

University of Hawai'i at Manoa -- M.Ed. in Curriculum Studies with a Middle Level Emphasis

MLMED Portfolio

A portfolio is an organized and edited collection of artifacts that provide a comprehensive review of one's professional accomplishments. Artifacts are material evidence of the process and products of one's work as an educator, including curricula, lessons, tools and materials, student work samples, letters, performance evaluations, and other indicators of the effectiveness of one's professional efforts.

A portfolio is a selective, not exhaustive, catalogue of accomplishments. Artifacts, or Exemplars, are organized, selected and arranged to illustrate one attempts to meet the MLMED Standards and Benchmarks.

Portfolios communicate one's professional activities in their real-world context. A good portfolio, therefore, reveals the complex and integrative nature of one's work. Portfolios are well suited for fields like education which emphasize self-assessment, analysis of change over time, and reflection by the owner.

How are portfolios used in the MLMED program?

The overarching goal of our Portfolio is to track participants' progress in meeting the MLMED's Professional Standards for Educators of Early Adolescents. Under each Standard are Benchmarks which detail its various components. The MLMED classes and curriculum are designed to help participants attain the Benchmarks and Standards. The Cohort and Home Base structures are designed to scaffold participants' attainment of the Standards.

From the beginning of the program, participants will collect Exemplars and develop their Portfolios. In consultation with their Advisor, participants will use their Portfolios to assess their current standing and progress towards proficiency on all Standard are Benchmarks.

The Portfolio constitutes MLMED participants' Masters Plan-B Projects. The final Portfolio will be rated by two members of the MLMED faculty. Participants must achieve a rating of "Shows Adequate Development" (A) on *all* of the Benchmark ratings for each of the Professional Standards.

What goes into the MLMED Portfolios?

- I. A written Précis which contains the following, in the order listed – *Make sure that you do not identify any student by name in this document, nor provide sufficient detail that they could be identified:*
 1. An Abstract – paragraph of 75-100 words summarizing the entire document – purpose and key points.
 2. A Table of Contents listing by page number all items in the Précis.
 3. A 2-4 page Introduction containing --
 - a. An introduction to the writer, his/her philosophy of middle level education and professional context.
 - b. The Program Curriculum and Portfolio Assessment (this document).
 4. *Each* of the five Standards comprises a chapter in the Précis, consisting of --
 - a. An Introduction reflecting one's past relative to the Standard, i.e., when you entered the profession.
 - b. The Body of the chapter, where each Benchmark is used as a section heading; in each section, the writer explains the Benchmark's requirements, links them to relevant **research literature** and explains how their Exemplars (3 - 5) address the Benchmark's and **literature's** expectations; i.e., the section will be composed of several paragraphs consisting of B+L+E (Benchmark criteria + Literature citation/explanation + Exemplar with explanation of how they all fit together).
 5. An Appendix containing --
 - a. Reference List of sources cited (~20+ total); APA format is mandatory for citations and references.
 - b. The MLMED Portfolio [this document]; On the Assessment Records [worksheet(s)]:
 - (1) Note each Exemplar by name and identifying Code, and very briefly explain its relevance in the box for each Benchmark (see Sample Portfolio Assessment Record, toward end of this doc).
 - (2) Provide a numerical Self-Assessment in the "St" (Student) column for each Benchmark.
 - c. Exemplar List noting each Exemplar by Code and Name (Codes are numbers or letters attached to the Exemplar so the reader can identify and find the item, e.g., #1, #2...; a Name might be "Ancient Greece IDU" – whatever you choose to call the Exemplar).
 - d. Current résumé or curriculum vita.
 - e. "Program of Studies" listing all courses taken in the MLMED.
- II. A Dossier containing all Exemplars noted in Précis. The Dossier should be a sturdy, attractive, organized holder for the Exemplars. Exemplars should clearly bear their Code (from Exemplar List). Dossiers may consist of a box [**maximum total of box dimensions (L+W+H) = 36"**]; or electronic medium, e.g., CD/DVD/Web.

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Suggested Exemplars

Participants have free choice of what to include as Exemplars. Be considerate of your readers: 3 - 5 Exemplars (max!) per Benchmark; use one Exemplar to address several different Benchmarks; your students' work is often the best evidence of what *you* have accomplished; Think *quality* over *quantity*!

- Edited and annotated videotape of a class session, parent conference, or professional presentation
- Curriculum guides and materials
- Lesson plans and materials
- Notes demonstrating progress and strategies in parent and/or student conferences, team meetings, etc.
- An intervention plan and progress data for changing group or individual student behavior
- Articles, reviews, workbooks, or academic papers authored that show one's ability to synthesize current theory and research
- Letters, brochures or audiotapes demonstrating effective communication with parents, teams or community groups
- Annotated examples of student work
- Annotated examples of feedback on student work
- Resource directories or resource materials compiled
- Program, photos, descriptions of projects or activities designed in collaboration with students, parents or community members
- Student and peer evaluations of classroom teaching
- Participant evaluations of workshops and presentations
- Examples of original data collection and research
- A written reflection on how you have learned from an unsuccessful professional endeavor

Standard 1

A paper on early adolescent development; approaches to accommodating developmental needs; evidence of work in/with multiple contexts, e.g., parent groups, homes, community agencies; curriculum designed for inclusion of underrepresented groups, e.g., implementation of a gender equity curriculum; evidence of contribution to school or team's mission &/or vision statement; evidence of contribution to school plan to implement advisory, exploratory, flex schedule, etc.; paper linking Hawai'i's middle level movement to broader contexts; evidence of political action to improve funding for middle level schools.

Standard 2

Evidence of prior study (e.g., your undergraduate major); a curriculum unit utilizing recent research on learning in your subject area; interdisciplinary lessons/units; arts integration projects; course work in your content field; course work in pedagogy of your content area; presentations at local and national conferences regarding your content area; a content-rich curriculum unit or lesson; scores on content exams, e.g. Praxis.

Standard 3

Assessment of a curriculum unit; copies/pictures/examples of student work; a plan for ongoing assessment of student learning; curriculum units; an interpretation of standardized test results; a plan for inclusion of special needs students, or for de-tracking; documentation of learning centers used in your classroom; a video with analysis of your teaching; a plan for utilizing students' cultural/linguistic backgrounds as curriculum; assessment of efforts to achieve gender/ability group/racial balance in class participation; documentation of literacy instruction.

Standard 4

Design/assessment of an advisory program; class/team discipline policy; feedback on your classroom management; feedback from students/parents on your communication or counseling; documentation of work with parent groups, SCBM, community organizations.

Standard 5

Minutes of meetings in which you participated or led; documentation of presentations; school accreditation documents to which you contributed; a shadow study of student life at your school; a written critique of standardized testing; a literature review; a reflective journal regarding your teaching.

MLMED Professional Standards for Educators of Early Adolescents*

The following knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and actions characterize exemplary leaders in the education of early adolescents, and are the standards upon which the MLMED is based.

1. Thorough knowledge and acceptance of, and inquiry into, the nature and needs of early adolescents in the:
a) biological, b) social/emotional, and c) cognitive/psychological realms.

Subsumed here is an understanding of the physical, emotional, intellectual and moral development (including health and sexuality) of young adolescents, and awareness of small and large scale processes by which this development can be nurtured. These processes would involve school, home and community contexts, and informal and institutional settings.

2. Sufficient content preparation to: a) lead in-depth study in major subject area(s); and to b) make well-founded linkages to other academic and exploratory areas.

Implicit is a well-rounded education in the liberal arts with some of the breadth of an elementary generalist, some of the depth of a secondary specialist, and a sound intellectual capacity to understand and convey the interrelatedness of varied subject disciplines.

3. Ability to a) design, implement and assess developmentally-appropriate curriculum and pedagogy which emphasizes holistic learning, exploration, interdisciplinary organization, and active, successful learning for students with b) diverse interests, abilities, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Appropriate curriculum and pedagogy would include, but not be limited to, teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening in authentic contexts; team planning and teaching; individualized instruction; cooperative/collaborative learning; basic skills and enrichment learning; effective use of educational technology; teaching of skills and attitudes for lifelong learning; cross-age grouping; flexible scheduling; service and apprenticeship learning. Assessment should include a broad range of formative and summative, teacher-designed and standardized, authentic and decontextualized, and student and parent measures. Emphasis must be placed on recognizing and addressing the diversity within and across various subgroups of students and families.

4. Able to effectively apply sound a) communication, b) management and c) counseling skills to address the highly demanding and diverse needs of early adolescents in instructional and guidance capacities, to develop communities of learning, and to d) collaborate effectively with students, parents, community members and colleagues.

Teachers should be committed to and capable of serving as close, positive role models for students; facilitators of personal growth and development of self-esteem; leaders of student activities; and able to develop and maintain positive intellectual, social and emotional environments in the classroom and school. They should be able to apply effective human relations skills in a variety of contexts including with individuals, small groups and large groups; school and community settings; and faculty teams.

5. A commitment to being outstanding professional middle level educators, including: a) exercising leadership in instruction and schooling; b) constantly examining and improving upon one's work; c) able to interpret and critique a variety of research methodologies, and capable of utilizing at least one.

Implicit in middle level philosophy and in current trends toward shared school governance is a spirit of collaboration and inclusiveness. Educators should be prepared and committed to collaborate with all other stake-holders in promoting positive development for early adolescents. They should also be prepared and committed to serving as leaders, spokespersons and advocates in the rapidly developing field of middle level education in order to steer the field on a course of continued development and reflection.

* 1995, Hawai'i School-University Partnership Implementation Task Force for Middle Level Teacher Education, Paul D. Deering & Antonette Port, Co-Chairs: Revised 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008. Drawn from: Alexander & McEwin, 1988; Burnkrant, 1991; Butler, Davies & Dickinson, 1991; Center for Early Adolescence, 1994; Irvin, 1992; Jackson & Davis, 2000; Johnston & Markle, 1986; Lawton, 1993; Mergandoller, 1993; Middle Grades Teacher Education Task Force, 1991; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1993, 2007; NMSA, 1982, 1991a, 1991b; 1995; 2006; Scales, 1993, Stevenson, 1998.