Graduate Teaching Certificate Program

Writing the Reflection Essay

While most of the documents in your ePortfolio should be written for multiple audiences, the primary audience for your reflection essay is the Certification Board, which makes decisions about granting graduate teaching certificates.

There is no single, “right” way to create your reflection document, but keep in mind the following: Your reflection essay should help guide the Certification Board through your ePortfolio, helping them identify the most important issues and learning therein.

The reflection essay is a personal document in which you share your primary teaching interests, the insights you’ve developed in the process of writing syllabi, assignments, your teaching philosophy, etc. Consider the following questions as you write (though keep in mind that it is not necessary to answer all of these questions):

- What was the most striking or surprising thing you learned about yourself and about teaching as you developed your ePortfolio?
- Based on the materials you wrote, what will be your greatest strength as a teacher? Your greatest challenge?
- How did the combination of workshops, experiential learning, syllabi construction, assignment development, and lesson plan creation lead to new understanding about teaching?
- Of which documents are you most proud in your portfolio? Which documents do you see yourself returning to over the years, as you gain more teaching experience?
- What special information would you like the Certification Board to know about you and your future as a teacher?

To develop your reflections, the general length of a reflection essay should be between 2-5 pages.