

# Faculty Teaching Portfolios at McMaster

These slides were originally presented during a live workshop and are provided here for reference. Please note that some content may require context or discussion. For any questions about applicability, check with your Chair, Director or Dean's Office. You may also wish to reach out to MacPherson Institute for support: <https://mi.mcmaster.ca/teaching-portfolios-at-mcmaster/>

# What is a teaching portfolio?

A teaching portfolio is a **reflective and developmental tool** used to:

Articulate your **beliefs**  
about teaching,  
learning, and students

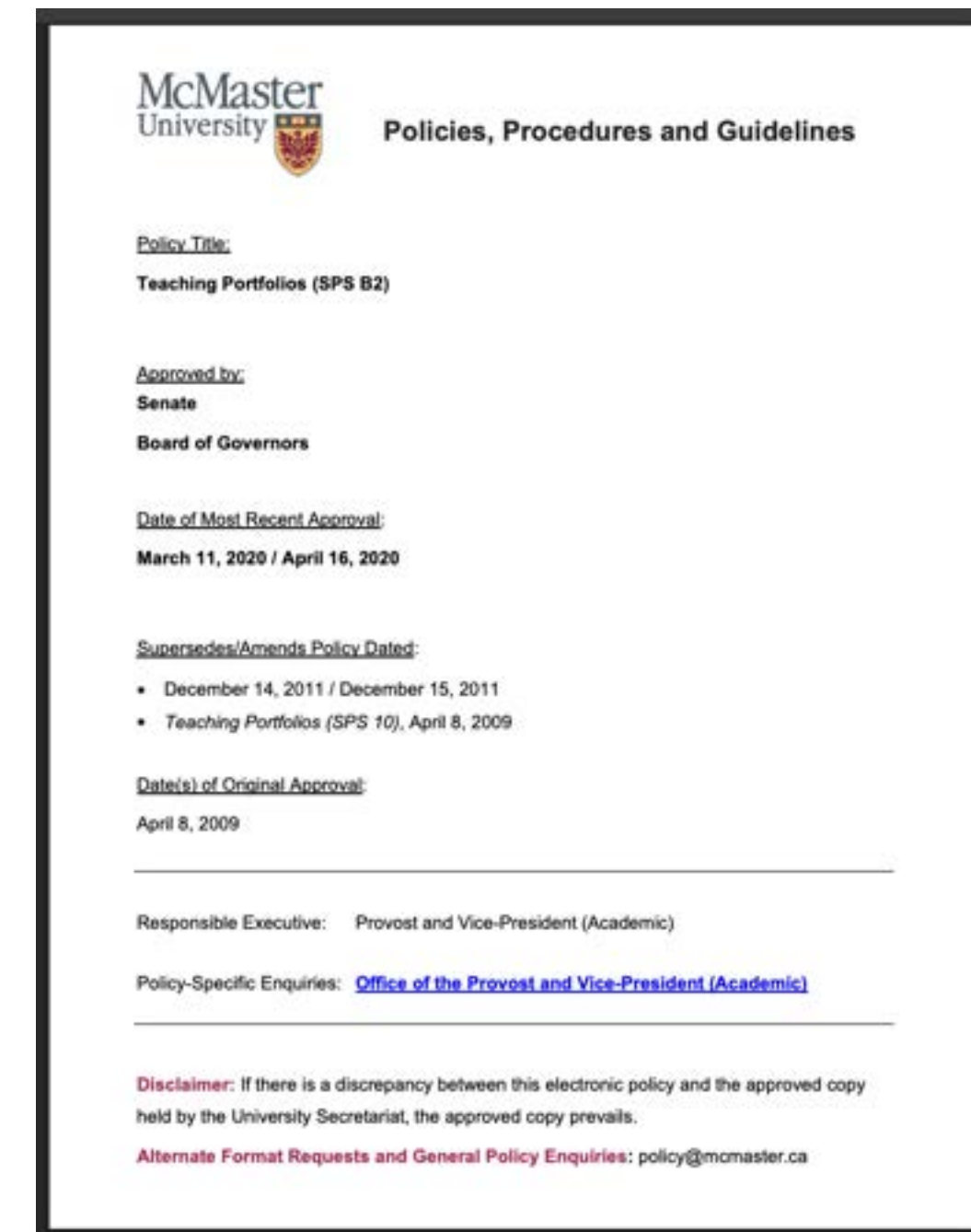
Demonstrate your  
**growth** as an  
educator

Support your claims  
with a record of your  
teaching practices,  
**accomplishments,**  
and **goals**

# The Components of a Teaching Portfolio

# How to Structure your McMaster Teaching Portfolio

- First things first...
  - Title page
  - Table of contents
  - Each section starts on a new page
- Then, SPS B2 specifies 2 structural parts:
  - Part A – Executive Summary
  - Part B – Supporting Documentation



<https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/SPS-B2-Teaching-Portfolios-.pdf>

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: Executive Summary

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1. Description of responsibilities and mechanism of evaluation as per appointment letter (1 page max)
2. Description of teaching approach/philosophy (about 1 page)
3. Description of teaching practice (1-2 pages)
4. Description of contributions to teaching (about 1 page)
5. Complete details of responses to the summative question in the student feedback on all courses taught over the past five years. >> Evidence of teaching effectiveness

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 1. Description of Responsibilities and Mechanism of Evaluation

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- Straightforward reiteration of what's described in your appointment letter (e.g., 40% research, 40% teaching, 20% service)
- If applicable, include any formal updates made to your appointment since the original appointment letter
- 1 page max

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 2. Teaching Philosophy (1 of 3)

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- Your teaching philosophy is a personal statement that forms the foundation on which you will build the rest of your teaching portfolio
- It documents your teaching:
  - **Beliefs (What do you think?) [this should be the primary focus!]**
  - Strategies (What do you do?)
  - Impact (What is your impact on learners, colleagues, and self?)
  - Goals (How do you strive to improve?)
- The rest of your teaching portfolio should provide evidence to back up the statements you made in your teaching philosophy
- About 1 page

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 2. Teaching Philosophy (2 of 3)

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- Typically:
  - Written in first person
  - Structured and organized – but there isn't one template
- Common Structures:
  - Narrative
  - Metaphor
  - Pillars
  - Quotes
  - Characteristics
- If you are really struggling with how to structure yours, you can see examples of various structures shared by the University of Calgary:  
<http://tinyurl.com/UCPhilosophies>

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 2. Teaching Philosophy (3 of 3)

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### Tips:

- Remember that authenticity is key!
- Note your disciplinary teaching context
- Show that your beliefs are grounded in scholarly evidence
- Share how you work to grow as an educator
- Check for alignment within the statement and across the broader teaching portfolio
- Have your statement reviewed by a trusted colleague
- Revisit your philosophy statement on an annual basis to make updates

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 3. Description of Teaching Practice (1 of 2)

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- While your Teaching Philosophy focuses on your *beliefs* and contains only a few brief examples of your teaching practice, your Description of Practice is about what you actually **do** and contains several in-depth examples
- Ultimately, it describes how your teaching philosophy is realized
- 1-2 pages

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 3. Description of Teaching Practice (2 of 2)

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Your Description of Teaching Practice should showcase:

- Reflective practice and a description of your growth over time
- How you teach (characterize your key approaches) and why you do it that way [note your discipline and show that your practices are grounded in scholarly evidence]
- Your assessment strategies and how they align with your teaching approach
- How you ensure your teaching is accessible and inclusive
- How you adapt your teaching in different situations
- Your greatest teaching successes and failures, and what you learned

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 4. Contributions to Teaching (1 of 2)

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Practices beyond your course-based teaching that fosters growth in curriculum, students, colleagues, etc.:

- Contributions to curriculum and other learning experience design initiatives
- Significant teaching challenges and how you addressed them
- Presentations or professional development sessions you facilitated related to teaching and learning
- Pedagogical research / SoTL presentations and reports
- Examples of teaching and learning leadership or peer mentorship
- About 1 page

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 4. Contributions to Teaching (2 of 2)

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What this section is NOT:

- Your Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- A list of courses you've taught
- A list of your own professional development in teaching activities
  - However, you could briefly say at the end of this section “I have also done a lot to develop myself as an educator. Please see Appendix \_”.

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 5. Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness (1 of 2)

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- For each course taught over the last 5 years, provide:
  - Course title and code
  - Term
  - Number of students enrolled
  - Number of responses to the student experience survey for the course
  - *Complete details of responses to the summative question in the student feedback on all courses taught over the past five years, set in the context of all teaching done in the Department (data to be provided by the Chair)\*\**

**\*\*Prior to 2020, the question was about rating instruction – now it is about rating students' learning experience. The context and practice around what to include for evidence of teaching effectiveness continues to evolve at McMaster.**

# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part A: 5. Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness (2 of 2)

- While SPS B2 emphasizes presentation of numerical data for Part A: 5, it is advised that you do the following:
  - Reflect upon and explain what the data means to you and your teaching
  - Talk to your Chair about how to include the data, how to acknowledge the change in question, and how to best provide your reflection



# Breakdown of SPS B2

## Part B: Supporting Documentation

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As per SPS B2:

- Part B “is optional and may contain additional material compiled by the faculty member in support of Part A”
- DO include a Part B
- Include the curated materials as an organized set of appendices
- Ensure everything you include in Part B is referred to somewhere in Part A

Appendices to consider including:

- Written reflections about key teaching and learning insights / impacts
- Sample course materials: syllabus, assessment, evaluation framework, lesson plan
- Professional development in teaching activities (e.g., workshops attended)
- Copies of teaching certificates or awards
- Letters of support
- SoTL publications
- If applicable, address any aberrations



# How to Approach your Portfolio

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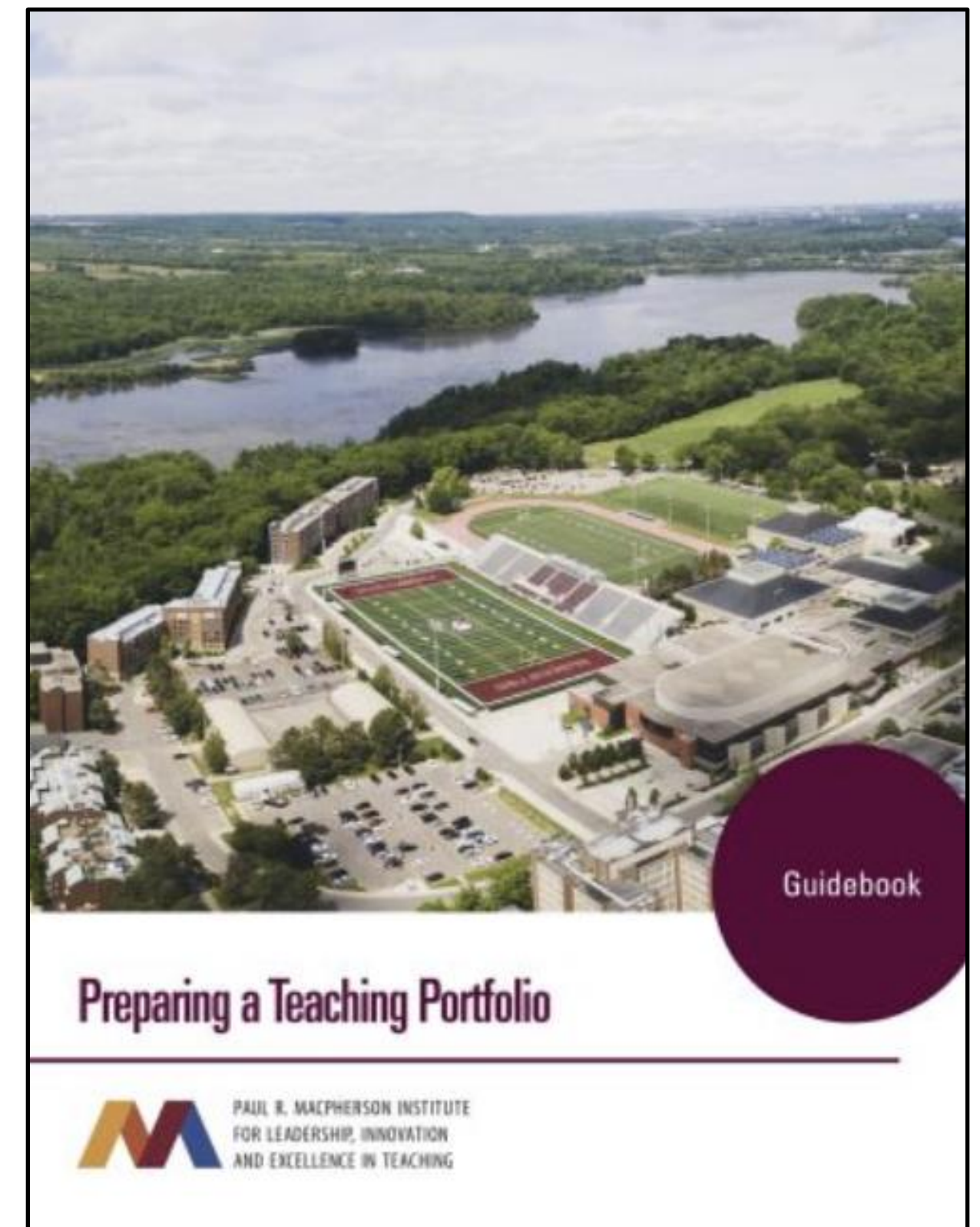
1. Consider your context
2. Collect supporting evidence
3. Craft your narrative
4. Review and revise
5. Update annually



# Preparing a Teaching Portfolio Guidebook

Read more about the portfolio process in the MacPherson Institute [Preparing a Teaching Portfolio Guidebook](#)

- Chapters:
  - The Portfolio Process
  - Writing a Compelling Portfolio
  - Fulfilling McMaster's SPS B2 Requirements
  - Selecting Evidence for your Portfolio
  - Refining your Portfolio: Feedback, Resources, and Policy
  - Teaching Portfolio Assessment (for Chairs, Peers, and Reviewers)



# Additional Tips for Getting Started (1 of 2)

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Book time in your calendar:

- ...to **reflect following critical moments** such as at end-of-term, after you've tried something new in your teaching, after an important mentorship moment with a student
- ...to review **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning** and decide how it will inform your teaching
- ...to **connect** with your colleagues or Chair to discuss teaching interests, goals, and possible initiatives
- Get familiar with writing reflections:
  - What? So what? Now what?
- Get familiar with discussing challenges and how you addressed them
- View challenges as an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to teaching excellence

# Additional Tips for Getting Started (2 of 2)

- Consider how your teaching aligns with McMaster's [2021-2026 Partnered in Teaching & Learning Strategy](#)
- Themes:
  - Diverse and expansive ways of knowing
  - Experience-based learning
  - Whole student experience
  - Student belonging and inclusion
  - Teaching as a professional and innovative practice
  - Assessment and evaluation of student learning
  - Digital learning

**ENCOURAGING PARTNERED AND INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING**

**SUPPORTING A HOLISTIC AND PERSONALIZED STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

**FOSTERING INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AND SCHOLARLY TEACHING**

**DEVELOPING ACTIVE AND FLEXIBLE LEARNING SPACES**

# Remember That The MacPherson Institute Is Here to Help You!

- Check out the Preparing a Teaching Portfolio Guidebook:  
<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/teaching-portfolio-guide/>
- Take the “Teaching Portfolios at McMaster” asynchronous online module available via the MacPherson Institute Learning Catalogue:  
<https://mi.mcmaster.ca/learning-catalogue/>
- Book a teaching portfolio review and consultation (once you’re ready):  
<https://mi.mcmaster.ca/request-support/>





**Thank you!**

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Lead Educational  
Developer

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