be included in the professional portfolios
  i.) Sharing their portfolios with an administrator or colleague to receive feedback.
  j.) Summarizing their experience in progress reports for each study session
  2. Submitting their final; portfolios for review.

Course Materials

1. Course text: Bullock, A. and Hawk, P. (2010). *Developing a Teaching Portfolio: A Guide for Preservice and Practicing Teachers.* Pearson Publishing, Boston, MA.

2. Supplemental readings: article and book chapter excerpts relating to the creation of teacher professional portfolios.

3. Study Guide containing portfolio development guidelines, supplemental reading, discussion activities, application assignments, rubrics, and learning reports.

3. The videos for the previously taken QEP course.

5. Bibliography and Recommended Reading

Course Outcomes

This course are designed to promote a quality graduate educational experience through the attainment of the following outcomes:

To successfully complete the program, participants will:
1. Demonstrate an understanding of portfolio creation guidelines as determined by the National Board of Teaching Standards.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in accurately describing an instructional unit to be included in the portfolio.
3. Demonstrate proficiency complete analyses of instructional units for inclusion in their portfolio.
4. Demonstrate proficiency in reflecting upon instructional unit teaching experience and analysis thereof.
5. Demonstrate proficiency in critically analyzing archives for inclusion in their portfolios.
6. Assemble their professional portfolios, share them with colleagues, and receive feedback.
7. Incorporate feedback suggestions in the final version of their portfolios.
8. Acquire and utilize the skills in building learning networks that they may continue to utilize as lifelong learners.

Course Assessment

Participant achievement will be measured by a combination of the following:

1. An evaluation of participant's 10 progress reports. (Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.)
   > Each progress report will be evaluated for:
   > – Thoroughness of responses.
   > – Quality of responses
   > – Quality of reflection.

2. An evaluation of participant's professional portfolio. (Outcomes 6, 7, and 8.)
   > The professional paper will be evaluated for:
   > – Inclusion of required components.
   > – Quality of descriptions, analyses, and reflections.
   > – Presentation in an organized, professional manner.

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