

Portfolio Assignment

Due Date:

What Is the Portfolio?

A portfolio is a collection of a writer's work from a given period of time. This collection will consist of three of the essays you have written this semester and a short introductory essay, "Me as a Writer." This portfolio will reflect your very best work, and to achieve that aim, you will need to revise your essays from the comments I have made, reviewer comments, and from your own careful re-reading of your essays. Finally, you need to grammatically correct and proofread your essays. This is your final chance to let me see how hard you have worked, and also how strong your writing is. This is **% of your grade.

The Portfolio should include the following:

1. Short Introductory Essay, "Me as a Writer."

This is a short essay of about one page. Consider the following:

Who are you as a writer?

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

What characterizes your writing?

What do you like best about your writing?

AND...

How has your writing changed over the semester? How has it not changed? Or, take a longer view: how has your writing changed, or not changed, over your many years of schooling?

You don't have to answer all those questions I've asked above. You also don't have to like your writing or think your writing has improved. Rather, choose your own way to focus your essay, and develop it with examples and evidence, as you have learned to do this semester.

2. Two Revised Essays

Review and revise two of your essays, using the comments that your peers, CWE consultants and I have provided to you, and also your own insights, as you re-read your essays. These revised essays are the most important part of your portfolio. You ought to add substantially to each of your two essays.

Successful essays will include several new paragraphs as well as some significant cutting of old materials. When I evaluate your work I am looking to see that you have conquered the big challenges of college writing: focus, development, analysis, organization, clarity of prose and editing.

Here is an occasion when I will not overlook errors; you have time to fix errors and make your prose both clear and grammatically correct. Therefore, failure to proofread will lower your grade.

For each essay you include in the portfolio

- **Attach a paragraph explaining the changes you've made to your essay to the front of your final draft. Describe what you've done to improve your essay, using the established criteria (focus, development, etc.).**

Here is an example:

In essay four I wrote an entirely new introduction and greatly expanded the second example. I also worked on the introduction to the quotes. Finally, I worked really hard to remove ALL my previous typos and to get rid of the fragments and run-ons.

- **Include two versions of your essay: the old final one and the new revised one.** Note: you don't have to include the exploratory or mid-processed drafts, although you may decide that this will show the work you have done on your essay throughout the semester.
- **In your new version, put new sections in bold. That way we can really see where you have revised.**

Here are some important things to consider:

1. Presentation

Put your portfolio together neatly. Don't spend a lot of money on presentation folders, but do put it together in an organized and clear manner. In the past, many students have put together their portfolios carefully, with title pages, page numbers, etc. You decide how you want to package the result of a semester full of work.

2. Assessment

Your final portfolio grade will be weighted as follows:

- 3/4 on the writing quality of the portfolio-revised essays. In this analysis I will use the same criteria I have used all semesters, but the stakes will be higher: I now view you as graduates of College Writing I, and so the standards for an A, B, C, etcetera, are higher. Don't assume that revising your papers will automatically result in a higher grade: you will have to work in the final portfolio to show me that you have really thought about improving your papers in a significant way.
- 1/4 on improvement. I will assess the improvement I see from the previous "final" drafts, to the revised drafts presented before. Even students who are earning very high grades at this point in the semester can continue to improve their writing.