FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) ABOUT THE PORTFOLIO

This document is intended to supplement the **Portfolio Guidelines** document for rank-eligible full-time faculty members. Please refer to the documents in the Provost's Office Personnel Decisions webpage and the University Handbook (see the Faculty Handbook section C.13 on "Academic Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure") for more information. Questions noted with * have been updated.

Portfolio Submission Timeline

Q1: When is my portfolio due?
A1: The "Calendar for Personnel Decisions" document is available in the Provost's Office Personnel Decisions webpage and is updated each summer. All regular promotion/tenure portfolios are due on October 1. Reappointment portfolios typically are due around the start of the fall or spring semester and depends on the type of review; please check with your college office and/or chair for the college and department deadlines.

Q2: Can I add or modify documents in my portfolio after the submission deadline?
A2: Once a faculty member submits the portfolio in Watermark, materials may not be added, removed, or modified in the portfolio by the applicant.

Portfolio Preparation and Planning

Q3: I am a tenure track or clinical track faculty member preparing my portfolio for reappointment. What guidelines should I use?
A3: The version of the Portfolio Guidelines effective in Fall 2017 is required for faculty members whose promotion-eligible appointments start Fall 2017 or later, Associate Professors applying for promotion, and Clinical Track faculty members submitting portfolios for promotion or reappointment review. Early career faculty members (e.g., Assistant Professor, Clinical Assistant Professor) appointed to their current rank prior to Fall 2017 have the option to select the version of the portfolio guidelines they will use. Reappointment portfolios should be prepared using the same guidelines for promotion and/or tenure portfolios.

Q4: I'm overwhelmed! What suggestions do you have for getting started?
A4: Updating your CV in Watermark Faculty Success is a good starting point, as it helps you review your activities and accomplishments (see Q8). Having a plan to work of small pieces at a time can help the process feel less overwhelming (see the Portfolio Guidelines and Watermark Activities Detailed Guide). The portfolio is an opportunity for you to showcase and reflect on your achievements and contributions. Also, CETL is a resource available to you for individual consultation and to help answer questions.

Electronic Submission of the Portfolio

*Q5: How do I prepare my portfolio for Watermark submission?
A5: Enter activities and upload the associated evidence materials in Watermark Faculty Success. The Activities screen is organized by following the portfolio outline described in the Portfolio Guidelines. All your activities will be used by Watermark to create your CV (see Q8) and activities within the period of evaluation (see Q9) will be used to compile the evidence materials reports for teaching, scholarship and professional activity, and service. You can access Watermark year-round to update your activities and upload your evidence materials. Please see the guides for Watermark Faculty Success and Portfolio Guidelines.

Revision dates: 6.03.25, 7.23.24, 7.12.24, 7.24.23, 7.10.23, 6.23.23, 6.17.22, 6.09.21, 6.08.20

*Q6: How do I submit my portfolio using Watermark Faculty Success? What about the narrative?

A6: Starting in the 2025-26 academic year, all portfolios will be submitted using Watermark Faculty Success. A few weeks before the due date, a portfolio workflow will be created for you to submit your portfolio. You will be notified by email when your workflow opens; you also can access it directly via the "Workflow" tab in Watermark. Within the workflow, you will fill out the application form and upload (as pdf files) your narrative document, any context documents (section B of the portfolio), and any supplementary materials (Part 2 of the portfolio). See the "Preparing and Submitting Your Portfolio Using Watermark " guide for details.

Portfolio Contents

*Q7: Which areas in Watermark Activities correspond to the portfolio sections?

A7: The Activities tab is organized to align with the portfolio outline described in the Portfolio Guidelines, the Provost's Office Personnel Decisions webpage. Please see the "Preparing and Submitting Your Portfolio Using Watermark " guide for a table that maps the portfolio outline to the Watermark Activities screens.

*Q8: Do I need to follow a Curriculum Vita (CV) template? How do I prepare my CV in Watermark?

A8: The CV is generated in Watermark Faculty Success using the Activities you have entered and is formatted using a standard CV ("Vita") report. The CV contents can span across your academic and professional experience, including any activity prior to you joining USI and your current position. Note that the Watermark CV includes a listing of activities and does not include any uploaded evidence materials. You can preview your CV in the Reports tab and selecting the "Vita."

Q9: What is the period of evaluation for the portfolio? What period of activities and materials do I include?

A9: The period of evaluation for promotion review corresponds to the period in which a faculty member is on the tenure track, duration in the Clinical Assistant Professor rank, or the period since the previous promotion or tenure review. For Clinical Track, Instructor Track, and Teaching Track reappointment review (non-promotion), use the duration since the previous reappointment review. The portfolio materials focus on the activities during this period. See Q11-Q13 for additional information on the period for teaching materials.

Q10: What is included in the narrative?

A10: The narrative section includes separate statements for each of the applicable evaluation areas and is up to 15 single-spaced pages in length. The narrative should articulate the significance and impact of the applicant's contributions and accomplishments, as well as include reflection, in the evaluation areas during the period of evaluation. The narrative also should describe the evidence included in the supporting materials (Sections E-G). An effective narrative goes beyond a summary or listing of one's activities by describing the relevance and contributions of one's work to USI, the community, and their discipline/profession. It should help reviewers understand one's growth and trajectory based on items included in the CV and evidence materials.

Also, in the teaching narrative, discuss how the applicant, in one's teaching, helps foster a culture of free inquiry, free expression, and intellectual diversity; introduces students to scholarly works from a variety of political or ideological frameworks; and refrains from subjecting students to political or ideological views and opinions that are not related to one's academic discipline or assigned course. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines Section D and Faculty Handbook Section C.13 for guidance.

Q11: What is the period for teaching materials to include in my portfolio?

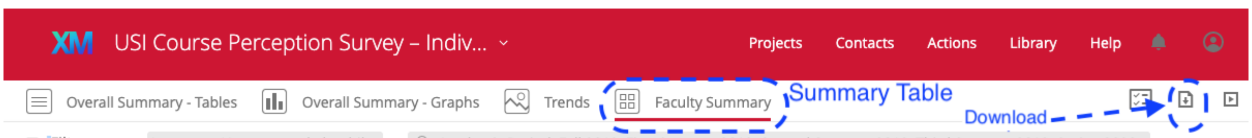
A11: Courses taught during the period of evaluation (see Q9) or the period starting Fall 2019, whichever is shorter, is included in portfolios submitted during the 2025-2026 academic year. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines Section E for details.

Q12: Do I include all course syllabi from all semesters in the portfolio?

A12: The most recent syllabus for each course taught during the period of teaching materials (see FAQ Q11) should be included in Section E.2 of the portfolio. Additional versions of the syllabus may be included if a course has been taught in multiple modes (such as face-to-face, online, hybrid) or to evidence topics described in the narrative (for example, the syllabus before and after a course redesign or adaptations due to the Covid-19 pandemic). Note that Section E.2 also includes evidence of teaching and learning contributions, such as course materials. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines Section E for additional guidance.

*Q13: What course evaluation information do I include in the portfolio?

A13: Section E.3 should include summary tables of the CPS scores from the period of evaluation or the period starting Fall 2019, whichever is shorter. The CPS summary table is available to view and download in the “Faculty Summary” page of the “Course Perception Survey - Individual Instructor” dashboard in Qualtrics. Additional analysis of the CPS results developed by the faculty member, such as tables or graphs that focus on specific areas, may be included in Section E.3. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines Section E.3 for additional information.



Q14: Do I include the CPS detailed reports in the portfolio?

A14: No, for faculty members who will be reviewed for reappointment, promotion and/or tenure, copies of the applicable CPS reports (which include the scores and open-ended comments) by course/semester do not need to be submitted in the portfolio. Review committees will be given online access to the view the CPS course reports for the period of evaluation (except for the semesters CPS results are not required due the Covid-19 pandemic). The provided CPS reports do not count towards the 500-page limit for Part 1 of the portfolio. Note that university-wide transition to the CPS in Qualtrics started in Fall 2019; thus, the previous Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) reports are not included in portfolios.

If you choose to include any CPS information from semesters impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g., Spring 2020, Summer 2020, and Fall 2020), the documents may be included in Section E.3 or Part 2. Separate summary tables of CPS average scores should be included in Section E.3 of the portfolio. Please see Q13 for details.

Q15: What are examples of advising and mentoring activity?

A15: Student advising and mentoring materials are included in Section E5 of the portfolio. These activities typically are student-centered and occur outside of a course, such as academic advising, informal advising, mentoring, writing letters of recommendations, or accompanying students to conferences or competitions. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines section E.5 and the Faculty Handbook Section C.13 on “Academic Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure”. Additionally, the impact to students of these activities should be described in the Teaching narrative.

Q16: As an Associate Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, Teaching Associate Professor, or Advanced Instructor, do I include teaching or service activities or works that were published, presented, or completed during the year while my previous portfolio was under review for promotion and/or tenure?
A16: Evidence that was not included in the previous promotion and/or tenure review is included in the current period of evaluation and thus may be included in the portfolio. For example, a faculty member who was promoted to Associate Professor in fall 2020 would include their activities and evidence materials starting fall 2019 (since their previous portfolio was reviewed in fall 2019-spring 2020).

Q17: What are examples of professional activity?
A17: Professional activity (sometimes referred to as professional service) is part of the scholarship criterion and typically uses one's expertise and contributes to their discipline and profession; activities that contribute to one's professional growth may be included. Example activity include membership and leadership in professional organizations, conference organizing committee, or an editorial board, or serving as reviewer/juror for conference proposals, publications, creative works, or grant proposals. These activities typically are listed as professional service in the CV. Example documentation include email invitations to serve/review, webpage or programs, or other acknowledgements. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines section F.2 and Faculty Handbook Section C.13. Additionally, the contributions and impact to one's discipline/profession should be described in the Scholarship and Professional Activity narrative. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines section D.

Q18: How do I include service or outreach activities in the portfolio?
A18: Example documentation of university service and community service/outreach include email invitations, meeting minutes, reports resulting from the service, webpages, programs, or other acknowledgements. Community service should result in the promotion of the University's objectives through public service. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines section F.2 and the section on "Academic Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure" in the Faculty Handbook.
Additionally, the contributions and impact to the university or local/state community should be described in the Service narrative. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines section D.

Q19: Do I include copies of past performance evaluations, reappointment reviews, and faculty activity reports (FARs) in the portfolio?
A19: No, these documents are not part of the portfolio documents. The narrative and supporting materials sections may be used to describe and evidence progression and development based on feedback and reflection. Please refer to the Portfolio Guidelines sections D. and H. and the Faculty Handbook Section C.13 on "Academic Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure" for guidance.

*Q20: Some sections of the portfolio do not apply to me. Do I skip them?
A20: If an area listed in Watermark Activities does not apply to you, you can skip it. The CV and evidence reports generated by Watermark include only the headings with associated activity entries.

Considerations Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Q21: An accepted conference presentation or creative activity was not presented due to COVID-19 cancellations. How do I represent this in my portfolio?
A21: Accepted presentations can be included in the appropriate section of the CV with a brief note to indicate that the conference, exhibit, etc. was cancelled due to COVID-19. For example, please refer to the APA style (or appropriate citation style) for canceled conference presentations. Additionally, these

research or creative activities may be described in the narrative and evidenced in the Section F. if this helps demonstrate your current/recent area of scholarship or creative activity.

Q22: Do I need to submit the form(s) that describes the one-year extension to the tenure/promotion review timeline, provided in May 2020 and May 2021?
A22: Submit the form if you have opted-out of the one-year extension(s). In general, you will want to document whether your review timeline has changed due to disruptions associated with COVID-19. If the form is not submitted by the deadline, then each one-year extension to tenure/promotion and reappointment review timeline will be automatically applied.

Q23: Can I change my mind later regarding the automatic extension or opt-out due to the pandemic?
A23: The form submitted by the deadline is the only opportunity to opt-out of the review timeline extension due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q24: What is a COVID Impact Statement?
A24: A COVID Impact Statement is an optional document, up to 2 pages, written by the faculty member to document the ways one's faculty work has been directly affected by COVID-19 pandemic. Recognizing that the pandemic has impacted faculty workload and professional opportunities in different ways, the statement can help provide context to reviewers by describing the effects of the pandemic on one's performance and contributions in the evaluation areas. The statement should not include any personal information or reasons for any approved leaves related to Covid. Please refer to the COVID Impact Statement Guidelines for details.

Q25: Is a COVID Impact Statement required?
A25: No, it is optional document. The presence or absence of a COVID Impact statement by itself should not be considered a positive or negative by individuals reviewing the portfolio. If you choose to provide this optional statement, include it in Section B.2.

Do you have additional questions?

We are here to help clarify the process. Please contact Amy Chan Hilton (Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning, CETL) at amy.chanhilton@usi.edu or 812.461.5476.

Please see the Provost's Office Personnel Decisions and Watermark webpages for resources on:

- Portfolio Guidelines
- COVID impact statement guidelines
- Preparing and Submitting Your Portfolio Using Watermark Faculty Success
- Reviewing Portfolios in Watermark Faculty Success