

Adult Education Masters Culminating Portfolio Project

Purpose of Portfolio: The purpose of the Adult Education Masters Culminating Portfolio is to give you the opportunity to reflect on your graduate experience, synthesize and integrate the various aspects of your learning experiences, and consider and plan for your continuing professional development after you leave the Adult Education Masters program. The portfolio project is intended to be reflective and comprehensive – personal, action- and practice-oriented, and developmental, rather than a theoretical exercise. The portfolio is to be reflected upon throughout your entire graduate experience, compiled and presented at either your last or penultimate semester in the program. While portfolios will differ so as to reflect your own learning, reflection, skills/competencies, and development, an estimated length of the entire portfolio is to be **no more** than **27-32 pages** (excluding appendices) or no more than 8000 words, in total. You will first present a *draft copy* to the ADED faculty for review and feedback about mid-semester. After receiving our feedback, the portfolio will then be presented to a Portfolio Review Panel that will consist of Adult Education faculty, adjunct instructors, and/or active practitioners in the field of adult/continuing or higher education. You will incorporate the feedback you receive during the presentation into your final portfolio as well. Your final copy is due after the presentations, near the end of the semester. Due dates for each semester are available from the ADED program coordinator and are also available in the Departmental office.

Format: All portfolios are completed electronically, using Taskstream. More details about Taskstream can be found at this link: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/TaskStream/index.cfm>. Content should be right in Taskstream. Do not simply attach a series of Word documents to Taskstream (unless you are attaching examples of your work).

Recommended word counts are noted for each section. These recommendations are based on the common calculation that 250 words equals approximately one page of double-spaced text in a Word document.

Portfolio Components: Your AE Masters Portfolio will include the following eight components:

1. Personal Philosophy Paper
2. Learning Profile
3. Teaching Profile
4. Evidence of Effective Written Communication
5. Selection of Applied Project
6. Cultural Competence Paper
7. Reflection Paper
8. Continuing Professional Development Plan

Note: Students completing a thesis will prepare only components 1, 6, 7, and 8.

Essays and compiled examples in the portfolios should (1) build on and expand upon your Adult Education coursework, (2) exemplify development of your leadership and technology skills, (3) reflect an understanding and appreciation of diversity and ethics, and (4) demonstrate your reflective and critical thinking abilities as you engage in Adult Education practice.

Portfolio Components

1. **Personal Philosophy Paper** – This is to be a newly-written personal philosophy statement of no more than 750 words. Recall that in at ADED6445 and perhaps other courses, you took Zinn’s Philosophy of Adult Education Instrument, examined, and wrote about your personal philosophy. This essay is to be a reflective re-examination and restatement of that initial philosophy, and you should consider your ethics and values, as well. You might consider re-taking the Zinn inventory, and certainly consider redrafting your philosophical statement. Also, review the guidelines for the philosophy paper you wrote in the ADED6445 course. Things you should address in this paper include the following:

- a. The experiences, people, knowledge sources, etc.. that have shaped your philosophy.
- b. Beliefs, values, and assumptions about adults as learners.
- c. Beliefs, values, and assumptions about the learning process itself.
- d. Beliefs, values, and assumptions about content or subject matter to be taught (who makes these decisions, and why).
- e. Beliefs, values, and assumptions about the roles of the adult educator and the purposes of education.

2. **Personal Learning Profile** – You also wrote, perhaps in ADED6453 or other coursework, your own learner autobiography or learning profile. This should be a newly-written paper as well (750 words maximum), but you can use your original paper as a basis for this new one. You should include an introductory statement explaining the context in which the original paper was originally written – and should include a description of your learning style(s), a statement about learning how to learn and how you use this skill in your self-directed learning, and how your learning preferences have been influenced by educational and life experiences.

3. **Personal Teaching Profile** – You may also have considered or written about your own teaching style, perhaps in ADED 6487, ADED 6240, or other courses. This newly-written essay (750 words maximum) can be based on that original paper – and should include some introductory statement explaining the context in which the original paper was written. This paper should distinguish how you teach from how you learn, describe your teaching preferences and strengths, and explain how your philosophy and the practice context influences your teaching. While your teaching profile or style is certainly influenced by your philosophical orientation, this teaching profile/style component is about *how* you teach, **not what** you believe.

NOTE: For items 1-3 (above) do not simply copy and paste your old course work (or sections of your old work) into these sections. All of the above are to be new works.

4. **Evidence of Effective Scholarly Writing** – For this component, you are to choose **two (2)** papers written for any class (**one** must be from an Adult Education core class); papers are to demonstrate **your** scholarly writing and should provide evidence of your effective written communication, critical and reflective thought, as well as well-argued, coherent, and well-constructed writing. Papers may be original class assignments – or some portion thereof – or revised for this portfolio project (please do not, however, include papers with our comments still on them). Include in this component your rationale for selection of these papers and why you consider them exemplary and scholarly (this piece should be no more than 250 words). While you will almost surely have to limit how much of a paper you include for these components, you may place the entire paper in your appendices, properly labeled and NOT counted in the 27-32 page limit.

5. **Examples of Applied Projects** – For this component, you are to choose **two (2)** applied projects from any class (**one** must be from an Adult Education core class) that may be work-related, volunteer, or service-oriented and demonstrate the effective translation of theory into actual practice. Include in this component your rationale for selection of these projects and why you consider them exemplary and reflective of effective practice-oriented projects (this introductory piece should be no more than 250 words). Again, projects may be original class assignments – or some portion thereof – or revised for this component (please do not, however, include papers with our comments still on them). Include in this component your rationale for selection of these projects/papers and why you consider them exemplary and effective applied projects. While you will almost surely have to limit how much of a paper you include for these components, you may place the entire paper in your appendices, properly labeled and NOT counted in the 27-32 page limit.

6. **Cultural Competence** – For this component, you are to reflect on what you've learned about cultural competence and diversity and prepare a **new** essay on this topic (750 words maximum). How has what you've learned helped you to communicate, interact, and work

positively with individuals from other cultural groups? Consider that the concept of diversity is multidimensional when addressing this component.

7. **Reflection Paper** – This is a new essay that compares where you were coming into the AE program relative to where you are now and what you have learned in your master's work. It is to include at least (a) how your philosophy has changed, (b) new knowledge and skills gained, (c) discussion of any change in values, attitudes, and perceptions, (d) discussion of what you've learned about ethics in the profession, and (e) how you or your practice as an adult educator may have changed (750 words maximum).

8. **Continuing Professional Development Plan** – In this final component of your portfolio, please tell about your plans for your continuing professional development (not career changes/development) as an adult educator (500 words maximum). What further **learning goals** do you have for yourself as a professional? How do you plan to accomplish these goals? What resources will you need and how do you plan to secure them? What do you most look for as you continue to learn and grow?

Portfolio Presentation: The purpose of your formal presentation is for you to summarize your portfolio, while demonstrating your verbal communication and presentation skills; you can equate this with a presentation at a professional meeting or conference. The time limit will not allow you to just read through your portfolio; rather you will want to pull out highlights, summarize, and emphasize. The audience for the presentation will be 3-4 faculty or expert practitioner reviewers, as well as the other students submitting portfolios that semester. The time limit for the presentation will be determined in part by how many other presenters there are but it will be approximately 20 minutes in length. A laptop computer with Internet connection and LCD projector will be available for PowerPoint or other technology-based presentation methods – but these presentation methods are **optional**. You will need to bring your presentation materials on a flash/pen drive or CD. If you let us know in advance, we can also make accommodations for an overhead projector, television, DVD/VCR player if necessary.

After you have made your presentation, the faculty reviewers will ask questions based on the contents of portfolio as well as the presentation. There will also be time for questions or comments from the other presenters. You will be assessed on your actual presentation skills as well as on the content of the presentation.

Adult Education Core/Required Courses

ADED 6445 – Introduction to Adult/Community Education

ADED 6453 – The Adult Learner

ADED 6481 – Developing Adult Education Programs

ADED 6484 – Organization and Administration of Adult Education

ADED 6487 – Instructional Strategies in Adult Education

ADED 6491 – Research Problems in Education