

Using Competency-based Portfolios as a Pedagogical Tool and Assessment Strategy in MPA Programs

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ABSTRACT

The development and use of the portfolio has become a critical feature of many Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs. The portfolio assignment has grown out of deepened appreciation of learning theory and the application of both performance measurement and management systems in MPA program curricula. The portfolio assignment as part of a capstone experience can contribute to the development of professional practitioners of public service. Based on review of the literature on the use of portfolios in professional degree programs and a case study of two MPA programs, this article seeks to deepen our understanding of the portfolio as an effective pedagogical tool and assessment strategy, and it offers conclusions about best practices in using portfolios.

KEYWORDS

NASPAA competencies, professional portfolios, MPA, capstone experience

In this era of mission-driven, performance-based assessment for professional master's degree programs, the public administration field has an opportunity to take on a leading role in integrating such assessment into evaluations of our academic programs. In response to these trends, when a Master of Public Administration (MPA) program goes through the accreditation process of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), it must demonstrate how its students meet the core professional competencies in our field, which include the ability to instill "the values that define the field: accountability, transparency, professionalism, equity, trust, and responsiveness—all in the public interest" (Raffel, Maser, & Calaruse, 2011, p. 70). As a response to the

growing need to develop rigorous, transparent, and ultimately useful tools to assess learning, the portfolio has emerged as an important feature of many MPA programs. As it grows in popularity, we must deepen our understanding of the best practices that have emerged in using the portfolio in various professional master's degree programs.

We apply these ideas to a living case and draw this conclusion: When portfolios are integrated into a capstone experience, they can be an effective way to assess student learning and a useful tool for assessing program effectiveness. For those programs seeking or obtaining NASPAA accreditation, courses are designed in part to incorporate common NASPAA curriculum

components, the goal being that that graduates demonstrate the following five core competencies: (1) ability to lead and manage in public governance; (2) ability to participate and contribute to the policy process; (3) ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions; (4) ability to articulate and apply a public service perspective; and (5) ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry. Generating program-specific competencies and learning objectives in accordance with NASPAA guidelines allows faculty to identify the key skill sets and knowledge that students will obtain. Furthermore, focusing on specific skill sets and knowledge assists in the assessment process, in which educators determine whether students have achieved the necessary competencies (Hatcher et al., 2013; Kapucu, 2011).

Fitzpatrick and Miller-Stevens (2009) stipulate that program outcomes should be assessed through two principles: “(a) use of multiple measures and (b) involvement of faculty” (p. 18). Previously, programs have been evaluated based on course content, qualification of faculty, and surveys of stakeholders, but the authors note that there is increasing use of outcomes as indicators for program quality. Even though faculty have been reluctant to evaluate their degree programs, there is need to aggregate student performances in courses at the program level. The professional portfolio has emerged as one tool to accomplish this.

A professional portfolio is a collection of representative materials, capabilities, accomplishments, and reflections organized by students when seeking employment or professional development opportunities for public service. Planning and completion of portfolio content requires collaborative exchanges between students, faculty, and advising staff. Professional portfolios extend the reach of academic programs by providing students with a tangible product to use after the program has ended. The use of portfolios enables students to reflect on their learning (Powell, Saint-Germain, & Sundstrom, 2014). Taking into consideration the recent and growing interest in competency-based education, in

which students are specifically equipped with professional competencies (Aderman & Choi, 1994; Berrett, 2015), the use of portfolios is a step toward acknowledging the need for students to apply their knowledge to real-life issues and solutions. When the portfolio requirement is introduced early in an MPA program, students have several classroom and practicum opportunities to develop potential items for inclusion.

Portfolios in MPA programs, especially if developed using program core competencies and learning objectives, can help integrate program goals and curricula with professional career development for public service (Williams, Plein, & Lilly, 1998). The portfolio assessment method allows faculty to maintain the program’s relevance and validate its “goals, training inputs, roles, tasks, competencies, skills, objectives, and specific performance statements” (Bawane & Spector, 2009, p. 384). Portfolios have been used in disciplines such as education, but their use in public affairs programs is not as common. This article reviews the literature on using portfolio assignments, discusses a process for portfolio assignment development, and gives examples of competency-based portfolios. We also look at portfolio use in two MPA programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND BACKGROUND

This literature review explores the use of the portfolio as a pedagogical tool and critical outcome assessment method. We review articles related not only to professional master’s degree programs in public administration but also to those in education, health care, social work, and business administration.

Outcome Assessment Methods

Given the importance placed on the accreditation of professional academic programs, it has become imperative to provide rigorous methods for assessing learning outcomes. Williams (2002) notes that “NASPAA accreditation standards, university assessment processes, and program management have put an increased emphasis on outcome and performance measurement” (p. 45). Moreover, higher expectations are being placed on public administration programs themselves.

Public administration education must offer students opportunities to enhance their reflective, critical, and reflexive capacities, and to share and debate their views with one another and their faculty, through discussion and reflection on classic and contemporary writings and case studies, as well as on current issues. Students should have the opportunity to develop an understanding of the political and economic context in which governance is practiced, and of public administration's place in society. (Henry, Goodsell, Lynn, Stivers, & Wamsley, 2008, p. 123)

The UN Task Force on Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training (2008) has proclaimed similar high expectations for educational programs, focusing on the cultivation of higher-education institutions: "The institutions that educate and train these persons must be always striving for excellence because, most assuredly, better governance is fundamentally related to the more effective preparation of public administrators" (p. 4). Thus, higher-education institutions must integrate assessment methods into their continuous improvement processes and practices.

Exploring the origins of the then-burgeoning performance management movement in the United States, Jennings (1989) tied the increase in outcomes assessment to the demand for more accountability of public services. Jennings identified the first discussions and debates about assessment protocols in the 1960s and 1970s, as part of the advancement of program evaluation methods. In response to requests for tools and methods, NASPAA began to integrate outcome assessment into its strategic plan while also creating standards for public administration programs as a whole. These standards call for the creation of evaluation tools for use in formal programmatic assessment and to promote organizational learning.

At the time of Jennings's 1989 review of the assessment debate, surveys were the main assessment method in use. Surveys of student learners and their would-be and current em-

ployers were seen as an appropriate tool for obtaining students' perceptions of what they had learned and employers' needs vis-à-vis desired skill sets in the workplace. But Jennings identified a weakness in using surveys, as they "do not provide direct, independent evidence of the learning that takes place in a program. They measure perceptions rather than performance" (p. 443).

Several scholars have highlighted the wide use of surveys in student performance evaluation. Other scholars have noted the danger in foregoing a good if flawed assessment measure, like the survey, while no perfect measure exists:

There has been an expansive but developing body of literature about the difficulty of developing good measures that will withstand the scrutiny of validation and statistical analysis. But it is very hard to develop perfect measures that encapsulate the complexity of MPA programs, and the search for the perfect measure may be accompanied by a danger of driving out a good measure. (Williams, 2002, p. 46)

Indeed, even if such a perfect measure does exist, it would likely have to "adjust to the context, information, and usefulness inherent in graduate education in public affairs and administration" (Williams, 2002, p. 47). Almost all measures are inexact and informed by social construction and elements of subjectivity. Ambiguity in measurement definition thus leads to the development of assessment rubrics, designed to quantify qualitative assessments.

Originating in K-12, rubrics have been integrated across disciplines and they serve several purposes (Fitzpatrick & Miller-Stevens, 2009). For example, such rubrics help students understand the requirements and expectations of an assignment and improve student performance. Rubrics also allow for constructive faculty feedback about student performance. In the field of public administration, rubrics have been used to assess reflective essays (see Koliba, 2004) and increasingly have been included in a portfolio assignment.

Rubrics generally consist of criteria for assessing performance and include the development and description of levels for each performance criterion (Fitzpatrick & Miller-Stevens, 2009). The use of rubrics not only clarifies to students what is expected from them in the learning process; it also helps align curricula with program goals and outcome. Use of rubrics as a means of collaboratively measuring learning outcomes, including in terms of portfolios, exists across professional fields.

Understanding the constraints of using surveys as a main assessment methodology, Durant (2002) proposed that a capstone course could assist in the evaluation process. A capstone course is usually the last course in an MPA program, which allows faculty to draw on all the material that students should have learned throughout the program and enables students to reflect on whether they have obtained the desired skill sets. Fitzpatrick and Miller-Stevens (2009) report on using a capstone course in the public administration program at the University of Colorado—Denver, because they wanted to find supplemental measurement tools besides surveys. The authors felt there was too much bias in the survey method: “Students’ self-reports concerning knowledge and skills gained are certainly useful...but these measures fail to examine actual student performance. ... Graduates, of course, feel that they have gained knowledge and skills...[however] assessing student outcomes requires multiple approaches” (p. 21). Using a carefully crafted, cumulative, and evidence-based professional portfolio assignment, developed based on achieving stipulated program competencies, addresses some of these concerns.

Using Portfolios in Professional Degree Programs

A review of the literature about portfolio development shows widespread application across professional degree programs. Although research on the use of portfolios in the field of public administration is limited, transferable information can be found in the education, health, social work, and business administration literature.

Professional education programs, K–12 to postsecondary, have used portfolios for multiple reasons. Portfolios enable students to collaborate with instructors to build their cumulative learning. Learning to develop and use portfolios assists new and in-service teachers in evaluating their own learning and provides direction for teaching enhancement (Bimes-Michalak, 1995, p. 53). Doctoral education programs also use portfolios, where they serve to “showcase student learning and experiences throughout formative and summative documentation” (Harvey, 2010, p. 1). In master’s level programs, portfolios have been described as a key reflective practice: “It is the portfolio that provides the richest portrayal of student performance based upon multiple sources of evidence collected over time in authentic settings” (Kish, Sheehan, Cole, Struyk, & Kinder, 1997, p. 255). Kish et al. (1997) further view the portfolio as a chance to explore three key aspects of reflective thinking and learning: “the cognitive, the socio-emotional, and the moral elements of reflection” (p. 257).

Portfolios require students take on a critical role within their own assessment process. By definition, portfolios are constructed by individual students, each responsible for identifying evidence and providing a rationale for meeting or exceeding a learning standard. “When students are involved in the assessment process they learn how to think about their learning and how to self-assess key aspects of metacognition” (Davies & Le Mahieu, 2003, p. 142). A learner’s taking responsibility for his or her own learning is a key reason that teacher education has embraced the portfolio as an assessment tool. When combined with a well-articulated rubric, portfolios provide the opportunity for students to reflect on the value and impact of their education.

Athabasca University’s Master of Distance Education program conducted a pilot study using e-portfolios as an alternative to a comprehensive examination, and results—as understood by students and faculty—have been positive (Moisey, Hover, Kenny, & Koole, 2009). In these portfolios, students submitted

materials such as “course assignments, web sites, instructional materials, learning objects, postings in CMC discussion and other formal, informal and work-based experiences and products” (p. 1). Although portfolios have been embraced in the education field, Bimes-Michalak (1995) did discuss a hardship teachers faced in wanting clear-cut guidelines for portfolio creation versus allowing it to be a more organic, generative process. This tension between a tight versus loose structure for portfolio assignments is a persistent theme within the literature. Just as some find that loose structures work best, others believe that portfolios need rigorous guidelines to enhance their reliability and validity (Berryman & Russell, 2001).

Identifying core competencies has long been part of the graduate education in health care (McKenna, Connolly, & Hodgins, 2011). Drawing on the 11 core competencies of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education, McKenna et al. (2011) found that the use of competency-based portfolios in health care education helps students integrate knowledge gained from various courses. Also relevant, the guidelines of the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education states that a school or college’s “system of evaluation should include demonstration and documentation of student learning and attainment of desired competencies in a variety of healthcare settings in student reflective portfolio format” (Plaza, Draugalis, Slack, Skrepnek, & Sauer, 2007, p.1). In health care education, portfolios with a standardized format have been found to help students bridge the gap between theory and professional practice (Plaza et al., 2007).

Portfolios in social work education have been used as a competency-based assessment tool, with emphasis on outcome assessment, student instruction, self-reflection, professional preparation, and curriculum enhancement. Indeed, in the social work field, portfolios are regarded as the highest form of knowledge and skill application for professional development. Portfolios in the field are differentiated as assessment-related or evaluative, reflective,

integrative, structured, process- or learning-related, and for showcasing professional skills (Alvarez, & Moxley, 2004; Fitch, Reed, Peet, & Tolman, 2008; Schuurman, Berlin, Langlois, & Guevara, 2012; Swigonski, Ward, Mama, Rodgers, & Belicose, 2006).

As an example, portfolio use at the Grand Valley State University School of Social Work is long-standing (Schuurman et al., 2012). The school reconfirmed its commitment to using portfolios after its Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) identified “ten core professional competencies and associated practice behaviors” (p. 1). Schuurman et al. (2012) describe how the school incorporates portfolios. Faculty review all undergraduate and graduate courses to ensure that coursework reflects the competencies, and the school then uses a capstone portfolio as an outcome measure. The school also uses electronic portfolios, so that they reflect process rather than a one-time event completed just before graduation. The portfolio, as part of the capstone seminar, is used to demonstrate the school’s 10 EPAS competencies and is linked to an assignment and evaluation rubric. This enables students to use self-directed learning and to track their mastery of the competencies and associated practice behaviors. In the portfolio, the students present elements meant to demonstrate mastery of the competencies and practice behaviors, and faculty assess using a point scale: below expectation (0 point), meets expectations (1 point), and exceeds expectations (2 points). Students also self-assess their own competencies and provide a plan for growth after graduation.

Fitch et al. (2008) examine the use of portfolios at the University of Michigan School of Social Work and found that some portfolios demonstrated mastery of competencies, but some failed to meet expectations. This reflects on the students, but Fitch et al. (2008) comment that portfolios can also serve as a “diagnostic tool to aid in assessing program effectiveness” (p. 46). Thus, if students struggle to meet expectations vis-à-vis competency standards, some measure of responsibility lies with the academic program.

According to Alvarez and Moxley (2004), portfolios in social work education are often assessed using measures of comprehensiveness, integration of program materials, organization and professional presentation, and personal reflection. And for program-level assessment, portfolios have been used to redesign courses, shift credits assigned to specific courses, reassign faculty members, identify new competencies and reformulate existing ones, and change and reformulate assignments (p. 100).

Finally, regarding business education, there has been an increase in the use of portfolios as a tool for integrating theory and practice, in part as a response to the criticism that business schools fail to train students to respond to new economic and business sector realities (Scott, 2010). Scott (2010) suggests that reflective education—such as the portfolio—is necessary to enable Master of Business Administration (MBA) students to respond to an “increasingly complex organizational reality” (n.p.). Capstone courses—many with a portfolio element—aim to “integrate principles learned in various businesses courses and apply them to solving marketing problems” (Mummalaneni, 2014, p. 43). Indeed, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, an accreditation body, promotes educational methods that document student learning. Such assessment is based on students’ knowledge, skills, and abilities that require higher orders of learning. Portfolios (including e-portfolios) in capstone courses often aid in this assessment.

Using Portfolios in MPA Programs

Public administration programs have used portfolios both independently from and embedded within capstone courses. When well-structured and integrated with applied projects and other assessment methods, portfolios can provide opportunities for students to undertake real-life projects or case studies. Aligning rubrics (and/or self-assessment surveys) with an MPA program’s goals is crucial, whether such assessment unfolds within a portfolio or some other activity, such as capstone projects.

Williams, Plein, and Lilly (1998) discuss how West Virginia University (WVU) integrated the portfolio assignment into its public administration curriculum. The school organized its portfolio process around six development areas: academic performance and course integration; leadership skills; applications, ethics, and professional standards; public service; and professional growth and continuing education. The portfolio was seen to embody WVU’s philosophy and instructional mission. Williams et al. (1998) found that “the portfolio is much like other academic devices, such as research papers: some [students] do it well, some do not, some learn a great deal, others gain only a small amount” (p. 284).

Importantly, as Powell et al. (2014) found with the MPA Program at California State University, Long Beach, faculty can use the kind of detailed and nuanced information compiled in a portfolio as a student growth indicator and can discuss these observations and improve program performance in the process. This underscores the need for the measurement of outcomes to “engender organizational learning and improvement” (Fitzpatrick & Miller-Stevens, 2009, p. 27).

Key Features of Portfolio Use in Professional Degree Programs

This review of the literature allows us to distill a few central features that all high-quality portfolio processes should include. Portfolios enable both student-level assessment of competencies learned and, in many instances, faculty- and program-level assessment of the overall program and curriculum. At their core, portfolios link assessment to instruction and place the impetus for demonstrating learning on students. Students take an active role in building their portfolios (Bimes-Michalak, 1995). In the process, students gain a deeper appreciation for their own learning and are able to articulate and reflect on, in their own words, how their academic learning has led to new knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Across education in professional fields, portfolio structure and guidelines vary. One common

guideline is to use rubrics to make assessment criteria transparent and accessible to students. These rubrics are used to quantify subjective evaluations. A rating scale or rubric is often used for this purpose (Koliba, 2004). Later in this article, we provide as a case study an example of a portfolio rubric.

A second critical and common guideline is to incorporate a program's stated learning objectives (i.e., core competencies) into design of the portfolio tool and subsequent assessment of completed portfolios. Such competencies set a clear target for students to attain in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In their portfolio projects, students provide some form of evidence clearly tied to one or more competency goal, and they are evaluated using a rubric. The combined use of competencies and an evaluation rubric lies at the core of most capstone portfolio assignments reviewed here.

A third feature of most portfolios is a required standardized format. This may mean using a template to develop a hard-copy portfolio binder or, increasingly, employing an online format (i.e., creating an e-portfolio).

Beyond this basic foundation of three key features, portfolios vary depending on what types of evidence are available and allowable (whether more restricted or open sources of data and information). There is also some variation in the processes programs use to guide students as they approach, design, develop, and eventually use their portfolios. Some programs provide focused and consistent guidance, while others provide limited support. The case study later in this article involves intensive guidance and structure, which allows students to share and discuss evidence with peers and the instructor during the portfolio construction process.

The question of who evaluates a student portfolio is also subject to variation. In some programs, assessment falls to the capstone course instructor; in others, to a panel of faculty and/or other experts; in still others, to students' own oral defense. Another variant is for stu-

dents and faculty to evaluate the evidence and come to some consensus, which is how the programs in the case study below structure portfolio evaluation and grading.

Lastly, the use of portfolios for wider program assessment is a common theme and likely best practice, particularly if the capstone portfolio is a summative assessment used to manage institutional performance and effectiveness. Although the literature on such use of the portfolio is generally anecdotal, in our conclusion we suggest ways that programs can use portfolios for programmatic assessment.

CASE STUDY OF PORTFOLIOS IN MPA CAPSTONE COURSES

Drawing on the following framework, we now turn to presenting a case study of two MPA programs' experiences using a capstone portfolio:

- **Standardized format:** The portfolio is structured to standardize expectations and ensure efficiencies.
- **Rubric:** A well-structured rubric is used to assess student achievement of program learning competencies.
- **Learning competencies:** Explicit competencies are framed and used to assess learning outcomes.

In addition, we ask the following questions to determine the rationale behind various portfolio strategies employed: What is considered "evidence"? Who evaluates the portfolio? How is the assignment graded? How much guidance in portfolio development is provided? To what degree is there student-to-student sharing of draft portfolio entries? How are portfolios used in managing program performance?

The portfolio assignments devised by faculty in the MPA programs of the University of Vermont and the University of Central Florida grew out of extensive strategic planning undertaken over many years and culminating in the programs' accreditation (University of Vermont in 2013) and reaccreditation (University of Central Florida in 2012). This process began

with extensive review and revision of each program's mission, followed by application of NASPAA's core learning standards to that mission. The University of Central Florida used the University of Vermont's experience to build an MPA capstone portfolio guide and rubric based on a competency-driven curriculum.

Learning Competencies

The programs devised a series of capacities aligned with NASPAA's five required core competencies. To develop these capacities, the programs reviewed the literature, tapped the expertise of faculty, and used alumni survey data. Conceptually, each capacity aligns with one of NASPAA's core competencies. Learning objectives at this level are framed as a student's capacity to achieve a specific goal or objective. The Florida MPA program also sought feedback from a public administration advisory board in developing its desired capacities.

In the next phase of planning, faculty mapped their program's core curriculum against the stated desired capacities. Faculty considered assignments and learning objectives in each course in light of how they exposed students to each capacity. This led to discovering gaps in the curriculum, and the programs made several changes: an internship became required of all students at the Vermont program and strongly recommended at the Florida program; the programs placed a greater focus on specific capacities for specific courses; and they each designed a capstone experience that includes professional development and a learning portfolio as core requirements.

Rubric Construction

Drawing on principles of rubric development (see Koliba, 2004, for a review of this literature), a subcommittee of faculty led by the program MPA directors designed assessment rubrics for each learning capacity. These rubrics were refined over time. Appendix C describes the current set of rubrics used by the Florida program. All the rubrics are designed around a 4-point scale. In general, the lowest level of proficiency speaks to the student's "approach"

to the learning competency. As levels of competency rise, so do expectations for the quality and/or quantity of evidence. Generally, mastery of capacities increase as the student moves from a baseline ability; to articulation of core themes, practices, and principles; to a deeper ability to demonstrate application of the capacity to specific cases, contexts, and lived experiences. In certain cases, then, mastery of a capacity can be achieved only when a student demonstrates that she or he has applied core knowledge, skills, or attitudes to projects, past experiences, or planned activities.

The construction, review, and periodic revisions of the rubrics by faculty and MPA directors in both institutions serve as ongoing opportunities for deeper appreciation and refinement of each program's curriculum. This process has fostered many meaningful discussions around each program's identity and its contributions to professional education for public service.

Portfolio Structure

Both institutions decided to provide students with a very clear pathway to complete their portfolios, as students would need to demonstrate evidence of competency for each capacity (a 3 on the rubric). Appendix A consists of the guidelines given to students for constructing their portfolios; Appendix B is the template for the cover sheet that must accompany each piece of evidence in a student's portfolio.

What Is Considered "Evidence"? Embedded in the template are details regarding each program's definition of evidence and its evaluation process. Both institutions take a broad, experiential approach, in that the programs consider a student's written reflection on prior work or other professional experience to be a valid source of evidence. The developers of the capstone portfolio came to this conclusion after considering the value of prior experiences to student success. Although neither institution grants academic credit for past experience, encouraging student reflection became a way for students to incorporate prior experiences into present learning.

At both institutions, during the capstone course and in a workshop leading up to the capstone, faculty provide students with an overview of Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1994). Students are taught to think of their experiences as a "text" from which to apply course concepts and learning competencies. Early in the semester at the Florida program, an expert from career services is often invited to share his or her perspective with the capstone students. Additional guidelines for professional portfolio development are also provided online early in the semester. These guidelines are then part of orientation and career-development workshops.

Who Evaluates the Portfolio and How Is the Assignment Graded? The programs take a dual evaluation approach (see Appendix B): both the student and the faculty member who teaches the capstone seminar assess each piece of evidence based on the learning rubric. The scores are averaged to achieve a final grade for each capacity. Students are also encouraged to meet and discuss their portfolios with their classmates during the semester. At the Vermont program, small groups meet periodically over the course of a semester to "workshop" their portfolio entries. The Florida program expects students to meet informally before submitting their portfolios. (We comment further on student-to-student sharing below.)

Both institutions require students to place their portfolios entirely online. Students use Blackboard or a similar online platform, such as Canvas. Final versions of each portfolio are also archived. With student consent, some portfolios are posted online or shared with new students.

How Much Guidance in Portfolio Development Is Provided? Both institutions provide students with a great deal of structure. Flexibility lies in the type of evidence students use to make their cases. Students have generally welcomed this mix of clear instructions and some flexibility in content.

To What Degree Is There Student-to-Student Sharing of Draft Portfolio Entries? Drawing on the value of reflective practices for learning,

both programs encourage students to share and assess elements of their portfolios prior to final submission, and both programs spend class time "workshopping" selected draft entries. The programs teach students to use a structured protocol to present to and obtain feedback from their peers. At times, the capstone instructor will join the small student groups in their discussions. Students report that the discussions stemming from the presentation of evidence and subsequent review are very helpful, particularly for those who have been proactive in completing their assignments. Based on our experiences, we believe very strongly in the effectiveness of providing students with opportunities to present and discuss their portfolio entries. Owing to time constraints, not all entries can be workshopped in class. We have heard reports of students carrying on similar workshops outside of class as well.

At the Florida program, students share their five- to seven-page portfolio reflections online with their classmates. Each student then briefly presents one of his or her classmate's reflections. First, they get a chance to comment on one of their classmates' reflections. Second, they hear another student's feedback on their own portfolio reflections. This session is usually a favorite among the students, and participants appreciate the professionalism of their peers. One student commented,

Going back through all of our assignments for the past five years was enlightening. It reminded me of some of the projects I worked on that I had almost forgotten about and it showed me all the hard work that had gone into completing this program.

How Are Portfolios Used in Managing Program Performance? Both the Vermont and Florida programs review their portfolio processes every two years. To date in the Florida program, three different faculty have taught the capstone course and have made slight adjustments to the process. Reflecting on feedback from faculty and students, both programs reduced the competencies students are required to demonstrate in their portfolios from 18 to 15.

But students are required to provide evidence for all 15 (before, students could choose to demonstrate 15 of 18 possible competencies).

In the Vermont program, faculty reflections on the portfolio have led to changes in the program's internship learning contract, the selection of specific case studies in both capstone and introduction to public administration courses, and renewed emphasis on application of research methods for program evaluation. In this way, portfolio results are used as a guide for institutional effectiveness and performance management. Although we have not quantified student responses (i.e., we have not determined which capacities students rate highest on), we certainly could do so to improve the rigor of our analysis.

Faculty at both institutions recognize the educational value of portfolios and have used the outcomes of the portfolio assignments to remedy gaps in the curriculum, to design effective assignments, and to prepare students to succeed. The result has been concrete programmatic improvements. Thus, the portfolio's value as a summative assessment tool to improve pedagogy is clear.

Further, the value of experiential learning and student agency in the assessment of their own learning has been well documented as a highly valued pedagogical approach (Estes, 2004). In both programs, students report that the portfolio assignment enables them to see the big picture and benefit of the entire program for their professional development for public service. The portfolio assignment affords students well-rounded insight into previously completed projects and significant prior professional experiences. Students comment that they gain a deeper understanding of the education they have received and, as a result, enjoy improved self-confidence vis-à-vis obtaining future employment. As noted above, students especially enjoy the reflection portion of the portfolio assignment. Specifically at the Florida program, students recommend that we require reflection at the end of each course throughout the MPA

program, matching this reflection assignment to the core competencies in preparation for the cumulative portfolio reflection assignment.

CONCLUSION

This review of the literature on the use of portfolios in professional degree programs and the application of certain key features of portfolios gives us an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the portfolio as an effective pedagogical tool in MPA programs. As the University of Vermont and University of Central Florida MPA programs reveal, the development and use of the portfolio has become a critical in each program's evolution. Stemming from a strategic approach to curriculum review and pursuit of accreditation, the portfolio has become a central feature of the student learning experience. Students are introduced to the portfolio assignment during program orientation and are reminded of the capstone course throughout their coursework, priming them for work on their portfolios. In addition, some students have approached their internship experiences with an eye toward mastering specific capacities and building evidence for their portfolios. At both the University of Vermont and University of Central Florida, we have also heard from students on the job market who have referenced their portfolios in job interviews and to shape their résumés, affirming Davies and Le Mahieu's (2003) assertion that portfolios have become an increasingly relevant document for use in job searches, formal conferences, and exhibitions.

The portfolio assignment has grown out of deepened appreciation of learning theory and the application of performance management systems to the execution of MPA programs. Although portfolios are labor intensive, both for the students who construct them and for the external evaluators who review them, the portfolio is a pedagogical best practice well suited to professional education. We encourage further research by MPA programs that seek to employ the portfolio in measuring student learning and professional preparation for public service.

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APPENDIX A

CAPSTONE LEARNING PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

Primary Objectives of the Portfolio

- To provide the student with an opportunity to reflect upon his/her graduate education and body of prior experiences.
- To provide evidence that demonstrates student attainment of core learning competency areas.

Format

- Completed portfolios will be evaluated based on self- and instructor assessment. Rubrics and other evaluative tools will be used in these assessments.
- Completed portfolios will be required to follow a specific format as outlined in these guidelines.
- Completed portfolios will need to be submitted electronically and in print as the culminating assignment of the MPA Capstone.

Acceptable Forms of “Evidence”

1. *Graded assignments from the Capstone or other courses.* A limited number of assignments can be revised. Original and revised versions of the assignment must be submitted together.
2. *Materials developed within internships experiences.* Any materials prepared for an internship site will need to be approved by internship site supervisor.
3. *Written reflections that ask a student to explain how she/he has attained this competency through graduate studies or prior experiences.*
4. *Any form of creative expression preapproved by the Capstone instructor.* Some examples of possible evidence in this area include visualization techniques found at http://www.visual-literacy.org/periodic_table/periodic_table.html#. Other forms of expression take the form of artwork, videos, photos, poetry, prose, etc.
5. *Any form of evidence proposed by a student will be considered.*

Competencies and Capacities to Be Covered

The list of competencies below is organized around five higher-order learning competencies that are required for NASPAA-accredited MPA programs. These five core areas are broken into sub-categories organized around the acquisition of skills and knowledge capacities.

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| Example: | 1. Higher-order competency |
| | 1.1 Skill or knowledge capacity |

Each completed portfolio will need to include evidence for at least *three* skill or knowledge capacities for each of the five higher-order learning competencies.

More than one capacity may be addressed in a single piece of evidence. For example, a graded assignment may be used to demonstrate satisfactory mastery of more than one capacity. In those cases where one piece of evidence serves more than one capacity, the evidence will only need to appear in the portfolio once. A written statement and a completed rubric for every capacity should be provided under the appropriate tab and direct the reader to where to find the evidence in other parts of the portfolio.

Use of Assessment Tools

Rubrics for each competency and capacity will be used by the student and the external evaluator to evaluate. Students will be asked to distinguish between the level of competency when he/she began the MPA program and the level of competency at the culmination of the graduate program.

Brief written assessments should include reflections on how the piece of evidence and other related experiences and accomplishments contribute to the student's personal assessment of each identified capacity.

Satisfactory levels of completion of a mean score of 3.0 or better over all 15 pieces of evidence presented in the portfolio will be required in order to obtain at least a B on this assignment. The following mean scores align with the following grades: 3.0 to 3.1, B; 3.1 to 3.2, B+; 3.2 to 3.4, A–; 3.4 to 3.7, A; 3.7 or higher, A+.

Portfolio Outline

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. Title page | VII. Public service values |
| | 4.x Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> |
| II. Personal bio (one paragraph) | 4.y Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> |
| III. Current résumé | 4.z Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> |
| IV. Public governance | VIII. Communicate and interact with diverse constituencies |
| 1.x Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | 5.x Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> |
| 1.y Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | 5.y Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> |
| 1.z Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | 5.z Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> |
| V. Policy processes | IX. Personal reflection about your future
<i>(5 to 7 pages)</i> |
| 2.x Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | X. Appendices |
| 2.y Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | |
| 2.z Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | |
| VI. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions | |
| 3.x Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | |
| 3.y Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | |
| 3.z Evidence
<i>Written self-assessment & completed rubric</i> | |

APPENDIX B

MPA CAPSTONE LEARNING PORTFOLIO: PIECE OF EVIDENCE COVER SHEET

Name: _____

TITLE/LABEL OF EVIDENCE

Type of evidence

Course assignment for (identify class):

Internship artifact for (identify internship):

Written reflection produced for the portfolio:

Other (explain):

Competency/capacity addressed: (insert full text of competency/capacity here)

Self-assessment

Score: _____

Criteria you have met: Insert text of rubric level attained here:

Instructor assessment:

Score: _____

Checklist

- Written assessment follows completed rubric
- Evidence is located after written assessment or may be found under another tab/page of the portfolio (add location)
- Additional supporting evidence included

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses

This rubric is used as part of portfolio development in the MPA capstone class at the University of Central Florida. The rubric aligns with the five central learning outcomes (core competencies) for the MPA program identified by NASPAA. Each of the five is then divided into fundamental criteria, which combined form the main competency. Students are assessed for different levels of attainment. At a *novice level*, the student understands the competency and associated objectives. At a *developing level*, relevant skills are being acquired. At a *proficient level*, relevant skills are being acquired and practiced with additional supervision or guidance. At an *accomplished level* (meets the standard and exceeds the standard), tasks are performed to demonstrate the competency. This instrument is intended for program-level use in evaluating learning and assessing competency development.

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
1. Ability to lead and manage in public governance					
1a	Develop expertise on local government	Does possess limited capacity in understanding local government operations Does not demonstrate a clear understanding of what distinguishes government from businesses and nonprofits	Can provide a basic articulation of how different social sectors are governed Can explain in basic terms what governance is and why it is important to local government	Can illustrate how governance dynamics as they unfold within specific social sectors and across social sectors play a role in the execution of public policies in particular cases and local government contexts	Able to evaluate the tradeoffs and synergies that persist within sectors and across sectors Can make recommendation for the design of new governance arrangements for local government
1b	Develop an ability to lead and manage within multiple networks of stakeholders	Does not understand the basic operations of systems and networks Cannot explain why understanding public administration cases and contexts in terms of networks is important	Can provide a basic overview of what network structures are and illustrate how they are evident in particular cases and contexts	Able to undertake an analysis of a complex public administration issue, problem or context using basic network frameworks	Can apply network frameworks to existing cases and contexts to derive working solutions or feasible alternatives to pressing administrative and policy problems
1c	Reinforce democratic principles and practices	Does not demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between democratic principles in public administration	Able to explain in simple terms why accountability in public administration is important to democratic systems	Can illustrate how accountability in public administration in a democratic society persists within particular cases and contexts	Able to critique the extent to which a robust accountability framework in public administration is evident in particular cases and contexts

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
1. Ability to lead and manage in public governance					
1d	Produce consensus or consent among diverse stakeholders	Cannot provide explanations for why and how collaboration and conflict persists within individual organizations and between organizations in public service settings	Able to provide a set of examples of where collaboration and conflict persist within single organizations and between organizations	Can illustrate how collaboration and conflicts arise within organizations and between organizations, ascertaining how they come about and what maybe done to improve the effectiveness of collaborations and/or overcome conflicts in particular cases and contexts	Can not only illustrate the drivers of collaboration or conflict in specific contexts and cases, but can also prescribe solutions for conflict and/or avenues to foster deeper collaboration by using negotiations, for example
1e	Model the skills and power of leadership (including transformational, transactional, and servant) and utilize principles of public management	Cannot distinguish between command and control structures from horizontally arranged administrative structures Cannot generalize why one form of leadership is better than another	Can distinguish between types of leadership and surmise which types of authority are working in particular cases and contexts	Can illustrate how leadership persists within specific cases and contexts and level critiques as to the efficacy of particular administrative arrangements	Can not only illustrate how leadership plays itself out in specific cases and contexts, but can offer alternatives to those arrangements perceived to be less effective or efficient
2. Ability to participate in and contribute to the policy process					
2a	Develop capacity to analyze political theory, policy process, and policy implementation	Possesses limited capacity to utilize any political theory, policy process, implementation, and/or practice to explain observed phenomena	Possesses some capacity to utilize any political theory, policy process, implementation, and/or practice to describe observed phenomena	Employs political theory, policy process, implementation, and past experiences to describe and evaluate observed phenomena Employs this analysis to seek solutions	Can demonstrate a mastery over more than one political theory, policy process, implementation, or political experience and is capable of applying these frameworks to study and/or transform an existing situation
2b	Analyze policy issues/problems using different methodologies	Possesses limited capacity to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of specific policy tools or interventions	Has some exposure to carrying out policy analysis/evaluation, employing simple evaluation methods and approaches	Can undertake an independent piece of policy analysis, successfully rendering new insights and applicable findings for policy makers	Can employ sophisticated analytical techniques to render a policy analysis or evaluation that provides new insights and actionable items for policy makers

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
2. Ability to participate in and contribute to the policy process					
2c	Identify and evaluate interests from multiple stakeholders in policy formation and communicate evidence-based policy information as a foundation for collaborative negotiations with diverse stakeholders	Can isolate simple problems from solutions, but has difficulty identifying ill-structured problems	Possesses some capacity to define how problems are framed by different policy actors	Can demonstrate how problems are defined within specific policy contexts by multiple stakeholders and deconstruct the relationship between problem definitions and solutions	Can articulate how conflicts over problem definition contribute to complex/wicked policy problems and their solutions in a networked environment
2d	Assess the political, legal, economic, institutional, and social environment and operation of public administration in the policy process (including concepts, theories, approaches, models, techniques, formulation, implementation, evaluation, and institutions)	Possesses limited capacity to utilize any political theory and/or practice to describe observed phenomena Possesses limited capacity to utilize policy process to describe observed phenomena	Possesses some capacity to utilize any political theory and/or practice to describe observed phenomena Possesses some capacity to utilize policy process to describe observed phenomena	Employs political theory and past experiences to describe and evaluate observed phenomena and employs this analysis to seek solutions Employs a policy process approach to the study of observed phenomena	Can demonstrate a mastery over more than one political theory or political experience and is capable of applying these frameworks to study and/or transform an existing situation Employs a policy process approach to the diagnoses of a problem raised in real-life policy dilemmas
2e	Design policy implementation methodology and actively engage with public sector employees and citizens to develop goals and strategies	Possesses limited capacity to distinguish between policy creation and policy implementation phases of the policy cycle	Possesses a rudimentary understanding of policy implementation processes within specific contexts	Can undertake a detailed assessment of policy implementation within specific contexts	Is capable of comparing policy implementation processes across different policy domains and can decipher challenges to effective policy implementation processes

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
3. Ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions					
3a	Develop expertise in techniques used in managing government operations	Can identify why strategic planning, budgeting, and sound fiscal management practices are important, but cannot analyze how and/or if such practices are being used within specific contexts	Can identify strategic planning, fiscal planning, and budgeting practices for a particular situation or context, but has limited capacity to evaluate the effectiveness of a management system	Can identify and analyze strategic planning, financial management systems, needs, and emerging opportunities within a specific organization or network	Can provide new insights into the financial management and strategic planning challenges facing an organization or network and can suggest alternative design and implementation scenarios
3b	Appraise the concepts of social science research methods, statistical analysis, and techniques; apply the skills to analyze public policies and government operations; and formulate a policy or managerial decision	Can explain why it is important to undertake program/policy evaluation, but possesses limited capacity to actually carry it out	Can provide a rationale for undertaking program and policy evaluation and explain what the possible goals and outcomes of such an evaluation might be	Can provide a detailed account for how a program or policy evaluation should be structured within the specific context	Can demonstrate the successful execution of a program or policy evaluation or the successful utilization of evidence to improve administrative practice
3c	Create networked/collaboration solution to complex modern problems	Can explain in a vague or abstract way why it is important for public administrators to value coalition and team building, but cannot provide specific explanations or justifications applied to particular contexts	Can identify instances in specific cases or contexts where a public administrator successfully or unsuccessfully demonstrated a capacity to build teams or coalitions Possesses a basic level of understanding of network dynamics	Demonstrates a capacity for successful participation in a team or coalition environment Can apply teaming and coalition-building concepts to describe the experience	Can point to example in which they have created and/or lead teams or coalitions Can apply teaming and coalition building concepts to describe the experience

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
3. Ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions					
3d	Identify, evaluate, and model best practices	Can provide an explanation of why performance goals and measures are important in public administration, but cannot apply this reasoning to specific contexts	Can identify the performance management considerations for a particular situation or context, but has limited capacity to recognize the effectiveness of performance management systems	Can identify and analyze performance management systems, needs, and emerging opportunities within a specific organization or network	Can provide new insights into the performance management challenges facing an organization or network and can suggest alternative design and measurement scenarios
3e	Develop professional capacity in basic skills (including writing, speaking, analytical techniques, and critical thinking)	Demonstrates some ability to express ideas verbally and in writing Lacks capacity to present and write consistently	Possesses the capacity to write documents that are free of grammatical error and are organized in a clear and efficient manner Possesses the capacity to present ideas in a professional manner Suffers from a lack of consistency in the presentation of material and expression or original ideas and concepts	Is capable of consistently synthesizing and expressing ideas verbally and in writing in a professional manner that communicates messages to intended audiences	Can demonstrate some instances in which verbal and written communication has persuaded others to take action in solving problems

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
4. Ability to articulate and apply a public service perspective					
4a	Develop a respect and demonstrate methods for authentic interaction with citizens, other governmental entities, and nonprofit and business communities	Can explain in a vague or abstract way why it is important for citizens to be involved in the governance of their society, but cannot provide specific explanations or justifications applied to particular contexts	Can distinguish between authentic and inauthentic citizen participation in field contexts, but cannot articulate how participation can either become more authentic or be sustained in an authentic way	Possesses the capacity to describe how citizen participation can be undertaken within an authentic way that improves the democratic accountability of an organization or network	Can demonstrate having either (a) played a role in facilitating the authentic participation of citizens in a public administration context or (b) played an active role as an engaged citizen
4b	Value and demonstrate commitment and professionalism and integrity in serving the public	Possesses little to no capacity to think critically about and reflect deeply upon their own identify as a present or future public administrator	Can express both orally and in writing why they are pursuing an MPA and describe how the degree will help them achieve public service goals	Can express both orally and in writing how course concepts and learning competencies synthesize with their own life experiences in advancing public service	Can demonstrate capacity to undertake responsive practice toward the resolution of a real dilemma or toward the achievement of a public service goal in real-life settings
4c	Communicate public interest based on ethical reasoning and democratic participation	Can explain in a vague or abstract way why it is important for public administrators to act ethically, but cannot provide specific explanations or justifications applied to particular contexts	Possesses a basic comprehension of ethical behavior and decision making within public administration contexts, but cannot apply concepts to specific cases with any level of depth and insight Can begin to articulate how they think of themselves as an ethical administrator	Can apply ethical concepts and frameworks to specific situations and contexts Able to articulate how they view ethics as a professional competency	Able to diagnose an ethical dilemma, apply specific ethical frameworks to study it, and articulate ways of resolving the dilemma Can clearly articulate their own ethical framework and cite examples of how it applies to past, present, or future practice

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
4. Ability to articulate and apply a public service perspective					
4d	Critique instrumental reasoning in order to promote social and economic equity and justice	Can explain in a vague or abstract way why it is important for social and economic equity to flourish, but cannot provide specific explanations or justifications applied to particular contexts	Can explain why social and economic equity is important to public administration and can identify how social and economic equity or inequities persist within a given context, but cannot diagnose why the problem persists or how to address it	<p>Possesses the capacity to describe and analyze social and economic equity/inequity within specific contexts</p> <p>Can offer suggestion for ways of improving inequitable situations</p>	Can demonstrate having played a role in facilitating the improvement of inequitable situations through indirect or direct action
4e	Incorporate and value principles of democracy, public transparency, and consensus building in the workplace when making decisions that directly impact the community	Can explain in a vague or abstract way why principles of democracy is important for public administrators to act as effective leaders, but cannot provide specific explanations or justifications applied to particular contexts	<p>Possesses a basic comprehension of principles of democracy within public administration contexts, but cannot apply concepts to specific cases with any level of depth and insight</p> <p>Can begin to articulate how they think of themselves as a leader</p>	<p>Can apply principles of democracy to specific situations and contexts</p> <p>Able to articulate how they views collaborative leadership as a professional competency</p>	<p>Able to apply specific principles of democracy to the study of a particular situation or context</p> <p>Can clearly articulate their own approach to collaborative leadership capacities and cite examples of how it applies to past, present or future practice</p>

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
5. Ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.					
5a	<p>Incorporate various communication tools and strategies (including written reports, brochures, e-mails, PowerPoint, and marketing plans) in the management of public service organizations</p>	<p>Can explain why information technology (IT) is important to contemporary workplaces and public administration environments</p> <p>Possesses direct experience with IT, but little understanding for how IT informs professional practice</p>	<p>Can identify instances in specific cases or context where a public administrator successfully or unsuccessfully demonstrated a capacity to use IT to foster innovation, improve services or deepen accountability</p> <p>Analysis at this level is limited to descriptions and thin analysis</p>	<p>Can identify how IT impacts workplaces and public policy</p> <p>Can diagnose problems associated with IT tools, procedures, and uses</p>	<p>Demonstrates a capacity to view IT in terms of systems design</p> <p>Capable of working with IT professionals in identifying areas of need for IT upgrades, IT procedures and IT uses in real-life settings</p>
5b	<p>Incorporate major concepts, skills, process, policies (including planning, classification, compensation, recruitment, selection, training, performance appraisal, labor relations, equal employment opportunity, and affirmative action) in public service human resource management</p>	<p>Can explain why human resources are valuable to any undertaking</p> <p>Possesses limited capacity in describing the critical feature of successful human resource management</p>	<p>Can identify some major features of effective human resource management systems: staffing, performance evaluation, motivations and benefits</p> <p>Possesses limited capacity analyze the human resources issues relative to specific situations and contexts</p>	<p>Demonstrates a capacity to identify and manage the necessary human capital to carry out a task or function within specific contexts or situations</p>	<p>Can point to instances in which they have lead or initiated projects or systems designed to improve human resource management practices within a specific setting</p>

APPENDIX C

Example Assessment Rubric for Portfolios in MPA Capstone Courses (continued)

Competency	Level of Attainment				
	Novice	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	
5. Ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.					
5c	Develop cultural competency and appreciation of diversity for collaborating with diverse stakeholders to produce consensus or consent	Can explain in a vague or abstract way why it is important for public administrators to be culturally competent, but cannot provide specific explanations or justifications applied to particular contexts	Able to demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures and groups Can express the value of differences and difference perceptions in the workplace Demonstrates an ability to openly discuss cultural differences and issues	Can explain how cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, and cultural skills are employed, or not employed, within specific cases for workplace productivity	Demonstrates a capacity to be aware of own behavior and its impacts on others, a capacity to understand how discrimination impacts for workplace experience and productivity
5d	Negotiate interest-based resolutions with stakeholders experiencing conflict	Can explain in a vague or abstract way why it is important for public administrators to value coalition- and team-building, but cannot provide specific explanations or justifications applied to particular contexts	Can identify instances in specific cases or context where a public administrator successfully or unsuccessfully demonstrated a capacity to build teams or coalitions Possesses a basic level of understanding of teamwork dynamics	Demonstrates a capacity for successful participation in a team or coalition environment Can apply teaming and coalition-building concepts to describe the experience	Can point to example in which they have created and/or lead teams or coalitions Can apply teaming and coalition-building concepts to describe the experience
5e	Critique existing partnerships and promote engagement and interaction with citizens and nonprofit organizations, as well as collaborative efforts with other entities	Can explain in a vague or abstract way the performance of networks, but cannot provide specific explanations applied to particular contexts	Can identify instances in specific cases or context where a network is effective or ineffective	Can formulate possible strategies for network effectiveness Creates engagement and is able to motivate people from other institutions and backgrounds	Demonstrates own capacity to analyze and network or take an active role in a partnership Has an emerging professional network, identifies important stakeholders and builds strategic relationships