

Capstone Portfolio in Educational Research and Evaluation

Conceptual Framework:

As an option to the thesis/project for the Master of Science in Educational Research and Evaluation, we are proposing a capstone portfolio, plus additional coursework. This option is a good match for students who want to continue or gain employment in research and evaluation after their degree and are not at the current time considering continuing into a doctoral degree program. Research and evaluation professionals need to understand the role of various methods in research/evaluation, the interrelationships among them, as well as their comparative strengths and limitations. Further, professionals in the field need to have professional oral and written communication skills to convey information effectively to clients and other professionals in the field. The additional coursework will be in research and assessment, and will allow students to focus on a methodological area that is of interest to them.

The capstone portfolio is designed to allow students to 1) reflect on their professional goals and demonstrate how they have progressed during the course of study, 2) reflect on the assessment, evaluation, quantitative, and qualitative analysis skills they have acquired and highlight what they believe are their personal strengths, and 3) demonstrate their written and oral communication skills in research and evaluation. Therefore the capstone portfolio will give students the opportunity to showcase their strongest skill sets in the research and evaluation field and show how different methodological approaches can be used to address particular research/evaluation questions. Further, the capstone portfolio will allow students the opportunity to reflect on their professional development during the course of their MS degree and how this relates to their professional goals. The defense, as well as the portfolio showcase will allow students to demonstrate their written and oral communication skills in research and evaluation content.

Logistics:

The student would take an additional 5 – 6 credit hours of coursework and enroll in a 1 credit hour experience with their mentor the semester that they plan to prepare and defend their portfolio. (Note, that students may elect to take a 2 credit hour independent study *or* take 2 additional hours of internship/practicum *or* take 2 additional 3-credit hour courses besides their portfolio credit hour)

Student requirements for 1 credit hour portfolio experience:

Meet with a mentor to decide:

- which artifacts to go into portfolio,
- timeline for completing artifacts,

Construct reflections on how the portfolio evidence addresses the portfolio objectives,

Defend the portfolio to the student's 3-member portfolio committee,

Make revisions to portfolio recommended by committee, and

Present portfolio at the Portfolio Showcase.

Format for portfolio:

The format for the portfolio defense and showcase will be electronic (e.g, website, moodle, LiveText).

Required Portfolio Components:

1. Current resume or vita
2. Developmental goals statement (initial, middle, end)
 - *Initial Program Goals*: List goals and pertinent knowledge, expertise, and interest at the start of the program. Indicate what shaped your goals.
 - *Middle of Program Goals*: List goals, courses, and experiences completed by the middle of your program. Indicate how such shaped your professional goals.
 - *End of Program Goals*: List goals, courses, and experiences completed by the end of your program. Indicate how shaped your professional goals. Also indicate any new goals that have emerged.
3. List of courses (i.e., number and title) completed by term.
4. Personal statement that reflects the development of your expertise in research and assessment and how the artifacts you have chosen to submit *collectively* exemplify your developing expertise in research and assessment and your mastery of the objectives.
5. Blueprint (documentation of the alignment between artifacts and objectives)
6. The role of the artifacts is to demonstrate breadth of skills and experience aligned to program objectives. Precede each artifact with a 1-page introduction that includes a clear description of the artifact and your rationale for including it as evidence relevant to mastery of each objective identified. Ultimately within your portfolio, each objective should have sufficient evidence to demonstrate proficiency (linking to 2-3 artifacts).

Objectives:

1. Design a study of an educational research problem or phenomenon using appropriate methodologies
2. Design and/or select appropriate assessment or evaluation tools for a given educational problem
3. Distinguish between ethical and unethical behavior when conducting educational research or evaluations
4. Select appropriate analyses for a given research question
5. Apply appropriate technology to conduct analyses of educational data

6. Conduct a study pertaining to an educational research problem or phenomenon
7. Demonstrate effective communication skills by presenting and defending a research project
8. Engage in research-related activities in diverse settings.

Approved 10/10/12