

BUILDING YOUR ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO: A KEY TO FACULTY PROMOTION

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Family Medicine Focus

Building an academic portfolio is essential for career advancement. Whether you're pursuing promotion or tenure, or simply seeking recognition for your work, your portfolio serves as a comprehensive record of your scholarly achievements. This includes evidence of teaching excellence, service contributions, clinical work, and research. The portfolio highlights your impact in academic medicine and provides a structured way to document your achievements and identify professional growth areas.

10 Recommendations for Building Your Academic Portfolio

- 1 Engage in the Process.** Don't disregard building your portfolio! It can feel overwhelming, but it will pay off. In addition to building your curriculum vitae (CV), it can generate new endeavors for professional growth.
- 2 Start Early.** Begin documenting your work as soon as you join the faculty to avoid scrambling later. This can include keeping a hard copy file of evaluations or gathering digital files/communications in a desktop folder.
- 3 Know the Process.** Each institution has unique promotion criteria and a promotion application process. Rubrics warrant review early in your journey and may follow themes or tracks of focus.
- 4 Set Goals.** Establish short- and long-term academic goals and align them with promotion criteria at your institution. Have a deadline buddy for accountability toward these goals.
- 5 Define Your Teaching Philosophy.** Develop a clear statement that outlines your approach, values, and goals in medical education. This is similar to a personal statement, but reveals your purpose as a faculty member and educator.
- 6 Track Your Teaching Activities.** Keep a log of lectures, workshops, curriculum development, and learner evaluations. Include important details like the number of learners present or the measurable impact of new curricula. Include any unique teaching methods or curriculum designs.
- 7 Document Scholarship.** Save copies of publications, research projects, grants, and conference presentations.
- 8 Highlight Leadership & Service.** Record committee work, mentorship roles, and contributions to professional organizations. Each learner you advise or write a personalized letter for could be considered a mentee; keep a running list. Include brief task forces or project-specific committees.
- 9 Collect Feedback & Evaluations.** Gather letters of recommendation, peer reviews, and learner feedback to demonstrate your impact. This is exceptionally important with lectures or workshops you give.
- 10 Seek Mentorship.** Your local mentors are invaluable, especially those who have gained promotion or are currently seeking promotion. They can review your current portfolio and point out areas for self-development. Most importantly, they can honestly depict the requirements for applying and help you find your institutional guidelines.

As a new faculty member, investing time in your academic portfolio early will pay off later. Take advantage of institutional resources and professional organizations like the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) to guide your journey. With a well-organized portfolio, you'll showcase your achievements and advance confidently in academic medicine.

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