

Portfolio Notes

Portfolio... the document that brings everything together

A) Purposes

- a. The portfolio provides a way of tying together major themes, issues, and perspectives the MSLT student has encountered and reflected upon over the course of the Master's program. This understanding is cast in the light of what it means to the MSLT student, and for the MSLT student's intended professional context.
- b. Writing the portfolio is a process of making connections and making explicit the knowledge and understanding the student has gained over the time period that the student was enrolled in the program.
- c. The portfolio is a demonstration of the student's professionalism; as such, it marks the beginning of one's new professional identity, as a result of having gone through the MSLT program.

B) Characteristics

- a. The portfolio is the product of the student's coursework; some of the components are written as course requirements in various courses.
- b. The author's stance is very important; the reader needs to hear the writer's *personal, professional* voice.

C) Format: Use APA format throughout. Total size: no more than 100 pages (which includes all preliminary pages, the main 'body' of the portfolio, and the References section).

- a. **Preliminary pages**, as required by the Graduate School. A template will be provided to you. Preliminary pages include: cover page with lines for signatures, copyright page, dedication page, abstract (written in 3rd person in layperson's terms without technical vocabulary), acknowledgments, table of contents, list of acronyms, list of tables, list of figures, and list of appendices.
- b. **Introduction** (about 300 words)
 - i. What is the MSLT portfolio / this portfolio
 - ii. The main areas of the teaching philosophy
- c. **Teaching Perspectives** (10-16 pages). This is the centerpiece of the portfolio, the axis around which all the other parts revolve. It should be started in the first semester and revised each semester as a result of the readings and ideas encountered in coursework and in practice. In the teaching philosophy, the student lays out "This is who I am as a teacher, coming out of this program." As such, the Teaching Perspectives section is personal, not about what the program is or does for people in general, but what it has meant to *you* ... what is important to you, in your teaching.

- i. **Professional Environment** (1 page). Describe what kind of professional setting you have in mind when articulating your teaching philosophy and presenting your papers in the Research Perspectives section. What kind of teaching situation is this portfolio aimed at – for example, teaching Japanese at an American university, adult ESL in the USA, Dual-Language immersion Chinese in Utah, high school French in Vietnam, EFL for business professionals in Brazil, etc.?
 - ii. **Teaching Philosophy Statement** (5-10 pages). This is the centerpiece of the portfolio. Not off-the-top-of-your-head ideas, but beliefs that are grounded in the literature. Make each belief practical by detailing how exactly you plan to implement your belief in a real-world context. Cite a sufficient number of important references. Be sure to explain all important concepts and terminology.
 - iii. **Professional Development through Teaching Observations** (4-5 pages). As you have observed a number of language teachers in action during your time in the MSLT program, you have been able to notice whether those teachers implement the principles you present in your Teaching Philosophy as critically important. Reflect on the practice of other teachers in light of your personal Teaching Philosophy.
- d. **Research Perspectives.** This section of the Portfolio contains re-worked term papers you have written for your courses. In these papers, you have the opportunity to elaborate on your beliefs about effective teaching in the second/foreign language classroom. The papers should further elaborate on some of the things you talk about in the Teaching Philosophy Statement. The Research and Teaching Perspectives sections should ideally echo or mirror one another. A separate Orientation and Reflection (2-4 pages long) precedes each paper and serves four functions: (1) discuss what this paper is doing in the portfolio (i.e., how it relates to your Teaching Philosophy Statement); (2) explain why you wrote this paper and for which class; (3) describe what you learned from investigating this topic; and (4) reflect on what this means for your teaching practice in the professional context in which you envision yourself.
- i. **Language, Literacy, or Culture Artifact #1** (15-20 pages): demonstrates your expertise in researching or supporting language learners' development of linguistic proficiency, literacy, the role of culture in language learning, or any other related topic (e.g., use of literature or technology to teach language, issues related to ESL, L2 pragmatics, or another topic).
 - ii. **Language, Literacy, or Culture Artifact #2** (15-20 pages): demonstrates your expertise in researching or supporting language learners'

development of linguistic proficiency, literacy, the role of culture in language learning, or any other related topic (e.g., use of literature or technology to teach language, issues related to ESL, L2 pragmatics, or another topic).

- e. **Annotated Bibliography** (10-15 pages). The Annotated Bibliography section is devoted to a topic about which you have read extensively while in the MSLT program. This topic could coincide with one of the themes of your Teaching Philosophy or be connected with one or more papers in the Research Perspectives section. For the Annotated Bibliography, you should explain what motivated your interest in this topic and how various sources helped you develop your understanding of the topic. There should be at least 15 sources in all. The Portfolio writer's critical stance on each of the sources is important: it must be obvious to the reader what you liked about each source and what you did not. To see how the Annotated Bibliography should be structured, consult recently defended MSLT Portfolios (i.e., since 2016).
- f. **Looking Forward** (1 page). Describe what you are aiming for in your professional development: what aspects of your knowledge and teaching do you want to develop, and by which means might you accomplish this?
- g. **References**. All the works cited in the portfolio go into one large reference section at the end of the portfolio. As you work on drafts of various sections of the portfolio, you need to keep the references with that section, but when putting the whole portfolio together, all references go together into one section at the end of the document. Please follow current APA stylistic guidelines for this References section.
- h. **Appendix/Appendices**. If you want to include any additional material that is either too long to fit in the body of your portfolio or is simply more appropriate to be included as an Appendix (work with your Chair to determine if something is better placed in an Appendix section vs. the body of the portfolio), please place it at the end of your portfolio in a dedicated Appendix/Appendices section.