

Guidelines, Procedures and Directions

For the Comprehensive Portfolio

Demonstrating Achievement of Advanced Competencies:

A Requirement for the

MAEd and MAT in Comprehensive Education



College of Education and Allied Professions

Western Carolina University

The Master's Comprehensive Portfolio

Definition: The Master's Comprehensive Portfolio is a formal, organized set of documents and artifacts demonstrating the teacher's growth, as a self-directed, reflective practitioner.

Rationale: The Master's Comprehensive Portfolio is intended to provide tangible evidence that the candidate has met each of the advanced competencies required for the degree. The portfolio is not a collection of everything the candidate has done in the master's program; it is a carefully selected, organized set of entries demonstrating achievement of each of the standards.

Portfolio Standards:

Standard One. Instructional Expertise: Applies the theoretical, philosophical, and research bases for educational practice in elementary, middle, and secondary school classrooms to improve student learning. Plans, implements, and evaluates instruction that is rigorous, coherent, and consistent with a well-developed theoretical and philosophical stance and with best practices emerging from educational research.

- Reads educational literature critically, including theoretical, philosophical, and research materials
- Analyzes and articulates relationships between and among theory, philosophy, research findings, and current practice
- Designs and modifies instruction based on well articulated theory, philosophy, educational research, and best practice
- Incorporates findings from educational literature into school and classroom strategies to improve student learning

Standard Two. Knowledge of Learners: Incorporates knowledge of the nature of the learner, learning processes, variations in learning abilities and learning styles, and strategies for evaluating learning. Plans, implements, and evaluates instruction that is responsive to wide variations in students' learning needs and learning styles

- Designs and modifies instruction that is responsive to differences among learners that are influenced by development, exceptionalities, and diversity
- Seeks actively to increase understanding of and respect for differences in students' development, exceptionalities, and diversity
- Creates a classroom environment in which all learners feel welcome and can be successful
- Reflects on, diagnoses, and prescribes instruction that fosters student learning

Standard Three. Research Expertise: Understands and employs methods of research to examine and improve instructional effectiveness and student achievement

- Investigates and solves educational problems through data-gathering, action research, and evaluation of student learning, classroom processes, and school practices
- Modifies instruction and learning environments based on assessment of student learning problems and successes
- Monitors the effects of instructional actions, selection of materials, and other instructional decisions on students' learning and behavior

Standard Four. Connecting Subject Matter and Learners: Understands and links subject matter and students' developmental and diverse needs in the context of school settings. Plans, implements, and evaluates instruction that reflects intellectual rigor and depth of knowledge in both subject matter disciplines and students' diverse learning needs

- Demonstrates appropriate depth and breadth of knowledge in subject matter defined in the North Carolina course of study
- Uses technology to create learning environments that support students' learning
- Seeks, implements, and evaluates the best pedagogical practices for the subjects taught within the context of a specific school setting
- Understands and respects differences between the learning behaviors and outcomes expected in a school setting and the learning behaviors and outcomes expected in diverse communities

Standard Five. Professional Development and Leadership: Demonstrates self-directed, self-reflective professional behavior and provides leadership to colleagues and communities through collaboration

- Initiates professional inquiry through reading, dialogue, professional development, and action research
- Seeks, evaluates, and applies well-grounded suggestions for improvement provided by educators, parents, students, and community leaders
- Participates in collaborative leadership and mentorship activities to solve educational problems at the levels of classroom, school building, school system, and community.

Format and Kinds of Portfolio Entries:

Portfolio entries can take a variety of forms. None are excluded. They can be paper entries such as manuscripts, published articles, exams, proposals, and teaching units. They may be in other media as well. Students can include videotapes of teaching or other professional activities. They can include audiotapes or computer software. Entries could be notebooks including photographs and drawings. Notebooks can include different formats. For example, entries could show lesson plans, teaching materials, photos of student projects, evaluations by supervisors, journal entries, printed programs of student presentations, and other things.

Source of Portfolio Entries:

Portfolio entries may come from the student's professional career. Entries may include course assignments, projects, and exams from graduate courses. Entries may also include products of activities in the student's working career. Entries that are not course

assignments should come from the same period as graduate study and must relate directly to the standards.

Portfolio Product Guidelines:

1. The entire portfolio should be viewable in two hours or less including any videotapes, audiotapes, etc. The portfolio should be submitted in one container with the candidate's name clearly visible on the outside. The candidate's name, student identification number, address, and phone number should be included in the portfolio.
2. Students should prepare portfolios for presentation with care. Contents should be organized with a table of contents at the beginning. Each standard or outcome should comprise a labeled section.
3. Written documents may be stapled or may be included in a three-ring binder. Plastic binders or sleeves should not be used. Grades and instructor comments should not be visible on papers that have been submitted for a course. Copy the papers with remarks deleted or reprint the paper if possible.
4. The names of pupils in classes should be deleted. Candidates are responsible for securing written permission to use materials showing individuals other than the candidate who can be recognized.
5. No less than two and no more than five entries may be included for each standard. Any particular artifact can be used to show evidence of meeting no more than two standards.
6. Each standard should have a one-page introduction from the candidate with the following information.
 - a) Statement of the Standard. Restate the standard.
 - b) Listing of the Entries for the Standard. List the title of each entry and describe its format. For example, "Agricultural Influences of 19th Century America – Research Paper" or "Parent Workshop on Curriculum – 10 minute videotape."
 - c) Statement of How Entries Address the Standard. Write two to five sentences stating how the standard is addressed by these entries. Write only one paragraph for each standard.
 - d) Strengths of Entries. Include a short paragraph (200 words maximum) stating the strengths of these entries in relation to the standard. Write only one paragraph for each standard.
 - e) Weaknesses of Entries. Include a short paragraph (200 words maximum) stating the weaknesses of these entries in relation to the standard. Write only one paragraph for each standard. It is not acceptable to state that there are no weaknesses.
7. Sections should be tabbed and entries separated by some kind of divider so that they might be easily found. Make three (3) copies of the Portfolio Rating Form for each standard for raters.

Portfolio Presentation Procedures:

1. Students must present a satisfactory portfolio meeting all program standards before graduation requirements are met. The portfolio should be presented to the program faculty no later than the 10th week of the semester of expected graduation and no earlier than completion of 24 semester hours.
2. Portfolios should be presented to the candidate's advisor during the fall or spring semester. Portfolio submission during the summer session may only occur with prior written approval from the candidate's advisor and major department head by the 8th week of the spring semester. (Faculty are generally not employed during the summer session, are not obligated to review portfolios, and may not be available to review portfolios.)
3. Portfolios must address all program standards and may contain written documents, disks, videotapes, audiotapes, and other media. However, students should consult advisors to determine if artifacts can be reviewed with equipment readily accessible to the faculty. Students may be asked to provide the necessary equipment to review some portfolio artifacts in some formats.
4. At least two faculty members will independently review each portfolio and the candidate's advisor will inform the candidate whether it is satisfactory no later than the 14th week of the semester during which the portfolio was submitted. A satisfactory portfolio is one that meets all standards.
5. Standards that are not satisfactorily addressed must be resubmitted the following regular academic semester by the 10th week of the semester. Candidates desiring to resubmit the portfolio in the summer session must obtain written approval from the candidate's advisor and department head. A portfolio that satisfactorily addresses all standards is a graduation requirement.

Final Portfolio Evaluation:

Final evaluation of a portfolio will involve the following steps:

1. Candidates who have completed at least 24 semester hours should submit the portfolio to the candidate's advisor no later than the 10th week of the fall or spring semester in order to graduate at the end of that semester. Portfolios may not be accepted for final evaluation during the summer except with prior approval from advisor and department head. Students completing their programs during the summer should be prepared to submit their portfolio for final evaluation during the last spring semester or wait until the next fall semester. Once an advisor receives a portfolio, it will be presented to the student's portfolio committee for evaluation.
2. Projects for each standard are read and evaluated independently by at least two faculty members.
3. After all entries for a standard are reviewed, each reviewer rates the standard on a scale of 1 - 6 on two criteria:
 - a. Does the project demonstrate competency in the specified area?
 - b. Is the project presented in a professional manner?An average ranking of 3 or more is considered satisfactory.
4. If each standard receives a passing score, the portfolio is formally accepted and the student is notified that the portfolio is satisfactory. For any standards that do not receive a passing score, the student is notified of the committee's findings and suggestions for remediation are provided. Changes to these portfolio entries should be corrected and the portfolio should be resubmitted to the advisor for additional review. Any requested changes must be made within one additional regular academic semester.

Evaluation Scale

1 – 2 Unsatisfactory

Content: Entries fail to address the standard, only marginally address the standard or address less than all elements of the standard. Entries are poor quality; entries contain inaccurate information. Entries are superficial. Entries are not original work; entries are substantially commercial products, reprints from published materials, or clearly the work of others.

Presentation: Standard contains less than two entries. One of the two required entries is used for more than two standards. Standard contains more than five entries. Entries fail to meet guidelines. Standard does not include an explanation page with listing of standard, entries, strengths, and weaknesses. Entries are sloppy; contain errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. Entries are excessive in length causing entire portfolio to take more than two hours to review. Entries are inaccessible to reviewer. Viewing entries using various media (cd, videotape, audiotape, diskette, etc.) is impossible or difficult given available resources.

3 – 4 Satisfactory

Content: Entries clearly address most or all elements of the standard. Entries are graduate level quality; entries contain accurate information. Entries are clearly original work and mostly free of commercial products. The work of others is appropriately cited and does not comprise a major part of any particular entry.

Presentation: Standard contains two to five entries. None of the entries is used for more than two standards. Standard includes an explanation page with listing of standard, entries, strengths, and weaknesses. Entries are mostly free of errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. Entries are clearly identified and easily accessible to reviewer. If an uncommon format is used for an entry, a reasonable way to access the material is provided. Time to view entries for the standard is appropriate and viewing the portfolio will not take more than two hours.

5 – 6 Excellent

Content: Entries comprehensively address the standard. Entries are high quality, and contain accurate information and original thinking. Entries demonstrate a significant contribution to the growth of the candidate and to the profession. Entries are varied, original, and appropriate to the standard. Entries have qualities that go beyond expectations. Not all entries are papers, review of the literature, or standard coursework.

Presentation: Standard contains two to five entries. None of the entries is used for more than two standards. Standard includes an explanation page with listing of standard, entries, strengths, and weaknesses. Entries are free of errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. Entries are clearly identified and easily accessible to reviewer. Standard is well-organized and contains entries in varied formats easily accessible to the reviewer. Entries are appropriate in length.

Portfolio Rating Form

Graduate Student: _____

Rater: _____

Standard One. Instructional Expertise: Applies the theoretical, philosophical, and research bases for educational practice in elementary, middle, and secondary school classrooms to improve student learning. Plans, implements, and evaluates instruction that is rigorous, coherent, and consistent with a well-developed theoretical and philosophical stance and with best practices emerging from educational research.

Titles of Entries: _____

Please rate presented projects for the standard using the following scale. Circle the rating.

	Unsatisfactory		Satisfactory		Excellent	
1. Do the entries demonstrate competency of the standard?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Are the entries presented in a professional manner?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Comments:

Portfolio Rating Form

Graduate Student: _____

Rater: _____

Standard Two. Knowledge of Learners: Incorporates knowledge of the nature of the learner, learning processes, variations in learning abilities and learning styles, and strategies for evaluating learning. Plans, implements, and evaluates instruction that is responsive to wide variations in students' learning needs and learning styles.

Titles of Entries: _____

Please rate presented projects for the standard using the following scale. Circle the rating.

	Unsatisfactory		Satisfactory		Excellent	
1. Do the entries demonstrate competency of the standard?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Are the entries presented in a professional manner?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Comments:

Portfolio Rating Form

Graduate Student: _____

Rater: _____

Standard Three. Research Expertise: Understands and employs methods of research to examine and improve instructional effectiveness and student achievement

Titles of Entries: _____

Please rate presented projects for the standard using the following scale. Circle the rating.

	Unsatisfactory		Satisfactory		Excellent	
1. Do the entries demonstrate competency of the standard?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Are the entries presented in a professional manner?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Comments:

Portfolio Rating Form

Graduate Student: _____

Rater: _____

Standard Four. Connecting Subject Matter and Learners: Understands and links subject matter and students' developmental and diverse needs in the context of school settings. Plans, implements, and evaluates instruction that reflects intellectual rigor and depth of knowledge in both subject matter disciplines and students' diverse learning needs

Titles of Entries: _____

Please rate presented projects for the standard using the following scale. Circle the rating.

	Unsatisfactory		Satisfactory		Excellent	
1. Do the entries demonstrate competency of the standard?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Are the entries presented in a professional manner?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Comments:

Portfolio Rating Form

Graduate Student: _____

Rater: _____

Standard Five. Professional Development and Leadership: Demonstrates self-directed, self-reflective professional behavior and provides leadership to colleagues and communities through collaboration

Titles of Entries: _____

Please rate presented projects for the standard using the following scale. Circle the rating.

	Unsatisfactory		Satisfactory		Excellent	
1. Do the entries demonstrate competency of the standard?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Are the entries presented in a professional manner?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Comments: