

Date: May 22, 2007  
To: MPA Students  
From: Dr. David Powell  
Re: Changes to the Student Learning Portfolio Requirements

Effective Fall, 2007, several changes will go into effect that will modify the contents of the Student Learning Portfolio (SLP). SLPs submitted prior to Fall, 2007 will NOT be affected by these changes. However, SLPs submitted in Fall, 2007 or later will be governed by the new requirements. A Modified Student Learning Portfolio Handbook is attached for your reference. Hard copies of the Modified Student Learning Portfolio Handbook can also be obtained in ET-235. Here is an abbreviated list of the important changes:

**PPA 500:** Students who enroll in PPA 500 in Fall, 2007 or later will complete an Initial Skills Self Assessment that will be distributed by the PPA 500 instructor early in the semester. The Initial Skills Self Assessment will require students to assess their own ability levels within each of the core content areas of the program. This Initial Skills Self Assessment will replace the existing vitae and “Where I am Now” essay requirements of PPA 500 and will be combined with a Final Skills Self Assessment completed in PPA 697 to constitute Part I of the SLP. Students who completed PPA 500 prior to Fall, 2007 will still submit the vitae and essay completed in PPA 500 in Part I of the SLP.

**Core Courses:** Each core course will still require the completion of portfolio assignments. However, effective Fall, 2007, each core course will provide a Pre-Instructional and Post-Instructional Portfolio Assignment. The course instructor will distribute a Pre-Instructional Assignment early in the semester. This Pre-Instructional Assignment will then be combined with a Post-Instructional Assignment that will be completed near the end of the semester. The combination of the Pre-Instructional and Post-Instructional assignments will constitute the portfolio requirement for each core course. These will NOT require second reader approval and will be submitted in Part II of the SLP. For core courses completed prior to Fall, 2007, the existing portfolio requirements remain in place. In other words, if a course was completed prior to Fall, 2007, the portfolio assignment that was required at the time the course was taken will still require instructor and second reader approval.

**PPA 697:** Effective Fall, 2007, PPA 697 students will be given the option of completing either the traditional directed research project or a series of case studies related to each of the core areas of the program. The cases will be determined by the full-time faculty of the Graduate Center for Public Policy and Administration and will be identical for all students who choose the case study option. These cases must be approved by the PPA 697 instructor before inclusion in Part IV of the SLP. In addition, all PPA 697 students will complete a Final Skills Self Assessment as the final requirement of PPA 697. For students who complete PPA 500 and PPA 697 in Fall, 2007 or later, the Initial Skills Self

Assessment that was completed in PPA 500 and the Final Skills Self Assessment that was completed in PPA 697 will be combined together in Part I of the SLP. For students who completed PPA 500 prior to Fall, 2007, the Final Skills Self Assessment will be submitted in Part IV of the SLP.

Part III: Effective Fall, 2007, Part III of the SLP will consist of at least two papers and/or assignments completed in core or elective courses that were not included in Part II of the SLP. The purpose of this requirement is to allow the student the opportunity to submit exemplary samples of their work as part of their SLPs. For SLPs completed prior to Fall, 2007, the existing portfolio guidelines will govern the construction of Part III of the SLP.

All of these changes are detailed in the attached Modified Student Learning Portfolio Handbook. You are encouraged to review these new requirements prior to Fall semester. I will be holding a series of information sessions on campus in late Summer and early Fall to address any questions or concerns regarding the new requirements. It is hoped that these changes will produce a portfolio process that contains many avenues for the assessment of student learning in the MPA program. Also, the changes should expedite the preparation of the SLP by removing second reader and reflective essay requirements from portfolios submitted in Fall, 2007. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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