

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; all the major 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: fewer than 200 pages.

- 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** (2-3 pages)
 - i. What is the MSLT portfolio / this portfolio
 - ii. Very briefly, the main areas (topics, themes) of the Teaching Perspectives section and the Research Perspectives section
- c. **Teaching Perspectives** (25-35 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. 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. ***Apprenticeship of Observation*** (2-4 pages). Make clear what you learned about teaching when you yourself were a student; articulate how being a student affected your conceptions of language, language learning and teaching, the role of teachers, and so forth.
 - ii. ***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.?
 - iii. ***Teaching Philosophy Statement*** (12-15 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.
 - iv. ***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.
 - v. ***Self-Assessment of Teaching Statement*** (4-10 pages). Invite one or more observers to a class you teach. Have a peer video-record the class. Write a reflection comparing your classroom practice (that lesson, that day) with your Teaching Philosophy. After you send this reflection to your observers, they will send you their notes. You then combine their notes with your own reflection to write the Self-Assessment of Teaching. You should mention specific ways in which your video demonstrates or fails to demonstrate what you believe about good language teaching. You can include multiple classes/observations, to demonstrate your growth.
- 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. Research Perspectives and Teaching Perspectives should 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 Paper* demonstrates your expertise in supporting language learners' development of linguistic proficiency
 - ii. *Culture Paper* demonstrates your understanding of the role of culture in language learning
 - iii. *Literacy Paper* demonstrates your ability to help language learners develop their reading and writing skills
 - iv. *Optional fourth paper*: this could be on the topic of Technology, Teacher Development, or something else relevant and important to you.
- e. **Annotated Bibliographies.** The Annotated Bibliography consists of three to four sections, each section devoted to a topic about which you have read extensively while in the MSLT program. These topics could coincide with the themes of your Teaching Philosophy or be connected with one or more papers in the Research Perspectives section. For each 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 6-8 sources per theme (25-30 sources total). 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. Samples can be found in recently defended MSLT Portfolios (since 2016).
- f. **Looking Forward.** 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.