

# Portfolio Assessment for Doctoral Students in ELPS

## **Introduction**

There are two key components of portfolio assessment for ELPS doctoral students. The first is the *portfolio assessment process*, and the second is the *presentation portfolio*.

The *portfolio assessment process* has been designed to support learning and development in the six major program domains throughout the doctoral program. Through this process, students monitor and reflect on their learning in each domain. Portfolio assessment is an opportunity for students to understand and celebrate their own learning, to set goals for improvement, and to receive feedback from important stakeholders such as the major professor, committee members, and other individuals who may be involved in the student's program.

As part of the *portfolio assessment process* (see previous page), each student reviews his/her learning in the six domains three times during the program. At each review, the student assesses the current level of proficiency in each domain, selects an example of work he/she has produced in the domain, writes a reflective self-assessment about learning in the domain, and seeks feedback from the major professor.

After the third self-assessment, the materials from all the reviews are compiled in a *presentation portfolio*, using the guidelines below. The *presentation portfolio* is submitted to the Program of Study (POS) committee so that it can be discussed at the prelim orals. The discussion at the meeting should focus not only on the student's current level of achievement but also on the student's learning history, i.e., the process through which current achievement was developed. (In addition to discussing the *presentation portfolio* at the prelim orals, the POS committee will also discuss the capstone project.)

The *presentation portfolio* is a learning portfolio rather than a professional portfolio. That is, it is a "representative, purposeful and selective collection of one's work drawn primarily from classroom work . . . It documents . . . evidence of learning, growth, and change—in essence a learning history is captured" (Arter, 1995). In contrast, a professional portfolio is a summative collection of best work that might be presented to potential employers. Although the ELPS *portfolio assessment process* focuses on portraying the learning process over time, it should assist students in identifying materials that could be useful in developing a professional portfolio.

## **Privacy Policy**

Each student's presentation portfolio will be shared with the student's POS Committee. It may also be viewed by ELPS department assessment committees whose charge will be to review the work of several students *as a group* in order to evaluate learning outcomes at the department level. No presentation portfolio will be shared with any other individual unless the student gives permission.

## Portfolio Assessment Guidelines

### **Student's Periodic Self-Assessment**

The student will review and analyze his/her achievement in the six major learning domains three times during the doctoral program:

1. upon entry (Self-Assessment 1)
2. at the midpoint of the course-taking period (Self-Assessment 2)
3. after the preliminary oral examination (Self-Assessment 3).

Each of the three self-assessments should result in a *narrative reflection for each domain*. The purpose of the *narrative reflection* is to portray the student's learning history. Therefore, the student should include—but not feel limited to—the following elements:

- a) The student's self-rating of current performance in the domain. Using the department rubric associated with the domain, the student will provide a rating for each criterion in the rubric. (When addressing the Communication domain, students should address all four components: written communication, oral communication, interpersonal communication, and intrapersonal communication. )
- b) A self-assessment narrative in which the student shares insights about his/her own learning in the domain, including both strengths and areas in need of improvement. In the narrative, the student should explain the self-ratings on the rubric criteria. He/she should analyze how learning is progressing in the domain and give specific examples of relevant learning experiences. The student should also explicate key elements referred to in the intrapersonal communication rubric—personal philosophy, beliefs, values, and ethical perspectives.
- c) A sample artifact that illustrates points made in the narrative, along with a discussion of what it represents. At the time of the first self-assessment (soon after entering the doctoral program), the student will select artifacts from previous professional and life experiences. At the time of the second and third self-assessments, the student will select most artifacts from courses taken in the program, but when appropriate, the student can include examples of out-of-class learning.
- d) The student's goals for improvement.

**The student should save the materials generated from each self-assessment for eventual inclusion in the presentation portfolio. (See directions below for compiling the presentation portfolio.)**

### Stakeholder Involvement

At the time of each self-assessment, the student will share and discuss the narrative reflections for the six domains with either the major professor alone or with the major professor and Program of Study (POS) committee. For example, the student will share and discuss the narrative reflections resulting from first self-assessment with both the major professor and the POS committee during the POS meeting. This provides an opportunity for the committee and the student to discuss the student's strengths and areas in need of improvement when the Program of Study is designed and approved.

The second self-assessment takes place during the course-taking period of the student's program. The student will discuss the narrative reflections from this self-assessment with the major professor. If the major professor so desires, he/she may write a brief response to the student to be retained for inclusion in the presentation portfolio.

After the third self-assessment, the student will prepare the presentation portfolio and distribute it to the members of the POS committee for discussion at the prelim orals. At that meeting, the student and committee will discuss both the student's learning history and the student's current level of achievement in the six domains. The committee will assist the student by offering insights into the self-analyses that the student has presented. The student and committee will also discuss the direction of the student's future growth and development.

### **Compilation of the Presentation Portfolio**

Following the third self-assessment, the student will prepare a reflective narrative on the portfolio as a whole. To prepare for this narrative, the student should review the material from the three self-assessments. The reflective narrative on the portfolio as a whole should summarize the student's insights about what the portfolio assessment process has meant to him or her, as well as an overview of the growth the student has experienced in the program.

The student should then prepare a paper version of the presentation portfolio to share with committee members prior to the prelim orals. (A CD may also be included with the paper version.) The presentation portfolio should include the following elements:

- 1) Table of Contents
- 2) Student's Program of Study
- 3) Student's Vita or Resume
- 4) Reflective Narrative on the Portfolio as a Whole
- 5) Materials for Each Learning Domain
  - a) Copy of ELPS Rubric(s) for the Domain
  - b) Materials from Entry Self-Assessment (Self-Assessment 1)
  - c) Materials from Midpoint Self-Assessment (Self-Assessment 2)
  - d) Materials from Final Self-Assessment (Self-Assessment 3)

The student should organize the material to facilitate movement through the presentation portfolio. In the case of the paper version, the student should consider dividers, labels, plastic sleeves, dated entries, etc. In the case of an electronic version, the student should design the home page and system of links in a way that communicates the portfolio's organization to the reader and is easy to use.

### **Reference**

Arter, J (1995). Portfolios for assessment and instruction. ERIC Digest. ERIC Clearing House.  
[http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed388890.html](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed388890.html)