ELA 2600-001 (Seminar)

Collect, Select, Reflect: ePortfolios in Undergraduate Education
Tues. 11:00 – 11:50 – New Cabell Hall 107

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Transcripts and resumes in the 21st century have to be more than documentation on paper. This is not only because computers have become ubiquitous, but also because digital technology allows us to represent who we are to others and to ourselves in more multi-dimensional ways than print can. This in turn allows those who assess or evaluate us to have a rich, varied, and more representative picture of who we are in terms of our experiences, our capabilities, our accomplishments, and, ultimately, our *individuality*. Electronic portfolios (eportfolios) are a particularly effective way of accomplishing these goals.

In this class you will assemble three eportfolios: a *learning eportfolio* (created for personal educational and reflective purposes), a *presentational eportfolio* (targeting audiences such as prospective employers, instructors, peers, or others), and a *creative eportfolio* (based on a creative topic of interest to you).

We will be using an eportfolio platform called *Digication* which will be available to you not only this semester (through our UVaCollab course site), but throughout your years at UVa (http://uva.digication.com). You will get instructions on how to use *Digication* as well as other tools (such as video/audio editors, image and document manipulation tools, etc.) which will be necessary for creating and editing the artifacts that you collect for your eportfolio.

The primary focus of the course will be on *collecting* and organizing digital artifacts, *selecting* appropriate and varied items for each eportfolio, and *reflecting* on your work through

ELA 2600-001
Credits: 1
Schedule:
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biographical self-introductions, informative captions, reflective writings, and focused (rubric-based) self-assessments.

Together we will view, critique, and give feedback and "feedforward" to each other's work throughout the semester. Based on these discussions we will formulate an evaluation rubric to be used for assessing the quality of your ePortfolios at the end of the semester.

COURSE ACTIVITY

Design three electronic portfolios (one "learning," one "presentational," and one "creative"). Each portfolio must be supported with a variety of "evidence" from such areas as academics, sports, arts, fieldwork, community service, or any other activity that effectively represents you (your experiences, your skills, your achievements, etc.). Each portfolio also needs to contain your reflections on the significance of, and relationship between, the artifacts, and how they contribute to your self-representation. The process and techniques for accomplishing this will be part of the required readings and class discussions for this course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Collect: Your first step in the eportfolio building process is to collect as many potential artifacts as possible. You can upload these items or copy-and-paste them into the eportfolio platform (*Digication*). New content can also be composed directly in the platform using its online editor. You will be encouraged to keep your material as varied as possible (images, texts, audio, video, etc.). As you collect your artifacts, you will be encouraged to think and keep notes about how each item fits into the "portrait" of yourself you want to create.

Select: Your second step is to go through the material you have collected and pick out the artifacts that work well together to create the particular theme of the eportfolio you are working on ("learning," "presentation," or "creative"). The selection process should allow you to create a coherent narrative or portrait of yourself for your audience. This is not to suggest that you create a rigidly linear story about yourself (first this happened, then that, then that…) , but to make your artifacts relate to each other in interesting ways, and to help you take control and shape how others see you through your eportfolio. For example, a photograph may have a connection to a paper you wrote; a

ePortfolio: *"…a digitized collection of artifacts, including demonstrations, resources, and accomplishments that represent an individual, group, community, organization, or institution"* ([EDUCAUSE, 2005](#)).

Folio Thinking: *"…a reflective practice that situates and guides the effective use of learning portfolios, defined as a purposeful collection of artifacts that characterize the learning experiences of the portfolio owner"* ([Stanford Folio Thinking Initiative](#)).

description of an event you attended may have an audio track associated with it; or a line in a poem may be connected to the map of a place you have visited. The selection process is where you begin to weave together the theme of your portfolio.

Reflect: The final step involves writing (or, if you prefer audio or video, recording) your reflections on the eportfolio, and the eportfolio building process, itself. For example, you might consider questions such as:

- How would you describe the experience of putting the eportfolio together?
- Why did you pick the artifacts you picked?
- What is the relationship of the artifacts to each other?
- How did they coalesce (or not) to constitute your intended theme?
- What did you learn from the process of building the eportfolio?
- How do you rate your eportfolio (using the class rubric)?

The reflective document in each of your eportfolios may be a sort of "introduction-and-conclusion" rolled into one. Or you may prefer to have two separate documents (or recordings) – an introduction at the beginning (letting the reader know what to expect in the ePortfolio) and a reflective conclusion at the end (summing up the experience). In either case, this is your chance to explain what you have created and to add your own perspective on the work you have done.

COURSE PROCESS

Because the class meets for only one hour per week, class times will be used primarily for quick discussions and demonstrations of specific techniques and process for generating content for your ePortfolio. Students will be expected to practice these process on their own outside of class and report on their experiences during class discussion. The processes we will explore will be *experimental writing techniques*, *emotional intelligence survey*, and *exploratory mindfulness practices*. Guests will be invited to present some of these processes.

ASSESSMENT AND FINAL PRESENTATION

Your portfolios will be evaluated, and your grade determined, using a rubric (such as the one below) the details of which we will "flesh out" together as a class.

Criteria	Beginner (1)	Adequate (2)	Advanced (3)	Rating
Selection of Artifacts				
Reflection/Critique				
Quality of Writing				
Citations				
Layout and Readability				
Navigation				

Finally, you will present your eportfolios to your peers and invited guests at the end of the semester.

COURSE TEXT
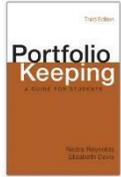
■ Reynolds, Nedra, and Elizabeth Davis. *Portfolio keeping: A guide for students*. Macmillan Higher Education, 2013.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

■ Come to class.
■ Listen to your classmates and give constructive feedback.
■ Ask for help from instructors and your classmates when you need it.
■ Look for your "aha!" moments.
■ Enjoy the process! This is a celebration of *you*!

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