Doctor of Philosophy in Theology
Portfolio Manual
09/20/2017¹

Villanova University
Department of Theology and Religious Studies

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1 The Portfolio

The Portfolio is an academic archive, a comprehensive, organized and cumulative electronic record of the breadth and depth of a student’s accomplishments over time in coursework, research, teaching, and other academic and professional experiences in the program. The student’s continuation in the doctoral program is based on three reviews of the materials included in the Portfolio. In these reviews, doctoral faculty assess the student’s accomplishments and goals and discuss with the student possible modifications or additional work needed to facilitate continued progress in the program.

2 Learning Outcomes

2.1 First (Integration) Portfolio

The First Portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to

a) compare and contrast research methods in the three areas of non-specialization;
b) identify and contextualize core aspects of the relationships between faith and culture;
c) evaluate theological knowing in the Augustinian tradition as both speculative and practical, and
   distinct in its emphasis on the union of mind and heart; and
   d) express him/herself clearly, coherently, and persuasively in writing and speaking.

2.2 Second (Synthesis) Portfolio

The Second Portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to

a) examine his or her position in relation to the area in general and to research methods in the area
   in particular;
b) integrate his or her position into a coherent framework of understanding;
c) identify and explain the major research trends in the area;
d) analyze the relationship between faith and culture from the perspective of the area;
e) advance a vision for inquiry in the Augustinian tradition as both speculative and practical; and
f) express him/herself clearly, coherently, and persuasively in writing and speaking.

2.3 Third (Evaluation) Portfolio

The Third Portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to

a) critically evaluate his or her professional growth and development in his or her areas of speciali-
   zation;
b) examine his or her intended contributions to theological inquiry in the Augustinian tradition; and
   c) formulate a cogent account of his or her vision of him/herself as a member of the professional
      community of his or her areas of specialization.

3 First (Integration) Portfolio

The First Portfolio Review serves as integrative examination for all students completing the first phase
of the doctoral program. The materials in the Portfolio document the student’s general, broad knowledge
in three areas of non-specialization through coursework and other academic experiences in the program. Before taking the First Portfolio Review, full-time students must have completed three semesters of residence; part-time students must have completed, or be in the process of completing, all M.A. or M.T.S. degree requirements. In addition, students who register for the Review must be in Good Academic Standing.

3.1 Review Board

6. In the semester preceding the Review, the student establishes a Board consisting of one faculty member from each of the three areas of non-specialization. The Doctoral Program Committee appoints a facilitator who moderates the Review Meeting. The Board must be constituted formally by the Friday preceding the fall semester recess.

3.2 Registration and Scheduling

7. The Review is administered during the week following the spring semester recess. Any variation in this schedule must be approved by the Doctoral Program Committee. Students submit their Portfolio electronically on the penultimate Friday preceding the official spring semester recess.

8. Full-time students register formally for the Review no later than the second week of their fourth semester in residence. Part-time students register no later than the second week of classes in their last semester in which they are completing requirements for the M.A. or M.T.S. degrees. Along with the registration form students submit the date and time of the Review. It is the students’ responsibility to contact Board members to identify a date and time for the Review. Once a date and time have been identified, students contact the Administrative Assistant to secure a location.

3.3 Review Meeting

9. A Review Meeting serves as the platform for students to explicate the material included in their portfolios. The student uses the stated Learning Outcomes of the Review as the guide for preparing for the Meeting. Students meet with their Review Boards for no longer than 70 minutes. The Review begins with a Portfolio Presentation by the student (20 minutes in length). The following conversation probes the extent to which students meet the Learning Outcomes of the Review.

10. An appointed Facilitator initiates each step of the Review Meeting, keeps the process on track, and facilitates the dialogue between student and board members.

11. At the end of the Portfolio Review Meeting, each Board member completes an evaluation of the student’s performance with respect to the Learning Outcomes of the Review. The evaluation is based on a common rubric and is graded pass/fail solely on the merits of the submitted materials and the performance in the Meeting. For continuation in the Ph.D. program, a passing grade is required. The Facilitator submits the evaluations by individual Board members, together with the First Portfolio Review Feedback Form to the Adviser for a signature. The Administrative Assistant sends the result of the Review to the Office of Graduate Studies, which officially notifies the student.
3.4 Failure of the Review

12. In the event of a failing grade, the student may request from the Adviser to retake the Review. In such a case, the Doctoral Program Committee appoints a new Review Board. The final decision will be based upon the verdict of the newly constituted Board. The following conditions apply:

13. Students may not retake the Review a second time if they fail to submit their Portfolios by the deadline without prior notification of a serious situation that prevents them from submitting the Portfolio; submit incomplete Portfolios; or fail the Portfolio Review Meeting by unanimous decision of the Board. In these cases, paragraph 15 applies.

14. A student who is permitted to re-take the Review Meeting must do so during the same semester by arrangement with the Board members. The re-take will be scheduled no earlier than one week after receiving the grade and no later than during the penultimate week of regular classes.

15. A second failure to pass the Portfolio Review results in the termination from the doctoral degree program (see the relevant Office of Graduate Studies Policy). The Doctoral Program Committee will recommend whether a terminal M.A. or M.T.S. degree may be awarded.

16. Students who violate the University’s code of Academic Integrity in any part of their Portfolio fail the whole Portfolio Review and will be handled by the University’s disciplinary procedures.

3.5 Portfolio Materials

3.5.1 Section 1: Student Information
  
a) Current Curriculum Vita.
  b) Current unofficial Villanova transcript.

3.5.2 Section 2: Progress Reports
  
c) Evidence of fulfillment of one language requirement (unless otherwise specified).
  d) Self-assessment narrative: year 1.
  e) Evaluation by the Adviser: year 1.

3.5.3 Section 3: Essays
  
f) Analytical Essay, 1000 words in length. A critical examination of the student’s role and place in his or her coursework and profession, taking into consideration his or her original responses to the Application Essay prompts formulated at the time of applying for admission to the program.
  g) A copy of the original Application Essay from the admissions file.
  h) Integrative Essay. A scholarly essay, 4000 words in length, which thematicizes faith engaging culture. In the essay, the student evaluates the ways in which the various pieces of her or his educational program (courses, readings, papers, colloquia, service experiences, etc.) fit together with the program’s emphases on sound research methods; interdisciplinarity and integration; cultural contexts; the relevance of theology in today’s world; and theological knowing in the Augustinian tradition as both speculative and practical, and distinctive in its emphasis on the union of mind
and heart. Each student writes the essay with a special focus on the three areas of non-specialization.

3.5.4 Section 5: Course Documentation (Areas of Non-Specialization)

i) One artifact (textual form or another medium) from each course taken in the three Areas of non-specialization. Students admitted with transfer credits include the approved Course Equivalency Form.

3.5.5 Section 7: Research Documentation (Optional)

j) One of the following items:

   i. Scholarly manuscript (author or co-author) published or accepted for publication, which may include a book chapter.
   ii. Comprehensive and critical literature review published or accepted.
   iii. Paper proposed for, or presented at, a professional conference.

4 Second (Synthesis) Portfolio

17. The Second Portfolio Review serves as qualifying examination for all students completing the second phase of the doctoral program. The materials in the Second Portfolio are reflective of the students’ overall broad and deep knowledge of their areas of specialization acquired from reading, courses work, research, and other academic experiences in the program. Students who register for the Review must be in the process of completing all but the final course in each of their areas of specialization. Full-time students normally meet this requirement in the sixth semester of residence. In addition, all students must be in good academic standing.

4.1 Review Board

18. In the semester preceding the Review, the student establishes two Review Boards, each consisting of three faculty members of the core faculty of his or her chosen Area of Specialization. The Doctoral Program Committee appoints a facilitator who moderates the Review Meeting. The Board must be constituted by the last Friday preceding the spring semester recess.

4.2 Registration and Scheduling

19. The Review is administered during the first two weeks of classes in the fall semester. Any variation in this schedule must be approved by the Doctoral Program Committee. Students submit their Portfolios electronically on the first Friday of August. All members of the area faculty will have the opportunity to read a student’s portfolio.

20. Students register for the Review no later than April 1 of the semester preceding the Review. Along with the registration form students submit the names of three faculty members serving on each of the two Review Boards and the dates and times of the Reviews. It is the students’ responsibility to contact all Board members to identify a date and time for the Reviews. Once dates and times have been identified, students contact the Administrative Assistant to secure a location.
4.3 Review Meeting

21. Two Review Meetings, one in each of the student’s areas of specialization, serve as platforms for students to explicate the material included in their portfolios. The student uses the stated Learning Outcomes of the Review as the guide in preparation for the Review Meeting.

22. Students meet with each Review Board for no longer than 120 minutes. The review begins with a Portfolio Presentation by the student (30 minutes in length). The following conversation probes the extent to which she or he meets the Learning Outcomes of the Review. An appointed Facilitator initiates each step of the Review Meeting, keeps the process on track, and facilitates the dialogue between among student and board members. At the end of each Meeting, all Board members complete evaluations of the student’s performance with respect to these Learning Outcomes. The evaluation is based on a common rubric and is graded pass/fail solely on the merits of submitted materials and the performance in the Review Meeting.

23. For continuation in the Ph.D. program, the student must pass both Review Meetings. The Facilitator submits the evaluations by individual Board members, together with the Second Portfolio Review Feedback Form, to the Adviser for a signature. The Administrative Assistant sends the result of the Portfolio Review to the Office of Graduate Studies, which officially notifies the student.

4.4 Failure of the Review

24. In the event of a failing grade, the student may request from the Adviser to retake the Review. In such a case, the Doctoral Program Committee may appoint new Review Board members. The final decision will be based upon the verdict of this second Review Board. The following conditions apply:

25. Students may not retake the Review a second time if they fail to submit their Portfolios by the deadline without prior notification of a serious situation that prevents them from submitting the Portfolio; submit incomplete Portfolios; or fail one or both Portfolio Review Meetings by unanimous decision of the respective Board(s). In these cases, the student will be dismissed from the program (see the relevant Office of Graduate Studies Policy).

26. A student who is permitted to re-take the Review must do so during the same semester by arrangement with the Board members. All re-takes will be scheduled during the official week of final examination. A second failure to pass the Portfolio Review results in the termination from the doctoral degree program (see the relevant Office of Graduate Studies Policy). Paragraph 16 also applies.

4.5 Portfolio Materials

a) All elements included in the First Portfolio Review.

4.5.1 Additions to Section 1: Student Information

b) Current Curriculum Vita.

c) Current unofficial Villanova transcript.

4.5.2 Additions to Section 2: Progress Reports

d) Self-assessment narrative: years 2 and 3.
e) Evaluation by the Adviser: years 2 and 3.
f) First Portfolio Review Feedback Form.

4.5.3 Additions to Section 3: Essays
g) Two Area-Knowledge Evidence Essays, one for each area of specialization, each 4000 words in length. Each scholarly essay demonstrates breadth of familiarity with, and depth of understanding of, the literature in the area (texts read for courses and selected from the Area’s official reading list); examines the students’ position in relation to the area and to research trends and methods in the area; integrates their perspectives into a coherent framework of understanding; analyzes the relationship between faith and culture from the perspective of the area; and advances a vision for inquiry in the Augustinian tradition as both speculative and practical.

4.5.4 Section 4: Area Knowledge Reading Lists
h) Two reading lists, one for each area of specialization, each consisting of three parts:
i. Part 1: A list of all texts read for courses in the student’s area of specialization.
ii. Part 2: A list of texts from the Area’s official Reading List identified collaboratively, yet individually, with each of the three Review Board members. Official Area Reading Lists may be obtained from the Administrative Assistant. Procedure: During the semester in which the student registers for the Portfolio Review, before April 1, the student collaborates with each Board member on selecting up to three texts (per Board member) from the official reading list that complement the texts the student read for his or her classes.
iii. Part 3: Up to three texts of the student’s choosing.

4.5.5 Section 6: Course Documentation (Areas of Specialization)
i) One artifact (textual form or another medium) from each course taken in the two Areas of specialization.

4.5.6 Additions to Section 7: Research Documentation
j) Two (cumulative!) of the following items:
i. Scholarly manuscript (author or co-author) published or accepted for publication, which may include a book chapter.
ii. Comprehensive and critical literature review published or accepted.
iii. Paper proposed for, or presented at, a professional conference.

5 Third (Evaluation) Portfolio

The Third Portfolio Review serves as the final review of the students’ accomplishments before submitting their dissertations. Students who submit their portfolios for the Review must be enrolled in the Theological Education Formation Program and have taught two undergraduate courses. Full-time students normally meet this requirement after completing the tenth semester of residence. In addition, all students must be in good academic standing.
5.1 Review Board, Scheduling, and Review of Student Learning

28. The Review is administered during the first two weeks of classes in the fall semester. Any variation in this schedule must be approved by the Department Chair. Students submit their Portfolios electronically by August 15. All members of the doctoral faculty will have the opportunity to read the student’s Portfolio.

29. The Doctoral Program Committee (minus the Department Chair) constitutes the Review Board, chaired by the Adviser. The Board examines the student’s Portfolio and probes the extent to which she or he meets the Learning Outcomes of the Review. All Board members complete evaluations of the student’s performance with respect to these Outcomes. The evaluation is based on a common rubric and is graded pass/fail solely on the merits of submitted materials.

30. For continuation in the Ph.D. program, the student must pass the Review by majority decision of the Board. The Adviser submits the evaluations by individual Board members, together with the Third Portfolio Review Feedback Form, to the Administrative Assistant who sends the result of the Portfolio Review to the Office of Graduate Studies, which officially notifies the student.

5.2 Failure of the Review

31. In the event of a failing grade, the student may request from the Department Chair to retake the Review. In such a case, the Department Chair appoints a new Board to examine materials. The final decision will be based upon the verdict of this new Board. If that decision is negative, the student may not retake the Portfolio Review a second time and the student will be dismissed from the program (see the relevant Office of Graduate Studies Policy). The following conditions apply:

32. Students may not retake the Portfolio Review a second time if they fail to submit their Portfolios by the deadline without prior notification of a serious situation that prevents them from submitting the Portfolio; submit incomplete Portfolios; or fail the Review by majority decision of the Board. In these cases, the student will be dismissed from the program (see the relevant Office of Graduate Studies Policy). Paragraph 16 also applies.

5.3 Portfolio Materials

a) All elements included in the Second Portfolio Review.

5.3.1 Additions to Section 1: Student Information

b) Current Curriculum Vita.

c) Current unofficial Villanova transcript.

5.3.2 Additions to Section 2: Progress Reports

d) Self-assessment narrative: years 4 and 5.
e) Evaluation by the Adviser: years 4 and 5.
f) Evidence of fulfillment of all language requirements.
g) Second Portfolio Review Feedback Form.
5.3.3 Additions to Section 3: Essays

j) Evaluative Essay, 1000 words in length. A critical evaluation of sections six through nine of the portfolio explaining how the material included in these sections is indicative of the student’s professional growth and development in his or her areas of specialization; his or her professional goals; and intended contributions to theological inquiry in the Augustinian tradition.

5.3.4 Additions to Section 6: Course Documentation (Areas of Specialization)

k) One artifact (textual form or another medium) from each course taken in the two Areas of specialization since the last Portfolio Review.

5.3.5 Additions to Section 7: Research Documentation

l) Four (cumulative!) of the following items:

i. Scholarly manuscript (author or co-author) published or accepted for publication, which may include a book chapter.
ii. Comprehensive and critical literature review published or accepted.
iii. Paper proposed for, or presented at, a professional conference.


5.3.6 Section 8: Dissertation Documentation

n) Original Dissertation Proposal.
o) Revised Dissertation Proposal (if applicable).

5.3.7 Section 9: Education Documentation

p) Statement of Teaching Philosophy.
q) Undergraduate Course Syllabus.
r) Assignments.
s) Sample lesson plans.
t) Rubrics.
u) Teaching observation logs.
v) Teaching evaluations.

6 Portfolio Material Table of Comparison