

Final Portfolio Assignment WR 150

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Purpose: A *portfolio* is an organized collection of *artifacts* representing your work in the class, framed by an introductory essay that assesses your progress toward the course goals and toward the goals you established for yourself at the beginning of the semester. In documenting and reflecting upon your accomplishments and development as a reader and writer, you will come to a better understanding of what you have learned in the course and thus increase the likelihood that you will be able to transfer what you have learned in the course to other contexts. The portfolio also gives you an opportunity to take responsibility for your own learning and to make sense of your own education.

Tasks: Complete your portfolio so that it represents your work and documents your progress over the course of the semester. The specific contents and organization of your portfolio are up to you, but the following elements should be included:

1. Table of Contents: Include a table of contents that begins with the title of your introductory essay and clearly identifies each item in the portfolio. Titles or captions that reflect your argument or organizing principle are especially helpful.

2. Introductory Essay: Compose an introduction (approx. 1000 words, or about 3-4 pages) in which you assess your progress toward the course goals outlined on the syllabus and toward the personal goals you established for yourself in your January self-assessment. Approach your introduction *as an argument about your writing and your development as a reader and writer*, supported by the evidence contained in your portfolio. See the comments section below for suggested approaches to this essay.

3. Artifacts: Your portfolio should include the following artifacts:

- your self-assessment from the beginning of the semester
- the final versions of each major paper
- at least one draft of each major paper
- 3-5 additional artifacts, with brief captions explaining their significance

Please make sure these artifacts are labeled clearly (e.g. “Essay one, final version”). You can think of your artifacts as an archive or appendix of material that supports the argument you make in your introductory essay.

Submission and Formatting Instructions: You can compile your portfolio in one of three ways:

- 1) As a single .pdf containing all of your artifacts. If you choose to take this route, you can create the document in Word (putting everything together on there) and then click “save as” and select .pdf.
- 2) **As a Google Drive folder. This is probably the easiest way to arrange things. Make sure all of your files are neatly arranged, sorted, and labeled.**
- 3) As a printed document. In this case, have everything prepared in a manila folder with your name and the class name written on the front.

Due Date:

Your final portfolio is due **Tuesday, May 2** at 11:59pm. Email me the Google Drive link and ensure that “anyone with the link can access” the folder. I will acknowledge my receipt of your portfolio within 24 hours via email.

Grading: This portfolio is worth 10% of your final grade. I will not be reevaluating work that has already been graded. Your grade will be determined by the quality of your portfolio as a whole, with particular emphasis given to the introductory essay.

Comments:

Artifacts: Artifacts might include homework exercises, in-class writing (which can be scanned), worksheets, comments from me or from your peers, comments you wrote in response to the writing of others, tutorial feedback forms, revision cover notes, email exchanges, source materials, “before-and-after” samples demonstrating revision, etc. Note that not all artifacts are strictly textual. For instance, a photograph of post-draft outline could be a compelling artifact. Choose those that best support the argument you make in your introductory essay.

Introductory essay:

One former student wrote, “Whenever I am asked to assess my improvement as a writer, the ‘correct’ answer always seems to be, ‘I have most certainly improved as a writer, and I owe it all to (name of current writing teacher).’” But your portfolio and especially the introductory essay are *not about your teacher*, nor is there any correct answer or narrative here. Feel free to write about your frustrations as well as your successes as a writer. Note also that although this assignment requires some personal reflection, it should not read like a private journal entry. It should be an academic argument, like the other papers you have written for this class. The difference, of course, is that in your introduction you will develop an argument about your own writing. Good portfolio introductions, like good papers, advance precise and compelling claims and support those claims with well-framed and well-presented evidence or exhibits. Think of the introduction as an essay that presents your portfolio publicly to your peers and to your teachers. Think of the rest of your portfolio as an archive of evidence that you will use in support of the arguments put forward in the introductory essay. Refer to evidence from the archival portion of the portfolio in the introductory essay. Guide the reader to them.

Approaches: Here are some prompts to stimulate and guide your thinking:

- How do you go about generating a topic and question? How do you come up with your ideas?
- How do you plan your papers?
- How do you go about revising a paper? How do you use advice and feedback from others?
- How has your writing process changed or evolved? How do you approach research?
- How do you approach sentence-level revision?
- Have you experienced any epiphanies—“aha” moments—about your writing?
- What aspects of writing are most difficult? Have these changed since September?
- Are you using things you’ve learned in WR 100 in your other classes? What? How?

In your introductory essay, you may respond to some of these, or you may develop an approach of your own. Feel free to concentrate largely on your final essay.