

THE PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

Plan B for Master's degree candidates in the Department of Educational Leadership consists of the development and presentation of a **Professional Portfolio**. The portfolio should articulate the patterns and themes that portray an individual's uniqueness as an educational or other human services agency leader.

The Professional Portfolio is different from the Admissions Portfolio. Whereas the Admissions Portfolio is used for admission purposes and is maintained in the departmental files, the Professional Portfolio is developed and maintained by the student during the graduate education experience. It should be considered a living document that evolves as the student develops through the graduate experience and other professional endeavors. As such, the preparation for the portfolio should begin early in the student's graduate experience and should be developed and maintained throughout it.

Portfolios should be neat, visually appealing, and well organized. Substance, clarity, and coherence are the goals. During the semester when the student applies for graduation, the student will submit to his or her advisor (or other faculty member) for review the Professional Portfolio. The Professional Portfolio will be returned to the student after faculty review and discussion in an exit interview. At this meeting, the student should be prepared to discuss the following aspects of his or her program:

- Relevancy of coursework
- Rigor of assignments
- Suggestions for program additions or modifications
- Quality of the program
- Advantages of program delivery (cohort, individual, etc.)
- Most valuable courses or topics
- Delivery preference (weekend, hybrid, online, etc.)
- Most important learning experiences
- Personal career plans (current, five years, 10 years)
- Future service desired from the Department and CMU
- Other comments

Submission of the Professional Portfolio to the student's advisor shall occur no later than **November 1** for fall semester graduation, **April 1** for spring semester graduation, and **July 1** for summer session degree completion.

Students preparing a Professional Portfolio in educational leadership should concentrate on including evidence of their competence in the standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) or the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). Students preparing for leadership positions in human service agencies other than educational institutions should use these topic areas as guidelines as appropriate. These guidelines comprise

the knowledge and skills necessary to lead and administer educational enterprises. They are:

- Vision/Mission
- Student and Staff Learning and Growth
- Management and Operations
- Diversity and Community Relations
- Ethics and Integrity
- Political, Social, Economic, Legal and Cultural Contexts
- Integration of Technology

More specifically, the following should be included:

- **Resume** – Detailed educational and professional experience.

• **Professional Platform** – The educational leadership platform consists of a series of beliefs and assumptions that expresses what an individual believes is true, possible, and desirable. The platform provides the foundation that guides an individual's thinking and decisions he or she makes about educational leadership issues.

The platform should be written through the *lens of an educational leader* and should be done thoughtfully and of sufficient depth and breadth to represent the student's program capstone. Explication of concepts and processes should be part of each plank, and *differentiation* between concepts should be made, where appropriate. Attribution of sources of the ideas and positions presented will strengthen the presentation.

The platform development process should be useful to students in clarifying their values and in synthesizing their beliefs about educational leadership. In addition, the platform should be useful to students for communicating their professional positions on educational issues to others. The Professional Platform should include one's professional positions on:

- Leadership
- Management and Administration (*differentiate*)
- Decision Making
- The School (including considerations of the physical environment)
- The Student
- The Teacher
- The Administrator
- Student Assessment
- Supervision and Evaluation (*differentiate*)
- Problem Solving
- Education Change
- Other positions about which the student feels strongly

Students preparing for leadership positions in human service agencies other than educational institutions should consult with their advisor for appropriate guidance.

Copies of the student's résumé and Professional Platform are to be submitted for the Department's files. They should be neat, well written, and include a cover page.