

## *Answers to Questions Recently Asked Regarding SBOS Program Planning & Portfolio Qualifying Procedure*

Several questions were recently raised regarding the program planning and portfolio qualifying procedures at SBOS. As the basic source of information on this topic, students are referred to the handout in the office (also available online at: [www.cgu.edu/sbos/documents/portfolio%20plan%20guidelines.pdf](http://www.cgu.edu/sbos/documents/portfolio%20plan%20guidelines.pdf)) entitled, "Guidelines for the Program Planning and Portfolio Qualifying Procedure." Here students will find specific information regarding the anticipated domains of preparation, content of the portfolio proposal, and procedure for completing or changing portfolio items. There are also specific guidelines prepared for each of the portfolio items, and there are sample portfolio plans available in the office. These should be consulted prior to working on any portfolio items.

Answers to recently asked questions:

### 1. Master's Thesis

Q: Is it possible to use a project from your workplace that you have been paid to do as your master's thesis project or any other portfolio item?

A: *As a general rule, it is irrelevant to the portfolio process whether you're paid for the work you do on any item.* If, for example, you conduct your thesis research in the setting in which you are doing your field placement, the product of the thesis research is likely to be quite different from the experience of the field placement, in which case it is perfectly appropriate for these to count as two separate portfolio items.

Q: Should the thesis project be empirical or can it be qualitative?

A: Qualitative research is empirical!

### 2. Publishable Paper

Q: Can a Master's thesis be used for this requirement?

A: Students should aim to submit their thesis for publication. However, if the same piece of research is in the thesis and the paper, this cannot count as two portfolio items. If the thesis is the first part of a program of research, and the larger program of research becomes a publication by the student, then this could be considered as two portfolio items.

Q: Does the publishable paper have to be empirical?

A: No. A publishable paper can be, for example, a review paper, a theoretical piece, or a meta-analysis. The defining characteristic, however, is that it must be appropriate for a peer-reviewed journal in the student's area of specialization.

Q: Under what conditions does a submitted paper qualify as a publishable paper?

A: If both portfolio committee members read it and find it ready to submit to a peer reviewed journal in the student's area of specialization? *As a general rule, all written portfolio items must be signed off by both portfolio committee members.*

### 3. Formal Oral Presentation at a Professional Meeting

Q: If a student submitted for presentation at a conference, the results of a research project conducted for another portfolio item, might this count as two portfolio items?

A: Conference presentation is generally considered a “light” portfolio item. Each portfolio committee tries to balance across items so that if there are some light items, there are heavier items as well; the goal here is balance. With this in mind, a student might make a conference presentation of a research project conducted for another portfolio item and count this as two portfolio items as long as the portfolio committee considers that there are more substantial portfolio items to offset this.

Q: Do poster presentations count?

A: Yes, as long as the student’s portfolio committee considers this appropriate. However, a research project presented as a poster cannot double-count if the research is counted as another portfolio item elsewhere in the portfolio.

Q: Does the conference presentation have to be at a psychology conference?

A: No, as long as the student’s portfolio committee considers the conference appropriate for the student’s area of study and an activity that builds the student’s resume in a productive way.

### 4. Research or Technical Report

Q: What is a research or technical report?

A: This would be an empirical project conducted and written up by the student for an in-house publication, usually within an organization in which they are working. Frequently technical reports are used by organizations as a vehicle for distributing project results within the organization. A research or technical report is rarely subjected to peer review.

Q: Could this be a review paper?

A: Possibly but not usually.

Q: Could a student be paid for doing this as part of their field placement?

A: *As a general rule, it is irrelevant to the portfolio process whether you’re paid for the work you do on any item.*

### 5. Grant Proposal

Q: Could a student write a grant proposal outside of their discipline?

A: The goal of the portfolio is to build a resume with experiences that prepare the student for the career for which he or she is being trained. The grant proposal thus should be relevant to the student’s area of specialization, as determined by his or her portfolio committee.

Q: If you write a grant proposal as part of a field placement, can you this count as two portfolio items?

A: Yes, as long as the scope of both portfolio items is justified. In other words, it’s unlikely that your field placement will consist of just writing a grant proposal; other responsibilities will be required as well. So although there may be some overlap between the field placement and writing the grant, the

combined scope of the work should exceed the effort devoted to either of these portfolio items alone.

6. Review Paper – Before beginning a review paper for a portfolio item, students should pick up in the SBOS office, the “Guidelines for Preparing a Portfolio Review Paper.” Attached to these Guidelines is Daryl Bem’s excellent article, “Writing a Review Article for Psychological Bulletin.”

Q: Does the review paper have to be the introduction to the dissertation?

A: No, but it’s sure a good idea because this will jump-start the student’s dissertation process.

Q: How long does it have to be?

A: The text of a review paper should be no longer than 30 double-spaced pages, but see the Guidelines for more details.

7. Teaching Experience

By the way, every Ph.D. student is required to take either the teaching seminar (and teach a course) or the field placement seminar (in conjunction with a field placement). Which ever each student selects to do, this same experience can also count as a portfolio item.

Q: What are the requirements of this portfolio item?

A: Ordinarily a student is required to teach his or her own course to satisfy this requirement, and if a student has teaching as his or her career goal, he or she is expected to take the teaching seminar as well, usually in conjunction with the teaching experience.

8. Field Placement and Job Experience

By the way, every Ph.D. student is required to take either the teaching seminar (and teach a course) or the field placement seminar (in conjunction with a field placement). Which ever each student selects to do, this same experience can also count as a portfolio item.

Q: What’s the difference between an internship, field placement and job experience?

A: There really is no difference between an internship and field placement. Both are usually temporary positions to serve a focused role for an organization. Job experience, on the other hand, is usually a long-term (permanent?!) position this is more likely to be full time and involve more independent responsibilities.

Q: What are the requirements of this portfolio item?

A: *Students must enroll in the field placement seminar (0 – 4 units of credit) to get credit for this portfolio items.* As part of this seminar, students will be told what the field placement requirements are in terms of hours and scope of the required work.

Q: By relevant, do you mean relevant to the student's concentration area or to his or her career? These may be discrepant; which takes priority?

A: Does not compute!

9. 8 or More Units of Non-required Methodology

Q: Does this apply to Ph.D. students in the Evaluation program? What counts as "non-required" methodology for Evaluation students?

A: Students in the Evaluation program are not encouraged to select this item for a portfolio item because they take so many evaluation courses already as part of their program requirements. After all, with the portfolio we're seeking unique experiences for students. However, if an Evaluation student selects this portfolio item, the 8 units need to be in addition to the methods courses already required in this concentration area.

10. Relevant Non-required 2 Course Sequence Outside of Psychology

Q: Does "relevant" refer to career goals or to concentration area? If these two are discrepant, which one takes priority?

A: Again, does not compute!

Q: Is this "outside" of psychology or "outside" of concentration area?

A: Students are encouraged to take courses in SBOS outside of their concentration area, and they would be wise to do so. However, this portfolio item is for courses taken outside of psychology.

Q: Is 2-course sequence expected to be 8 units?

A: Yes

General Concern:

Q: If a dispute over the legitimacy of a portfolio item between the 2-person portfolio committee and the student should arise, to whom can the student appeal?

A: The normal student appeal process should be followed here. That is, the issue should first be brought to the Associate Dean (or the Dean in the event that the Associate Dean is one of the 2 portfolio committee members) who will attempt to resolve the issue. If this avenue is not satisfactory to the student, he or she should file a petition to the full SBOS faculty.

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