

FOREWORD BY **WILBERT J. McKEACHIE**

FOURTH EDITION

THE Teaching Portfolio

A Practical Guide to Improved Performance
and Promotion/Tenure Decisions

Peter Seldin
J. Elizabeth Miller
Clement A. Seldin

THE TEACHING
PORTFOLIO

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FOREWORD

Almost twenty years ago, in 1991, I wrote the Foreword for the first edition of Peter Seldin's seminal book, *The Teaching Portfolio*. I said then that the portfolio offered a promising solution to the problem faced by professors to supply persuasive documentation of their teaching effectiveness. The reason for my genuine optimism, I said, was that the teaching portfolio provided tangible concrete evidence needed by those responsible for personnel decisions, and at the same time, it provided a useful structure to stimulate critical self-analysis and improvement in teaching.

In the time since I looked into my crystal ball and wrote those prophetic words, use of the teaching portfolio concept has been adopted by several thousand colleges and universities throughout the United States and by countless other institutions around the world. And in the process, *The Teaching Portfolio* has become the most widely used and all-time best seller in the teaching portfolio field.

I thought the first edition of the book was great. Then the second and third editions each added some helpful new suggestions. Now, in this fourth edition, Peter Seldin has been joined by coauthors J. Elizabeth Miller and Clement Seldin. Each brings a wealth of hands-on experience with the teaching portfolio. Together, these three authors have written a remarkably useful book. They have mastered the art of simplification, used straightforward language, and provided suggestions that are practical and easily implemented.

Especially noteworthy new features of this edition are:

- The detailed guides for preparing a portfolio for promotion and tenure as differentiated from a portfolio for improvement

- The specific suggestions on how to find a mentor to help in developing the portfolio
- The detailed nuts-and-bolts chapter on preparing a portfolio
- The expanded section on electronic portfolios and a new section on clinical educator portfolios
- The time-tested strategies for getting started with portfolios.
- The pragmatic answers to questions commonly raised about developing and using portfolios

The Teaching Portfolio, Fourth Edition covers just about everything you should know about portfolios. It includes models of successful use; provides a field-tested, widely used template; offers sample teaching portfolios; and gives immediately useful advice. Seldin, Miller, and Seldin have extensive portfolio involvement as researchers, practitioners, and mentors to faculty who are preparing portfolios. This broad-based experience has enabled them to gain new perspectives and insights, as well as refine and modify what has already been learned about portfolios. The new edition puts much of this wisdom into practice.

I believe that college teaching has improved since I began teaching in 1946. One of the major factors contributing to this improvement is the development of the teaching portfolio.

University of Michigan

WILBERT J. McKEACHIE

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

Not long ago, an academic friend ran into us at a national conference and asked us how she could *really* convince others that she was an effective teacher. Student rating scores, she said, were an obvious way to measure teaching effectiveness: the higher the rating, the greater the effectiveness. We told our friend that it was an obvious (and necessary) way, but that it struck us that student rating numbers were hardly a complete basis for determining teaching effectiveness and that they needed to be augmented by data from an array of other sources. We also pointed out that student rating numbers did not provide information on *what* a professor did, *why* he or she did it, or *how* he or she did it. And these numbers did not present a rationale for pedagogical choices made, expectations realized, or circumstances that promoted or inhibited teaching success.

Our friend pondered what we had told her. Okay, she said, if using student rating numbers alone is a flawed approach to measuring teaching effectiveness, is there a better way? We said there is. It is the teaching portfolio. Our friend was not familiar with the concept and asked how she could learn more about it. *The Teaching Portfolio, Fourth Edition*, we told her, is a book that will be helpful. It covers just about everything you should know about portfolios; gives models of successful use; provides a field-tested, widely used template; and provides sample teaching portfolios and practical materials.

WHY A NEW EDITION?

Since 2004, when the third edition of *The Teaching Portfolio* was published, we have collectively visited more than one hundred colleges and universities and talked with countless faculty and