

## Brief TaskStream Overview for Special Education Instructor/Evaluators

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## Brief TaskStream Overview for Instructor/Evaluators

### **1. What is TaskStream and why are we using it?:**

TaskStream ([www.taskstream.com](http://www.taskstream.com)) is a customizable, electronic portfolio, assessment management and performance based instruction tool. For National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) college accreditation, as well as Special Education Student Portfolio evaluation purposes, specific student assignments (Signature Assignments) are to be evaluated based on a faculty developed rubric associated with the CEC Standard(s) addressed by each assignment.

The electronic submission of the Signature Assignments to TaskStream serves two purposes. First, it serves as a college accreditation data collection and storage site, as instructors evaluate each student's Signature Assignment in connection with the NCATE performance based outcomes. The NCATE outcomes incorporate the CEC standards for special education teachers. George Mason University's College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) must collect this data every semester.

Second, it provides a platform for students to build an electronic portfolio for EDSE 791 (Midpoint Portfolio) and EDSE 792 (Final Portfolio). After each student submits their Signature Assignments to TaskStream, instructional faculty will use a 3 point rubric, separate from their individual grading rubrics (viewable on TaskStream), to jury individual electronic submissions.

### **2. Which instructor receives and evaluates which assignment(s)?:**

Any student taking an EDSE course during the current semester is required to submit their Signature Assignment to that course instructor via TaskStream for evaluation.

### **3. When taking Midpoint Portfolio:**

Any student taking Midpoint or Final Portfolio during the current semester is required to submit their Student Selected Artifacts and Intro Narrative to the Midpoint or Final Portfolio instructor via TaskStream for evaluation.

In addition, students must at that time ensure that they have Signature Assignments posted to TaskStream for all EDSE courses that they have taken.

Signature Assignments (or approved alternatives) completed prior to the implementation of TaskStream (Fall 2007) will be submitted to the student's Midpoint Portfolio instructor for evaluation.

Signature Assignments (or approved alternatives) completed after the implementation of TaskStream (Fall 2007) should be submitted to the instructor of that course for evaluation, not to the Portfolio instructor.

#### **4. Following Midpoint Portfolio and prior to Final Portfolio:**

Students will continue to submit their Signature Assignments to the instructor of those courses in which they complete the assignment.

Students may continue to upload Student Selected Artifacts to TaskStream, but will not be able to submit them to an instructor for evaluation until they have determined who their instructor for Final Portfolio will be. Once they are successfully registered in Final Portfolio, students can go in and finish the process by submitting the uploaded Student Selected Artifacts to their Final Portfolio instructor for evaluation.

#### **5. When taking Final Portfolio:**

Any student who completed Midpoint Portfolio prior to the implementation of TaskStream (Fall 2007) may choose to complete their portfolio on paper (3 ring binder format) or electronically on TaskStream. However, regardless of their choice, for NCATE data collection purposes, students are still required to submit all Signature Assignments for any EDSE course taken from Fall 2007 forward (this also includes their Intro Narratives for Midpoint and Final Portfolio).

Any student who completes Midpoint Portfolio from Fall 2007 forward must complete their portfolio electronically. By the time they get to Final Portfolio, student's portfolios should contain a minimum of 10 assignments (Signature Assignments and Student Selected Artifacts) that have already been evaluated by their course instructors as well as their Midpoint Portfolio instructor.

Students will submit an additional 10 Student Selected Artifacts as well as their completed Intro Narrative, via TaskStream to their Final Portfolio instructor. The Final Portfolio instructor will evaluate these 10 Student Selected Artifacts and the Intro Narrative, and will review the student's portfolio as a whole to complete the Portfolio Evaluation process.

#### **6. What happens if a student submits their work to me incorrectly (it should go to another instructor for evaluation)?:**

If a student submits their work to you by mistake, you will need to go into the assignment as you would to evaluate it, but instead of choosing the "Evaluate/Score Work" tab, choose the "Send Work Back for Revision" tab and tell the student they need to submit it to another instructor in the comments section (note that some instructors simply cut and paste the same comment to students if they have received more than one mistaken submission).

**7. Am I limited to only viewing those artifacts that have been submitted just to me?  
How can I view a student's entire portfolio in TaskStream?:**

Yes, Evaluators will only have access to the artifacts that have been submitted directly to them for evaluation. However, each **Portfolio instructor** has been given dual status in TaskStream: As Evaluator and Manager. You already know what it means to be an Evaluator (please don't hesitate to contact Emily Gibson at [egibson5@gmu.edu](mailto:egibson5@gmu.edu) if you have questions). Your roll as Manager allows you to view every artifact and evaluation in TaskStream for any student. To do so:

1. When you log in, you'll see "My Programs." Instead of clicking on "E" for Evaluate, click on "M" for Manage Evals. This will open another window with two choices: Manage Evaluations or, below it, Search by Group. In order to see a specific student's entire portfolio, enter that student's name in the Manage Evaluations box and click Search. This will bring up that student's body of work. You will be able to view each submitted assignment and evaluation.
2. If, however, you want to view everything that has been submitted to you by every student, you'll want to "Search by Group."
3. Click on the drop down menu and select your group. This will contain all student work that has been submitted to you – your group is auto generated and managed by TS every time a student chooses you as an evaluator for an assignment. This is also another way for you to see if a student has submitted something to you in error (you'll follow the instructions for Step II above).
4. Click on "select." This will bring up that same familiar search screen. You'll see that new work has been submitted to you in red - don't choose a particular CEC standard (unless you want to) - let the default stand at "Show all categories."
5. Then at the bottom, click on "Individuals with Items Awaiting Evaluation."
6. Then click "continue." It will take a moment to load (it may appear as if nothing is happening). **If you don't see a student's name there, that person has not submitted their assignment to you yet.**
  - a. If the student tells you he/she has submitted to you, but you don't see it one of two things has likely happened. Either the student uploaded the assignment but failed to finalize the process by actually submitting it to you (in which case they should first be referred back to the Quick Start Guide for Authors and reminded to follow the procedures to the end) OR they've submitted it to the wrong instructor for evaluation. An additional possibility may be that you've inadvertently set up a duplicate login account for yourself somewhere along the way.
  - b. If the "wrong" instructor doesn't return it to the student (per Step 6 above), the student will have to contact that instructor directly and ask them to do so. If, for some reason, this is not possible, please let Emily Gibson know and she will be able to go in to retrieve it and send it back to the student – but the student will still have to resubmit it to the proper instructor. (Please let this be a last resort – Emily is the only administrator supporting nearly 1,800 student/authors and 135 instructor/evaluators

currently enrolled in the Special Education Portfolio in TaskStream. She'll do her best to accommodate such requests, but she won't be able to process 1,800 of them every semester. The goal is to get the students to become as self-sufficient in TaskStream as possible).

**8. Where can faculty and students find the most up-to-date information and usage instructions for TaskStream?:**

All of the most up-to-date information and usage instructions (for both students and faculty) for TaskStream are on the Special Education website at:

<http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/taskstream/>

Additionally, this same information is also on the Adjunct Instructor Blackboard site as well as the Cohort Blackboard site:

<https://gmucommunity.blackboard.com/>

User Name: cohort

Password: cohort

Or feel free to contact Emily Gibson, TaskStream Administrator for the Special Education Program, at [egibson5@gmu.edu](mailto:egibson5@gmu.edu).

Also, you may contact the TaskStream Help Desk for assistance at any time at 1-800-311-5656.

**9. What if a student doesn't submit their Signature Assignment to TaskStream for evaluation?:**

The Special Education faculty has set a policy whereby instructors are encouraged to withhold a student's final grade in their EDSE course (provide the student with an "IN" or "Incomplete" grade within 48 hours of the final class meeting instead of a letter grade) until their required Signature Assignment(s) have been submitted to TaskStream for you to evaluate. This is one of the only ways to ensure this data is collected from the student. Remember, the first priority and main reason for using TaskStream is for data collection for NCATE accreditation purposes – the college MUST have this data on file. It is ultimately your responsibility, as Instructor/Evaluator, to ensure this is done.

Every EDSE course syllabus should contain the following statement regarding the TaskStream submission requirement:

*Note: Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester is required to submit signature assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one time course or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/>. Failure to submit the assignment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade*

*as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.*

## **10. Glossary of Common TaskStream Terms & Mason E-mail/G Number Info.:**

DRF: Direct Response Folio (aka Special Education Portfolio in TaskStream). This where students find their courses and will submit their assignments for evaluation in TaskStream.

Author: Student submitting assignments via TaskStream for evaluation.

Evaluator: Instructor evaluating submitted assignments via TaskStream.

Manager: Portfolio instructors/evaluators who have been given additional access to TaskStream so that they may see a student's entire electronic portfolio. This access allows them to view every assignment submitted by a student/author as well as the completed evaluations done by other instructor/evaluators so that they can assess the completion of the student's portfolio.

Signature Assignment (aka Required Artifacts): A specific assignment, presentation or project, determined by the Mason Special Education Faculty, which best demonstrates one or more of the ten Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) standard(s) connected to each course. While used as part of a student's Midpoint and Final Portfolio, it serves a dual purpose for NCATE data collection.

Student Selected Assignments/Artifacts: These are assignments freely chosen by the students (as opposed to being required by the faculty as the Signature Assignments are) for their Midpoint and Final Portfolio that best demonstrate one or more of the ten CEC standards connected to each course.

To Find Mason E-mail Address and/or G Number: Direct students to the link below to find their Mason e-mail address and/or G Number (aka Mason student ID number). They will login using their social security number and 6-digit PIN. The 6-digit PIN is initially set as the MMDDYY of their birthday. If further assistance is needed with finding their Mason e-mail or G Number, direct them to the ITU Support Center at 703-993-8870.

<http://chimera.gmu.edu/gnum/prod/index.cgi>