

Process Portfolio Guide

Project Overview:

A “process portfolio” is a major project that guides you through the Design Thinking Process as you create a graphic design. The goal is to value process in addition to product: you will be assessed on your ability to document the steps of your process and your reflections along the way in detail.

Portfolio Sections Overview:

1: Investigate	2: Develop	3: Create	4: Evaluate
BEFORE working on your graphic design	BEFORE working on your graphic design	DURING your work on your graphic design	AFTER finishing your graphic design
Document your process of researching graphic design concepts and critiquing other artists for inspiration.	Document your process of exploring possible project ideas, setting goals, and planning your project.	Document your process of making your design, learning from your trials, and testing variants.	Critique strengths and weaknesses of your own work and reflect on your learning experiences.

Project Instructions:

1. Choose a **format** to present your portfolio; most students prefer to use Google Slides, but you can also document your work in a Google Doc, a webpage, a video, a digital flipbook, etc. The format you choose for your portfolio doesn't impact your grade, but you must ensure that you can fully and clearly answer all of the prompt questions and display evidence of your work in the portfolio.
2. Work on the “**BEFORE**” sections of your portfolio first: **Investigate** and **Develop**. These should be completed before you start working on the Create section. Read the prompt questions for each section in the guide below, and answer all of the questions in your portfolio, supporting your written responses with a variety of detailed visual evidence (like screenshots).
3. Finish the **Create** section only once your development is complete. Finish the **Evaluate** section only once your creation is complete. In every section, carefully answer all prompt questions, reflect, and document visual evidence of your work.
4. Notice that some projects require you to complete all 4 sections of the portfolio, but other projects may only require you to complete 1 or 2 of the sections. Pay

close attention to whether or not your assigned project is a **full portfolio** or a **partial portfolio**.

Portfolio Section 1: Investigate

Prompt Questions:

1. Conduct some online **research** to investigate a new graphic designer, a graphic design concept, or a graphic design genre, style or movement. **Present** the main ideas from what you have learned in your portfolio.
2. **Connect** your research to yourself. How might this research inform you and inspire your work as a graphic designer?
3. Choose an image of 1 design that you discovered during your research to **critique**. In your critique, analyze how the designer used different elements and principles of design to effectively reach their target audience and achieve their communication goals.

Investigate Rubric:

7	Provides comprehensive information about a relevant research topic and documents the investigation with detailed multimedia content and informal (URL) citations. / Reflects extensively and connects the research to self in order to illustrate how it has informed them as a graphic designer. / Critiques a professional graphic design with complex analysis of design elements, principles, audience, and purpose.
6	Provides specific information about a relevant research topic and documents the investigation with multimedia content and informal (URL) citations. / Reflects moderately and connects the research to self in order to illustrate how it has informed them as a graphic designer. / Critiques a professional graphic design with thoughtful analysis of design elements, principles, audience, and purpose.
5	Provides general information about a relevant research topic and documents the investigation with some multimedia content and some informal (URL) citations. / Briefly connects the research to self in order to illustrate how it has informed them as a graphic designer. / Critiques a professional graphic design with straightforward analysis of design elements, principles, audience, and/or purpose.
4	Provides some information about a relevant research topic and documents the investigation, but lacks specific details, multimedia content, and/or informal (URL) citations. / Critiques a professional graphic design in a simplistic or brief way, with some analysis of design elements, principles, audience, or purpose.

3	Provides sparse or unclear information about a research topic, but the investigation generally lacks both visual multimedia documentation and written reflective responses. Partially critiques a professional graphic design in a simplistic or brief way, with minimal analysis of design elements, principles, audience, or purpose.
2	Extremely sparse presentation of research information that lacks multimedia visuals and reflection. Some attempt to critique a professional graphic design in a surface-level way, not fully addressing the requirements of the prompt question.
1	Missing, extensively incomplete, or irrelevant (off-topic) work.

Portfolio Section 2: Develop

Prompt Questions:

1. **Brainstorm** various ideas of what you want to create, and document your brainstorm process through lists, flowcharts, word-webs, or any other format for exploring lots of potential ideas. Narrow your brainstorm down to 1 or 2 favorite ideas for your project.
2. If you conduct more online **research** to help you find ideas, document this research process, too.
3. **Visualize** your ideas by doing things like creating a mood board of inspiration images and making concept sketches of your design.
4. During all steps of this process, **reflect** on how your brainstorming, inspiration-searching, and visualizing are impacting your thinking about your project.
5. Write a project **pitch**. This is a clear statement of your final vision and plan for your graphic design. It should include all of the following details:
 - a. What do you want your final graphic design to look like?
 - b. What is the purpose of your design? What are you trying to communicate through your design?
 - c. Who is the target audience of your design? And why do you think your design will be effective at reaching this target audience?

6. In the Develop section, don't forget to document all of the idea **changes** you make throughout the process. You might start off with some initial ideas for your project, but then completely change your mind! If that happens, include it in the portfolio! Why did you abandon your early ideas and decide to do something different? Don't forget to include early **draft** versions of your pitch as you refine it into something polished, and most importantly...always **explain WHY** you made each decision in your development process!

Develop Rubric:

7	Demonstrates extensive and varied practical exploration of ideas (brainstorming methods, outside research, mood boards and inspiration images, concept sketches), with comprehensive reflection and multimedia documentation. Presents a clear pitch (plan, intention statement) for the design that considers the purpose and the desired audience in detail, justifying all artistic choices. Clearly documents the evolution of ideas and plans through revisions and drafts with explanation.
6	Demonstrates varied practical exploration of ideas (brainstorming methods, outside research, mood boards and inspiration images, concept sketches), with relevant reflection and multimedia documentation. Presents a clear pitch (plan, intention statement) for the design that considers the purpose and the desired audience, justifying artistic choices. Somewhat documents the evolution of ideas and plans through revisions and drafts with explanation.
5	Demonstrates some practical exploration of ideas (brainstorming methods, outside research, mood boards and inspiration images, concept sketches), with some relevant reflection and basic multimedia documentation. Presents a pitch (plan, intention statement) for the design that generally considers the purpose and the desired audience, for the most part justifying artistic choices. May not clearly document the evolution of ideas and plans through revisions and drafts with explanation.
4	Demonstrates simplistic exploration of an idea/ideas (brainstorming methods, outside research, mood boards and inspiration images, concept sketches), with minimal reflection and basic multimedia documentation. Presents a pitch (plan, intention statement) for the design that expresses what the final creation will look like. May not clearly document the evolution of ideas and plans through revisions and drafts with explanation.
3	Demonstrates sparse or unclear exploration of an idea/ideas (brainstorming methods, outside research, mood boards and inspiration images, concept sketches), significantly lacking reflection and/or multimedia evidence. Presents a basic pitch (plan, intention statement) for the design that expresses what the final creation will look like. No evidence of evolving ideas/plans.
2	Attempts at brainstorming are lacking, focusing instead on a single idea from the start without any evidence of idea exploration. Significantly lacking reflection and multimedia evidence. Presents a basic pitch (plan, intention statement) for the design that expresses what the final creation will look like. No evidence of evolving ideas/plans.
1	Missing, extensively incomplete, or irrelevant (off-topic) work.

Portfolio Section 3: Create

Prompt Questions:

1. Document your **work in progress** as you make your graphic design. Journal entries, photos, and screenshots can show how you have been progressing in the creation of your project. Don't forget to **reflect** on the creative choices you are making along the way, and demonstrate how you are thinking about elements and principles of design, editing techniques, or your evolving pitch/plan for the project.
2. Document your **trials, failures, and experiments**...because if everything is easy and can be completed without making a single mistake, you aren't giving yourself a big enough challenge!
3. Document any **independent learning** that you did in order to create your project. What program **tools** did you learn how to use? What tutorials helped you?
4. Present **more than one version** of your finished design. Graphic designers usually create multiple versions (called variants or iterations) of their design so their client/employer can look at the options and choose their favorite! Your portfolio should also include at least two variants to show your experimentation.
5. Always reflect! Which variant is your favorite, and why?

Create Rubric:

7	Extensively documents varied stages in the process of making a graphic design with multimedia evidence and reflection that demonstrates complex thinking about graphic design concepts and tools used. This documentation includes detailed, growth-focused reflection on experiments, trials, failures, and independent learnings. Presents 2 or more finished Product Graphics (variants) with detailed justification of your creative choices.
6	Documents multiple stages in the process of making a graphic design with multimedia evidence and reflection about graphic design choices and tools used. This documentation includes detailed reflection on experiments, trials, failures, and independent learnings. Presents 2 or more finished Product Graphics (variants) with reflection or explanation.
5	Documents the process of making a graphic design with some multimedia evidence and reflection about graphic design choices and tools used. General reflection on experiments, trials, failures, and/or independent learnings. Presents 2 or more finished Product Graphics (variants) with general reflection or explanation.

4	Documents the process of making a graphic design with simplistic multimedia evidence and reflection. Presents at least one finished Product Graphic with general reflection or explanation.
3	Documents the process of making a graphic design with sparse evidence and/or reflection. Presents at least one finished Product Graphic with sparse reflection or explanation.
2	Attempts at documenting the process of making a graphic design, but evidence of the process is lacking or unclear. Presents at least one finished Product Graphic.
1	Missing, extensively incomplete, or irrelevant (off-topic) work.

Portfolio Section 4: Evaluate

Prompt Questions:

1. **Critique** your own design. Your critique should include:
 - a. An analysis of how you considered elements and **Principles of Design** while making your graphic. Specifically, where in your design can we see design principles in action, and **WHY** did you decide to make your design in this way?
 - b. An analysis of the effectiveness of your design's **purpose** and **audience**. How does your design effectively communicate your intended message to your target audience? What evidence do you have that your design will be effective?
2. **Reflect** on your **personal** growth as a graphic designer. What did you learn in the process of creating this graphic, and how have you grown as a designer? In your reflection, you must incorporate thoughts on at least one of the TTGs: your inquisitiveness, resilience, independence, or positive-changemaking.

Evaluate Rubric:

7	Thoroughly and perceptively evaluates and justifies own design, demonstrating strong understanding of design principles, other design concepts, purpose, and target audience. Thoroughly and critically discusses development as a graphic designer, reflecting on personal growth and making clear connections to at least one TTG.
6	Evaluates own design, demonstrating strong understanding of design principles, other design concepts, purpose, and target audience. Discusses development as a graphic designer with specific detail, reflecting on personal growth and making clear connections to at least one TTG.

5	Evaluates own design, demonstrating decent understanding of design principles, other design concepts, purpose, and target audience. Discusses development as a graphic designer with sufficient detail, reflecting on personal growth and making clear connections to at least one TTG.
4	Evaluates own design, demonstrating basic understanding of design principles, other design concepts, purpose, and/or target audience. Describes general personal growth/development as a graphic designer.
3	Describes own design, demonstrating sparse and basic understanding of design principles, other design concepts, purpose, or target audience. Minimal/brief statement of growth/development as a graphic designer.
2	Describes own design, but shows misunderstanding in the attempt to reflect on design concepts. Minimal/brief statement of growth/development as a graphic designer.
1	Missing, extensively incomplete, or irrelevant (off-topic) work.

Resources

List of online programs you could use to make a graphic design:

- [Canva](#)
- [Picsart](#)
- [Adobe Express](#)
- [VistaCreate](#)
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List of desktop programs you could use to make a graphic design:

- Adobe Photoshop (editing and image manipulation focus)
- Adobe InDesign (layout design and object arrangement focus)
- Adobe Illustrator (illustration and graphic creation focus)
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List of online programs you could use to create your portfolio:

- Google Slides or Docs
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Example process portfolios from last year:

- I need to pick some out!

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