

Portfolio Reflections

Below in three sections is information relative to completing the reflections section of your portfolio for admission to education: 1) the assignment from the *Teacher Education Handbook*, 2) a sample reflection, and 3) criteria for evaluating your reflection.

1. Reflections Assignment for the Portfolio (from the *Teacher Education Handbook*)

For each goal area (8 in all) complete a one page reflective statement. This statement should include the following:

- The standards being addressed in this section of the portfolio. List the standards and briefly explain the significant skills it covers.
- A brief explanation of how your experiences have shaped you to develop skills related to the standards. Give the reviewer insight into your point of view concerning this standard.
- A self-evaluation of your proficiency related to this standard. What are your strengths and weaknesses? Be sure to review the materials you have placed in your portfolio as well as feedback from recommendations and evaluations as you develop your self-evaluation.
- A professional goal related to this standard that you have for the future.

2. Sample Reflective Statement -- *Does This Meet All Criteria for "Proficient?"*

Goal 2: Creates learning communities that make content knowledge accessible, exciting, and meaningful to all students

Standards addressed for Goal 2 include 2.9 and 2.10 (utilizes the Colorado Standards in planning and delivering instruction) and 2.11 (knowledge of the content in disciplines related to teaching, as well as strong reading, writing, and math skills). All three standards focus on the teacher understanding and using the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structure of the discipline(s). The teacher must create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students. Content knowledge and basic skills in math and literacy are critical attributes for teachers. The Colorado Model Content Standards provide the subject matter goals for planning and assessment, and require strong content knowledge for all teachers.

The following documentation for performance on Goal 2 includes: 3 lesson plans; field experience teacher's evaluation; four recommendations; transcript from CSU-Pueblo with GPA, grades in math, composition, and speech; *Academic Profile* scores; the writing sample scores from the *Academic Profile*; and other examples of writing, including my philosophy of education paper from ED 202.

My knowledge base has been developing since birth, and I learn everyday, both in and out of the classroom. My knowledge increases because I constantly make connections between the classroom and real life. In particular, my field experiences have helped me make connections between what I have learned about teaching and how to apply that to the learning process. Throughout the course of my schooling, I have also been fortunate to have many excellent teachers who have inspired my commitment to learning and my desire to acquire content knowledge.

As evidence of my growing subject area knowledge, I have included transcripts of university coursework and recommendations of university professors. My GPA of 3.75 indicates my success at acquiring strong content knowledge in all areas and indicates that I am on target for developing strong content skills. Academically, my strengths are in the language arts, and since elementary school have kept a journal and written poetry and short stories for pleasure. I am just beginning to learn to write lesson plans, and, though I understand and can build lessons around standards, this writing seems awkward and artificial to me. As I reread my lesson plans, I noticed that I sometimes use education terms awkwardly, and I haven't written the plans for myself to use as much as for someone else (the instructor) to read. However, my writing is always well edited and free from errors. Although I can communicate effectively with children, and my speech is free from errors, I need to watch my vocabulary and adjust my grammar and word usage to the developmental level of the students. My background knowledge in the arts and geography are probably the weakest, and I will need to continue to read and research independently as I plan instruction for students in these areas.

Future Goals:

1. Expand my skills at writing lesson plans, including the use of a variety of sources in developing them. I would like to strengthen my skills at researching and using search engines and other on-line resources.
2. Complete my Liberal Studies major, expanding my knowledge of history and geography and the fine arts.
3. Pass the PLACE or PRAXIS Elementary Education Exam.
4. Learn to think on my feet in transforming content into curriculum and instruction; be able to explain a concept in many different ways and reinforce with examples that match students' background knowledge.

3. Reflection Assessment*

| Unsatisfactory | Partially Proficient | Proficient | Outstanding |
|---|---|---|---|
| ...is incomplete; does not list the standards and/or documentation to be reviewed | ... lists standards and documentation but fails to include some piece of information | ... lists all standards and documentation related to the standards | ...is well-organized and briefly and concisely lists the standards and documentation related to the standards |
| <i>Your explanation of skill development</i> | | | |
| ...is unclear and unrelated to the standards | ...is vague and leaves some doubt in the reader's mind as to the writer's intentions | ...is somewhat clear and demonstrates limited insight on your development as a teacher in light of this standard | ...is clear and concise demonstrating insight on your development as a teacher in light of the standards in this goal area |
| <i>Your explanation of skill development and strengths and weaknesses</i> | | | |
| ...reflect no understanding of the meaning of the standards in this goal and their relationship to teaching | ...demonstrate only marginal understanding of the standards in this goal and their relationship to teaching | ...demonstrate some understanding of the relationship between the standards in this goal and the task of teaching | ...reflect an in-depth understanding of the relationship of the standards in this goal |
| ...provide a very vague statement of growth that leaves doubt in the reader's mind regarding your progress professionally | ...provide a general statement of how you are growing in this area with few references to supporting evidence | ...provide a general statement defining how you are growing in this area and is supported with general references to concrete experiences | ...demonstrate analysis and synthesis. Specific statements define how you have begun to grow in this area and are supported with references to concrete experiential evidence |
| <i>Your goal(s)</i> | | | |
| ...is/are unrelated to the strengths and weaknesses and documentation in the portfolio | ...is/are somewhat related to strengths and weaknesses cited but fail to consider the documentation in the portfolio | ...reflect both your own summary of strengths and weaknesses and the documentation provided in the portfolio | ...demonstrate accurate reflection on own skills and thorough understanding of |
| <i>The entire reflection</i> | | | |
| ...contains many of the following: spelling errors, punctuation/ capitalization errors, word usage errors or grammatical errors | ...contains some of the following: spelling errors, punctuation/ capitalization errors, word usage errors or grammatical errors | ...is written without errors | ...is polished in form and reads with a professional voice |

*Some items based on a reflection assessment use in teacher education at the University of Northern Iowa