



ELA 2600:

Collect, Select, Reflect: ePortfolios in Undergraduate Education

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Transcripts and resumes in the 21st century have to be more than documentation of grades. This is because grades are only shortcuts to students' capabilities and do not reflect the actual work they have done. Today, computers, and digital technology in general, have allowed us to present our work to ourselves and to others in more multi-dimensional ways (images, video, audio -- as well as test results and grades). In turn, this representation allows those who assess or evaluate us (teachers, employers, others) to have a more "evidence based" view of what we say we know, or have learned (skills, experience, capabilities, accomplishments, and even, ultimately, our self-awareness and *individuality*). The goals of this course are to give you broad experience with the process of using "electronic portfolios" (ePortfolios) to document your actual work, as well as your reflection on the work, and on your own growth.

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). The primary activities will focus on 1) *collecting* and organizing digital artifacts, 2) *selecting* appropriate and varied items for each eportfolio, and 3) *reflecting* on your work through biographical self-introductions, informative captions, reflective writings, and focused self-assessments.

To that end, we will be using an eportfolio platform called *Digication* which will be available to you not only this semester but throughout your years at UVa. You will get instructions on how to use *Digication* as well as other tools necessary for creating and editing the artifacts that you collect for your eportfolio. The hope is that, after this semester, you continue to use *Digication* to build ePortfolios on your own throughout your years at UVa.

COURSE ASSIGNMENT

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.

Process

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 “self-portrait” 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 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 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.

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

Together we will view, critique, and give feedback and “feedforward” to each other’s work throughout the semester; and, based on these discussions, we will formulate an evaluation rubric (such as the one below) to be fleshed out and used for self-assessing our work.

Criteria	Beginner (1)	Intermediate (2)	Advanced (3)	Rating
Artifact Selection				
Reflection/Self Assessment				
Quality of Writing				
Multimodality				
Layout/Navigation				
Mechanics				
Other				

Towards the end of the semester, all students will be invited to present their work at [FolioFest](#).

COURSE TEXT

- **Required:**
 - Reynolds, Nedra, and Elizabeth Davis. [Portfolio keeping: A guide for students](#). Macmillan Higher Education, 2013.
- **Recommended:**
 - Kimball, Miles A. The Web Portfolio Guide. [Chapter 2: “Planning the Web Portfolio”](#)

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE



- Come to class.
- Listen to your classmates and give constructive feedback.
- Ask for help from the instructor and your classmates.
- Look for your “aha!” moments.
- Enjoy the process! This is a celebration of you!