

CD-CW Orientation on Portfolio Preparation

Within the context of educational literature, portfolios are defined as assemblies of artefacts that facilitate reflection, personal evaluation, and authentic presentation (Graves, 1994; Riel, 1990; Valencia, McGinley, & Pearson, 1990; cited in Alvarez & Moxley, 2004).

The process helps people to illuminate who they are and what they can do and to interpret themselves to others. The assembly of the compendium and the process requires assessing and evaluating their materials, to reflect on these materials, and to make selections for inclusion that are relevant to their specific goals. Hence it is a form of active and self-directed learning.

It is not just an assembly and collection of products of your work but it requires interpretation and the search for personal meaning and the presentation of oneself to others.

Portfolios are Process, Product and Tools

Process: assembling portfolio stimulates the exchange of perspectives that the content of the portfolio stimulates

Product: an important reference point that documents a period of a person's life often characterized by intense learning, meaningful experiences, and important developmental outcomes. The document stimulates self appraisal especially when reflecting on past experience is important for personal decision making and planning.

Tool: is a practical resource to achieve a particular education or professional goal.

According to Smith and Tillema (2003), there are four types of portfolios:

1. **Dossier portfolio:**

a record of achievement or a mandated collection of work for selection of promotional purposes required for entry to a profession or programme: this is detail coverage of attainments.

2. **The training portfolio:**

a required or mandated exhibit of efforts collected during learning or in a curriculum programme. It highlights the core professional knowledge, skills or competencies a person has acquired and is collected during the time frame of a course as a representative sample of the student's work. Some reflective comments in the training portfolio might explain the selected evidence. This portfolio type often has a fixed format to help the collector provide appropriate evidence.

3. **The reflective portfolio:**

purposeful and personally collected array of work providing evidence of growth and accomplishments to be brought forward for promotion and admission. The compilation of evidence revealed best practices or key competencies chosen to meet certain criteria along with a self-appraisal showing progress overtime and understanding of accomplishments across different contexts.

4. **The personal development portfolio:**

personal evaluation and reflective account of professional growth during a long-term process. The collection itself is an opportunity to discuss and give value to the activities of the person who is building an identity.

Portfolios have four properties that link the self-reflection and self-assessment that students undertake to reality.

1. The evidence that students must muster to support their claims. Students can not make unsubstantiated claims.
2. The linkages of the students claim and evidence to the acquisition of specific competencies, either ones the educational program prescribes, ones that their own sense of professional mission suggests, or ones a specific field requires of its practitioners.
3. Students must explain the significance of what they can do in a contemporary field of social work practice (Community Development and Child Welfare specific to this training).
4. Students must be able to make a case for how this significance makes them distinctive as practitioners in their chosen field.

The context for the portfolio preparation is the goal of CD-CW training program. The project contains three major components: enhancing child protection and child welfare knowledge and skills, addressing poverty through family based community development and enhancing micro practice skills necessary to work with groups and communities.

In light of the training offered to you and the goals of the CD-CW training program and the mission of your organization, the following outline is given to you to prepare a training portfolio.

1. Introduction: describe why you are in the CD-CW training program, your principal practice interests and set forth the aim of your portfolio.
2. Philosophical orientation: what is your identity as practitioner in CD-CW program and describe what is important to you in that position or role. Identify the mode of practice you are engaged at and discuss your belief about the practice model, its purpose and your personal value concerning the practice.
3. Define your practice goal and objective. This definition should be compared with the mission and goal of your organization, and the context within which you exercise your profession.
4. Evaluate your learning experience: Identify and elaborate on what you learned through the CD-CW training program. Reflect on, identify and support outcome that pertains to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies as a result of the training or link the specific outcomes on your work.
5. Practice competencies: articulate what you have mastered in your areas of work or professional practice by enumerating the principal competencies and presenting evidence of their acquisition. And draw conclusion about both your practice strengths and your professional development needs.
6. Professional Development Plan: Develop and mission and goal statement guiding your practice, identify additional competence to acquire, and lay out plans for doing so.
7. Appendixes should be presented at the end of the portfolio on facts that support the statements and accomplishments reported in the portfolio.