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Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

Portfolios, the Pied Piper of Teacher Certification Assessments: Legal and Psychometric Issues

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90% of SCDE's use portfolios to make decisions about candidates
40% do so as a certification or licensure requirement (Salzman, et.al, 2002)

"Portfolios as Tests"

portfolios used in a high-stakes context are technically testing devices

need to meet psychometric standards:

- Validity
- Reliability
- Fairness
- Absence of bias

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

High Stakes Tests

tests used for decisions, such as for employment, licensure, or a high school graduation

when tests are used for high-stakes decisions, they will be subject to legal scrutiny

-Mehrens and Popham (1992) in Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

Portfolios for Learning

excellent tools

- reinforcing learning
- making formative decisions about teacher candidate
 - Knowledge
 - Skills
 - Dispositions
 - Growth

-Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

Requirements and Caveats

Graduation and certification decisions in a standards-based environment

Requirements for tests

Caveats for portfolios

-Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

1. Job-Related and Authentic

Stand the test that the portfolio is job-related and authentic.

Equivalent to what teachers do with technology in the classroom.

2. Representative, Relevant, Proportional

“All criteria used to evaluate the portfolio must be relevant to the job [of teaching].”

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

3. Documentation and Appeals Process

adequate documentation in place tells candidates

- how and when to prepare the portfolio
- how it will be reviewed
- who is allowed to help them and how much help they can receive
- the consequences of failure and the opportunities for remediation
- what their due process rights and procedures are if they wish to challenge the review results.”

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

4. Candidate Support System

Adequate instructional opportunities provided to candidates

- to succeed in meeting the requirements of the portfolio/test
- to remediate when performance is inadequate.

Embed portfolio preparation into instructional program (i.e., coursework).

“Any requirements outside of the instructional program could be subjected to a claim based on instructional/curricular validity.”

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

4. Faculty Support System

“The entire faculty need to buy into, and support, portfolio preparation activities of the students and provide remedial opportunities for components that are found lacking.”

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

5. Realistic Cut-Score

The most difficult aspect of portfolio design

- identify the specific score or characteristics
- sort teachers into the dichotomous categories of competent and not competent based on their portfolios

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

6. Alternatives

“Alternatives must be provided to candidates who cannot successfully complete requirements, or the SCDE must be able to demonstrate why no alternatives exist”

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

7. Protected Populations 8. Reliable Scoring

7. Are a disproportionate number of protected populations (minorities, handicapped, women) unsuccessful? SCDE must show why no alternatives exist.

8. Procedures and scoring are consistent. Clear directions and adequate rater training. Adequacy and comparability of evidence. Monitor rater mood and fatigue factor.

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

More limited and focused use of portfolios

Suggest a more limited and focused use of portfolios

To measure specific, job-related skills
Realize long known values of portfolio assessment without burdening faculty and students with excessive requirements that have limited use and without taking serious psychometric and legal risks

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

Showcase portfolios vulnerable to legal challenge

When used as a measure of job performance themselves, or
when evaluated using criteria that are related in only tangential ways to authentic job tasks, or
when they are not substantially related to standards required for state program approval, or
when they are prepared as an extra-curricular activity, or
when they contain student-selected evidence, or
when they are not adequately monitored for reliability or bias

- Wilkerson & Lang (2003)

Portfolios by Level of Inference

Inference Level	Selection	Time	Use
Low	Item selection pre-determined	No faculty time, no faculty skill if task rubrics included.	Excellent for accreditation and accountability
Medium	Students have some choice, typically from a list of options	Faculty decide if students made the right choices and assess the composite collection	Tricky for accreditation, especially if no task rubrics included.
High	Students have wide choices	Faculty reassess what was already assessed	Learning and formative evaluation. Not useful for accreditation.

(Wilkerson & Lang, 2004)