



THE 7 SECRETS TO PUTTING TOGETHER AN EFFECTIVE PORTFOLIO

1. Review the personal portfolio instructions and the sample personal portfolio on the website. See a model for how it can be done. You want to be thorough, listing as much relevant learning experience as possible — relevant, that is, to the course work required in the program.
2. Review the list of required courses. First determine what educational or other workshop type training experience you've had that might go toward fulfilling that course's requirements. Then brainstorm all of your other training or professional experience that might apply toward those courses. Remember, the University is on your side. IUPS wants to honor you with credit for the enormous relevant learning you've done in your work and life. That is part of its outlook on prospective students. We're on the same side. And remember that it is possible to be assigned partial credit for relevant learning. So even if you don't have a ton of experience in a given area, you might have enough to get at least 1 credit.
3. Electives. As you may have noticed, the electives listed are called "Suggested Electives". That list is in no way comprehensive. For instance, there are numerous coach training courses out there that could qualify for credit. So follow the same process we described for the required courses, but for electives, include all of the other training you've had that might qualify for elective course credit. And make note of that on your portfolio. Should the Admissions Committee not grant credit for some of those experiences, you will have the opportunity to follow up with your mentor regarding revisiting those items prior to your Academic Study Plan being finalized.
4. Think about key books and video trainings you've read or watched outside of a formal training setting. Certain relevant books and videos have been part of gaining expertise in your field. Listing them might assist the Admissions Committee in getting an idea of the breadth and depth of your experience.
5. Portfolios that are very wordy can be less effective. Don't make the Admissions Committee wade through so much material that she'll overlook what is truly relevant and miss an opportunity to assign credit for your experience. Rather, make each item brief and concise so that it is easy for the Admissions Committee to see the essence of the training or experience you're writing about.
6. Before you send in your personal portfolio, meet with a significant other or someone who knows of your work and educational experience. Ask them for feedback regarding how they see you might have experience that might apply to the required or elective courses. Sometimes those other than ourselves can see things we don't always recognize in ourselves.
7. Remember that credit granted serves to lower the cost of your tuition. But make it real. Don't invent training to lower tuition or shorten the time it takes to earn your Ph.D. You want to earn it, not cheat yourself out of engaging in this life changing process.