PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Assessment is an important part of the learning process and, in fact, is inextricably linked with teaching and learning, going beyond merely measuring what has been learned for purposes of evaluation and grading. The portfolio Assessment System used in FDU's teacher preparation programs is designed to address this important dimension of the learning process in the academic and professional preparation of pre-service teachers. It supports and enhances the Philosophy and Mission of the School of Education, the goals of the programs, and the attainment of the knowledge, dispositions, and competencies required for teachers to meet the challenges of the profession in the 21st century. The Portfolio Assessment System provides a broader, more flexible approach to assessment and evaluation of pre-service teachers' abilities and their attainment of requisite performance standards. The System also more accurately reflects the learning processes of pre-service teachers, thereby enabling diagnosis, self-reflection and self-evaluation, and allowing them to gain more control over their own learning.

Portfolios are personal collections of the pre-service teacher’s work that reflect progress toward pre-determined learning objectives and performance standards. They are collections of authentic learner-specific work samples and documents, and formal assessments, that provide evidence of growth and development toward meeting established performance standards and competencies. Portfolios are cumulative, reflecting the pre-service teacher’s progress over time and acknowledging that professional development is an individualized process. Portfolios, as with other assessments, also provide valuable feedback to faculty for use in evaluating attainment of course objectives and program goals as part of continual course/program evaluation and refinement.

Portfolios provide an opportunity for pre-service teachers to: (1) organize their work; (2) examine the importance of their work samples and documents as a reflection of their performance; (3) reflect on their own work, self-evaluate and set goals for continual improvement; and (4) realize the relevance of their pre-service coursework and experiences to their success as teachers. Portfolios also provide an opportunity for faculty to: (1) reflect on their work, self-evaluate and continually refine coursework and instruction to achieve learning objectives; and (2) become well acquainted with their students and their abilities, and with their students' progress, thereby being in a better position to evaluate their performance and assist them in achieving the requisite performance standards for an effective teacher.

FDU's Portfolio Assessment System has four major purposes:

1. To enhance and document authentic, relevant learning for pre-service teachers by continually assessing their growth and determining their level of proficiency for specific competencies based on national teacher performance standards;

2. To encourage reflection and self-assessment on the part of pre-service teachers to identify and address specific areas for further personal and professional development as they proceed in their program of professional studies and enter their induction teaching year;

3. To provide relevant data to evaluate FDU's teacher Preparation Programs; and

4. To provide pre-service teachers with a professional dossier/portfolio for presentation to prospective employers. Specifically, the Portfolio Assessment System supports FDU's Teacher Preparation Programs' focus on QUALITY: quality of programs, quality of work, and quality of performance.