

**E-DOL (Electronic Documentation of Learning)  
Its Purposes and Place in the MT Program**

**Addendum to Year 1 and 2 Handbooks  
2008-2009  
(Student Teacher and Partner Teacher Version)**

**Division of Teacher Preparation  
Faculty of Education  
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## **E-DOL (Electronic Documentation of Learning) Its Purposes and Place in the MT Program**

The implementation guidelines for e-DOL and e-Portfolio included in this addendum to the handbooks are intended to assist instructors, students, and partner teachers adapt the use of technology for the purposes of the documentation of learning as outlined for each of the four semesters of the MT Program.

As a teacher education program, we have committed to the requirement that all students in our program have both access to and make use of electronic means of documenting learning experiences, and developing in electronic form, a summative assessment-oriented portfolio as part of the exit requirements for the program. This is an initiative supported by grants from Alberta Education, whose interest was in broadening the application of ICT outcomes in beginning teachers' repertoire of professional knowledge, and by the University of Calgary in support of innovative approaches to fostering students' experiences of inquiry-based learning.

An essential aspect of learning pedagogical practice is the ability to account for one's learning, to be able to document, represent, interpret and narrate with rich examples and artifacts evidence of observation and practice...this is a foundational quality of reflective, inquiry-based learning on which the MT Program is based: to learn from practice, diverse experiences, conversations, research, and observations, and to imbue those activities with meaning and understanding through developing richly textured, creative, and critical forms of documentation.

As an aspect of a student's experience in the MT Program, there are a number of reasons why we attend systematically to the use of ICT in a student teacher's program. First is the requirement that graduating teacher education students meet *Alberta Education's Teaching Quality Standard Applicable to the Provision of Basic Education* for students graduating from Alberta's teacher education programs. The standards include seventeen statements—KSA's (Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes)—which describe in general terms the professional attributes and dispositions required for interim certification in Alberta. In relation to an understanding of technology in teaching and learning, the standards document states the following:

*As situations warrant, teachers who hold an Interim Professional Certificate are expected to demonstrate consistently that they understand: (j) the functions of traditional and electronic teaching/learning technologies. They know how to use and how to engage students in using these technologies to present and deliver content, communicate effectively with others, find and secure information, research, word process, manage information, and keep records.*

The KSA's are mandatory in the sense that graduating students must be able to attest to knowledge, say of technology as described above, and demonstrate capacities that meet the KSA's, and even exceed them in what is required.

In addition to the formal certification requirements for integrating technology use in MT Learning experiences, there are important philosophical and pedagogic reasons for both implementing and monitoring the use of electronic forms of documentation, in addition to and with other important

forms of knowledge and practice. Underlying the approaches to preparation that a teacher education might adopt, however, there are two paramount questions for each student in the program: *how are student teachers best prepared for beginning teaching, and how might students manifest their understandings of the complex forms of knowledge, pedagogic skills, and dispositions required for teaching.*

First, there is ample research to suggest that any form of learning that will extend to practical application and integration into practice depends on a student teacher's own confidence and comfort in using particular forms of communication and teaching. To put it simply, there is little point in simply learning *about* technology, if one is not practically conversant and creative in integrating technology into his or her own curriculum, teaching and learning practices. Secondly, *an essential aspect of learning pedagogical practice is the ability to account for one's learning, to be able to document, represent, interpret and narrate with rich examples and artifacts evidence of observation and practice. This is a foundational quality of reflective, inquiry-based learning on which the MT Program is based: to learn from practice, diverse experiences, conversations, research, and observations, and to imbue those activities with meaning and understanding through developing richly textured, creative, and critical forms of documentation.*

The foregoing, in abbreviated form, describes the purpose of **journaling** and why, a responsibility of students in the field seminars, for example, requires students to deepen their observations in classrooms, reflect on pedagogical and learning experiences, and become thoughtful, critical and judicious about documenting and demonstrating evolving understandings of learning, teaching, curriculum and one's own subjectivity as a future teacher.

Of course, such intentions can be achieved in multiple formats, including more traditional paper and pencil journals, and in no way are we discounting the choice to continue journaling in such formats. However, the MT Program is mandating, for reasons outlined above, that at least a significant part of students' experience of journaling and communicating and conversing with their field advisors, partner teachers and each other should be through the e-DOL format. Our experience to date with our pilot groups is that the use of an electronic format opens up creative possibilities for documenting experience in diverse ways, and expanding the possibilities for meaningful communication.

The last point, it must be emphasized, has to do with how we enrich experiences of inquiry and in ways that intentionally focus on the themes and content of each semester of the MT Program. Hence, our move to encouraging creative and flexible use of a learning technology like e-DOL is not about learning technology per se, but rather exploring—indeed inquiring into—how various modes of expression and communication available to us can be used in the service of enhanced communication and representation of learning. It is with this thinking that we hope that all our students will exceed what is required by the KSA's and the Memorandum of Understanding.

In inviting our faculty and students to participate in this important venture, it is not the intention to simply implement a technology, but instead to invite each instructor and his or her students and their partner teachers to inquire about how to best learn practice, how to understand that, and how to provide documentation and evidence of that understanding. As part of that process we invite you as well to document your experiences and to provide ongoing feedback on what can make e-DOL work in ways that serve the underlying pillars of the MT Program: *that learning to become a teacher is inquiry-based, learner-focused, and field-oriented.*

I welcome and invite your participation and your ongoing contributions to our collective understanding of teaching and learning in the program, and to learn to use technology creatively in the service of your own learning and that of the children and students with whom you will be working in schools.

Hans Smits, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean

***The following document provides details about how e-DOL is situated in the MT Program, and how the content and focus is related thematically to each semester of the program. It is offered to guide your implementation of e-DOL as you and your instructor move through each of the semesters. The document represents the product of an ongoing inquiry into how we might best begin to implement electronic forms of documentation and representation of learning. As such, it is intended as a guide for further inquiry, rather than as a set of outcomes etched in stone. The suggestions that follow serve as an invitation to and basis for further and ongoing inquiry, including how we might best develop formats that work well for you in the practice of developing good examples of pedagogic practices, and your own understandings of them. The document should be read and used with that spirit in mind.***

#### **INTRODUCTION (for each description of the semesters that follow)**

The electronic documentation of learning (eDOL) project became an integral part of the MT program in Fall 2007. It was conceived as a way to have faculty members, partner teachers and MT students understand how the MT components come together, to have students recognize their learning, and to have other educators, including employers, understand how well the program prepares future educators. When the student creates his/her blog, this becomes the field journal, which is a source of content for the electronic portfolios (which may be thought of a set of hyperlinked web pages). Electronic portfolios are required for Semester 2, Themes of Teaching in Semester 3, and Professional Portfolio in Semester 4). Other journals (blogs) that are created across the four semesters of MT program and the portfolios constitute the component parts of eDOL.

eDOL helps students make visible the work they are doing, learn from it, and document it in a way that helps to support ongoing professional development. eDOL helps students develop critical reflection and learn that ICT is an integral part of teaching and learning. eDOL spans the four semesters of the MT program, providing an electronic journal environment, a personal learning object repository and e-portfolios. The following guidelines offer suggestions as to how to incorporate eDOL into your learning in the four semesters of the MT Program.

***A critical requirement is that the content of e-DOL (and journaling in any form) reflects the required thematic content for each semester. For example, for Year 1 Field, see pp. 32-56, and particular pp. 37-40, which outlines the kinds of activities that students should be engaged with in field experiences, and the chart on p. 45-46, which provided categories for what ought to be documented through e-DOL.***

## SEMESTER 1 – Field Experiences - Learning and Teaching

eDOL is the journaling environment for inquiry into practice. Each student is expected to maintain an ongoing field journal and invite their field advisor and partner teacher to contribute, respond, and read their work.

eDOL can also be used by the field instructor as a discussion forum for the class by creating a class blog and inviting all students into the conversation. Details about how to do this are covered in the eDOL user manual (<http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).

eDOL requires students to provide evidence of their growing ability:

- To create meaning and understanding from significant field experiences
- To begin to understand how theory and practice are linked
- To begin to understand how learning and teaching are linked
- To begin to see that teaching is more than technique

By the end of Semester 1, students should be able to:

- Read the field as a living text – collecting artifacts and reflections
- Recognize and collect critical incidents and reflect on them
- Attend to other related criteria as specified in the MT Handbook

Activities during this semester include:

- Creating and maintaining a field journal
- Participating in online discussions with partner teacher and field advisor
- Participating in online discussions with classmates
- Drawing significant understandings from across the MT program to support field journal entries
- Beginning to document the classroom environment and the types of relationships that are emerging
- Selecting issues from the journal entries and sharing them with the larger group for discussion / elaboration

Instructor Responsibilities Unique to eDOL

- Selective and judicious responses to journal entries: Expectations about the number and length of responses should be developed in understanding with the students, acknowledging that the blog and learning documentation belongs to each student. It is expected that instructors will read and respond, adding materials, links, and other support when most pedagogically appropriate, that is, when entries and documentation provide opportunities for deeper learning and conversation, and move into becoming more thematically-oriented.
- Introduce the core principles of digital documentation and the ethics surrounding it in the classroom (see Digital Documentation and FOIP in the Pedagogical Supports - <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).

## SEMESTER 2 – Field Experience - Curriculum Content & Contexts

eDOL is the journaling environment for inquiry into practice. Each student is expected to maintain an ongoing field journal and invite their field advisor and partner teacher to contribute, respond, and read their work.

eDOL can also be used by the field instructor as a discussion forum for the class by creating a class blog and inviting all students into the conversation. Details about how to do this are covered in the eDOL user manual (<http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).

eDOL requires students to provide evidence of their:

- Deepening understandings of significant field experiences
- Deepening understandings of how theory and practice are linked
- Knowledge of key concepts and theories of curriculum and how they link to classroom practice
- Emerging approach to teaching

By the end of Semester 2, students should be able to:

- Draw on theory and practice – documenting classroom experiences and collecting related artifacts that illuminate core concepts
- Begin to analyze journal entries and documentation for emerging questions, issues and themes
- Recognize and collect critical incidents and reflect on them
- Attend to other related criteria as specified in the Handbook

Activities during this semester include:

- Maintaining e-Journal and participating in online discussion with partner teacher and field advisor
- Drawing significant understandings from across the MT program to support field journal entries
- Drawing on journal entries to inform Curriculum Inquiry Case A & B
- Drawing from all sources of information from Semesters 1 and 2 to develop a summative, reflective e-portfolio.

Instructor Responsibilities Unique to eDOL

- Review the core principles of digital documentation and the ethics surrounding it in the classroom (see Digital Documentation and FOIP in the Pedagogical Supports - <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).
- Selective and judicious responses to journal entries: Expectations about the number and length of responses should be developed in understanding with the students, acknowledging that the blog and learning documentation belongs to each student. It is expected that instructors will read and respond, adding materials, links, and other support when most pedagogically appropriate, that is, when entries and documentation provide opportunities for deeper learning and conversation, and move into becoming more thematically-oriented.
- Encourage students to create blogs that illuminate text through the incorporation of relevant images (see Digital Documentation in the Pedagogical Supports - <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>). This is a critical piece of Semester 2 as students will need to draw on these images as well as these skills for their e-portfolios.

### SEMESTER 3 – Field & Case - PRAXIS

eDOL is the journaling environment for inquiry into practice. Each student is expected to maintain an ongoing field journal and invite their field advisor and partner teacher to contribute, respond, and read their work.

eDOL can also be used by the field instructor as a discussion forum for the class by creating a class blog and inviting all students into the conversation. Details about how to do this are covered in the eDOL user manual (<http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).

eDOL requires students to provide evidence of their ability to:

- Build on their experiences of becoming a teacher through thoughtful practice and reflection on that practice
- Theorize about the experience and what it means to become a teacher
- Understand the relationship and resulting tensions of teaching
- Understand the contexts created through the interactions of teacher / student / curriculum
- Bring significant field experiences into the case tutorial as living cases
- Document their learning in significant and appropriate ways

By the end of Semester 3, students should be able to:

- Draw on theory and practice
- Provide evidence of the ability to take on the responsibilities of a beginning teacher
- Continue to document classroom experiences, collect related artifacts that illuminate core concepts
- Construct a portfolio that illustrates their emerging themes of teaching (see handbook – Themes of Teaching statement)
- Attend to other related criteria as specified in the Handbook

Activities during this semester include:

- Maintaining field journal and participating in online discussion with partner teacher and field advisor
- Drawing significant understandings from across the MT program to support field journal entries
- Drawing from journals to support living cases
- Drawing from journals and other sources for Themes of Teaching statement which takes the form of an ePortfolio) illustrated with digital documentation from the previous and current journals and supported by excerpts from journals, readings, references, and discussions. Mini manuals are available from <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol> to support the development of the ePortfolio.

Instructor Responsibilities Unique to eDOL

- Review the core principles of digital documentation and the ethics surrounding it in the classroom (see Digital Documentation and FOIP in the Pedagogical Supports - <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).
- Selective and judicious responses to journal entries: Expectations about the number and length of responses should be developed in understanding with the students, acknowledging that the blog and learning documentation belongs to each student. It is expected that instructors will read and respond, adding materials, links, and other support when most

pedagogically appropriate, that is, when entries and documentation provide opportunities for deeper learning and conversation, and move into becoming more thematically-oriented.

- Introduce the Themes of Teaching assignment early in the semester and show students the location of mini manuals to support their work
- Encourage students to create blogs that illuminate text through the incorporation of relevant images (see Digital Documentation in the Pedagogical Supports - <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>). This is a critical piece of Semester 3 as students will need to draw on these images as well as these skills for their portfolio in Semester 4.

## **SEMESTER 4 Professional Seminar – Identity, Diversity and Inclusion**

eDOL can be used by the Prosem instructor as a discussion forum for the class by creating a class blog and inviting all students into the conversation. Details about how to do this are covered in the eDOL user manual (<http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).

eDOL requires students to provide evidence of their ability to:

- Understand the importance of ambiguity and uncertainty and how it supports life-long learning across one's career
- Understand how previous experiences inform the ongoing inquiry into the complexity of learning and teaching
- Deepen reflection and enhance practice
- Attend to diversity in inclusive practice
- Develop capacity for culturally responsive teaching
- Clarify their individual identities as novice teachers

By the end of Semester 4, students should be able to:

- Provide evidence of the ability to begin to teach with attention to the KSAs
- Continue to document and collect related artifacts that illustrate and construct a portfolio that supports one's start in the profession
- Develop a professional portfolio
- Attend to related criteria as specified in the handbook

Activities during this semester include:

- Drawing from previous journals to demonstrate emerging professionalism
- Drawing from journals and Themes of Teaching statement for exit presentation
- Drawing from journals and Themes of Teaching statement for student professional portfolios
- Drawing significant understandings from across the MT program to support class discussions and professional portfolio
- Submitting a professional portfolio

Instructor Responsibilities Unique to eDOL

- Review the core principles of digital documentation and the ethics surrounding it in the classroom (see Digital Documentation and FOIP in the Pedagogical Supports - <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).
- Consider creating a class. Students are encouraged to recognize the importance of the blog as a possibility for sustained professional development and collegial support
- Introduce the professional portfolio assignment early in the semester and show students the location of mini manuals to support their work
- Encourage students to create individual blogs that illuminate their thinking through the incorporation of relevant images (see Digital Documentation in the Pedagogical Supports - <http://education.ucalgary.ca/edol>).
- Allow students to use their professional portfolios as part their exit presentations. The portfolio may serve as an exit presentation, used to enhance an exit presentation, or used in addition to an exit presentation which, depending on forms of expression and representation selected for the exit presentation.