

Teaching and Learning Experience Sharing (TALES) Workshop

Teaching Statements, Portfolios, and Awards



Professor Brian P. Coppola

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University of Michigan

Date

28 Jan 2016
Thursday

Time

12:30 to 2:30 p.m.
(light lunch from 12:15 to 12:30 p.m.)

Venue

ACC209
2/F, Jockey Club Academic
Community Centre,
Baptist University Road Campus

Abstract

The modern teaching portfolio concept has been around for 20-30 years, popularized in the US through projects run by the now-defunct American Association of Higher Education. There has never been any consensus reached, however, on the assembly and use of teaching portfolios, regardless of how ubiquitous they are.

In this session, I will look at teaching statements and portfolios as a simple and practical problem to solve, and one that can rely on existing faculty skills rather than trying to invent new ones. In short, a teaching statement (I avoid the term 'philosophy') is a discipline-centered argument about one's instructional practices. As with any other professional argument, the statement ought to start with a claim (a thesis) and follow with a coherent text that provides evidence to warrant the claim. The writer needs to keep the reader in mind, particularly in anticipating what the reader will anticipate based on the claim(s) that are made.

A teaching statement can form the foundation for a portfolio, where the artifacts constitute some of the actual evidence described in the statement. The narrative needs to be consistent and coherent, leading the reader from point to point. In assembling portfolios for awards competitions, writers need to identify ideas and practices that set them apart (signature pedagogies) and to provide information that readers immediately want to adopt, adapt, or at least tell someone about.

Biography

Professor Brian P. Coppola is Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of Chemistry at the University of Michigan. He serves as the department's Associate Chair for Educational Development & Practice, which includes directing CSIEIUM, the department's program for using faculty-led projects as the foundation for educating future faculty (sites.lsa.umich.edu/csie-um). Professor Coppola received his B.S. degree in 1978 from the University of New Hampshire and his Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1984. Moving to Ann Arbor in 1986, he joined an active group of faculty in the design and implementation of a revised undergraduate chemistry curriculum. His 1996-7 tenure review established a new policy at the University of Michigan, recognizing discipline-centered teaching and learning as an area that can be represented. He was promoted to Full Professor of Chemistry in 2001-2. His publications range from mechanistic organic chemistry research in 1,3-dipolar cycloaddition reactions to educational philosophy, practice and assessment. Professor Coppola has been recognized for his contributions to higher education, including receiving the Kendall-Hunt Outstanding Undergraduate Science Teacher Award from the Society for College Science Teachers (2003), the State of Michigan Professor of the Year in the CASE/Carnegie US Professor of the Year program (2004), and the American Chemical Society's James Flack Norris Award (2006). In 2009, he was selected as the CASE/Carnegie US Professor of the Year (for doctoral institutions). In 2012, he received the 2012-14 Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching.

Enquiries and Registration

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