ICaP Instructor's Guide to the Portfolio Spring 2021

This guide has been updated to reflect changes for Spring 2021. If you have questions about this process, contact Kailyn Hall (hall554@purdue.edu) or Dr. Richard Johnson-Sheehan (rjohnso@purdue.edu).

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The Portfolio Assignment: Instructor Context

How do I use this guide?

This guide contains two main components: Instructor Context and the Student Assignment Sheet. All materials are intended for instructor use to aid teaching the Portfolio in the classroom. Except for the assignment sheet, these materials are not intended to be student-facing. The assignment sheet included should be used in all sections of ENGL 106/108 to assign the Portfolio. Optional Rubrics that may be used to grade the Cover Letter and Reflection will be available in the additional Assessment Instructor Materials linked below.

For additional ICaP assessment materials, please see our website. Additional Instructor Materials can also be found here: Assessment Instructor Materials.

What is a portfolio and how does ICaP use it?

For our purposes, a portfolio is a collection of a student's work that is brainstormed, drafted, revised, edited, and reflected on throughout a semester.

In ICaP, we use a Portfolio as our Common Assignment. While ENGL 106/108 has different syllabus themes, every section offered includes a Portfolio as the final assignment unit for the course. The Portfolio is the culmination of our students' work; it showcases how their writing skills have progressed since beginning ENGL 106/108. It shows how they have engaged with and met the outcomes of the course through their work. Many institutions use Portfolios in this way; our Portfolio consists of a Reflective Cover Letter and a Portfolio of the students' drafts from the course.

In your classroom, it is a final check to see how students have met the outcomes set out. It also serves as an opportunity for them to reflect on their progress and skills as writers. As an instructor, you will submit a sampling of portfolios at the end of each semester for program assessment. At the program-level, we want to see how students across the program are meeting the ENGL 106/108 outcomes. We compile this data for necessary program reviews requested by administration at the University every few years.

As a friendly reminder, this assessment is not an assessment of individual instructors or the quality of your instruction; instead, the goal is to assess ICaP as a whole.

What are the components of the portfolio?

Your students will need to submit the following materials for the portfolio:

I. **Reflective Cover Letter:** The reflective cover letter will serve as the student's introduction to the materials in their Portfolio. They will be asked to discuss and reflect on their experiences in the course with relation to the course outcomes. The reflective cover letter will be directed to you, their instructor, and to ICaP's administrators in a formal manner with the purpose of explaining how the work they present showcases the outcomes. They will also explain the order in which they have placed their projects.

II. **Course Essays/Projects:** Students should include their first full draft and final draft of each major assignment submitted to their instructor. The students will put them in the order they believe indicates their improvement in the course. For example, they should place the work they think was their weakest first and progress toward their strongest writing.

Definition: By "first full draft" the portfolio should include the first instance of the project in a near-complete form. A good example of this is a draft submitted for peer-review sessions. This "first full draft" does not include brainstorming activities, outlines, or other pre-drafting stage work.

How should I put this assignment on my syllabus?

On your syllabus, list the assignment as **Portfolio**. It should be the final or near final assignment for your course. Because all students submit this assignment electronically as a document, rather than as a website or other multimodal format, the title Digital Portfolio or ePortfolio is not accurate for our purposes. The reflective cover letter should be approximately 1000 words, and the point value should not exceed 10% of the total grade for the course. Please include the following standardized syllabus language to describe it:

> At the end of the course, you will submit a portfolio of your work with a reflective cover letter that explains how your writing has evolved during the semester. The cover letter will explain how your work meets the outcomes of the course, and the portfolio is as an opportunity for you to showcase your written communication skills, how they have developed, and how you can adapt and negotiate your skills based on context.

Note: If you have questions about the modality of your course Portfolio and wish to explore the option of an ePortfolio, please speak with Assessment Research Coordinator. We have an interest, as a program, in finding ways to better assess multimodal work from our students. We welcome your experience and feedback.

When should I assign the Portfolio?

We recommend that you provide the assignment sheet to the students during the first week of courses when you discuss the trajectory of the semester. By discussing the Portfolio early, students are more aware of the need to maintain different versions of their documents, and they'll be able to reflect on their progress more concretely if they are aware of the end goal. Most instructors also check in with students around midterm to remind them about the Portfolio assignment.

Can I change the assignment sheet?

Instructors may change the grading criteria for the assignment to align with their course needs. Sample Rubrics for this have been provided and may be modified to give to students. You are also welcome to modify formatting so it matches other documents you have used with your students. **We ask that instructors not change the content of the assignment sheet instructions or required materials, with the exception of highlighted sections**. It has been modified to be

applicable to all course themes. Having a single assignment sheet allows us to assess the Portfolios more consistently.

However, as noted above in the syllabus information, if you have interest in exploring multimodal options, please speak with the Assessment Research Coordinator.

A Microsoft Word version of the Assignment Sheet can be found here.

How do students compile the portfolio?

At the beginning of the semester, you should encourage your students to create a system for keeping drafts of their work for this course and others. There are multiple options that students can use. We recommend that students use a Cloud storage service of some kind in the event of computer errors or malfunctions.

OneDrive and Box are Purdue-Supported technologies. This means, if a student has a problem with the technology, they can contact ITaP for assistance. Students can use other methods, but there is no guarantee that ITaP will be able to help if there are problems.

- **OneDrive can be accessed through students' Purdue Email.** Students should select the "App Launcher" in the top left-hand corner and select OneDrive. Students can also access the Online versions of Office 365 products through this method. On a related note, all students, faculty, and staff receive Microsoft Office Products from the University. Information on downloading the programs is available here: https://www.itap.purdue.edu/shopping/software/product/office365.html.
- **Box requires students to log in with BoilerKey and can be accessed here:** https://purdue.account.box.com/login.

At the end of the semester, students will collect their drafts and write a reflective cover letter using the assignment sheet included in this guide. Students will put all materials into one document and submit the assignment through Brightspace like any other assignment in the course.

Students should only include clean drafts of their work, that is, without margin or end comments from peers or instructors. They should not include any rubrics from the class or materials that indicate the grade they received.

A downloadable Microsoft Word template is provided here as a guide. Instructors may supply this template directly to students or provide the means to create the Portfolio in a similar way.

How should I collect the Portfolio?

Collect the Portfolio as a single assignment through Brightspace, as you would any other assignment. The Submission Protocol later gives steps for how to download them for Submission to Assessment.

While Brightspace has a Portfolio tool, ICaP staff are still working with the team at ITaP to learn more about how to use this tool effectively. The simplest solution is to have your students

submit the Portfolio and Reflective Cover Letter as a single document through an assignment in Brightspace.

How should I grade the Portfolio?

The Portfolio assignment should be around 5-10% of the student's total grade, but no more than that. For your student's grade on the Portfolio, grade it in a way that reflects your practices throughout the class. That is, if you use point-based rubrics usually, continue that practice. If you grade more holistically, please use that method to grade the Portfolio. The only requirement is that you communicate with the students how you intend to grade their work. The final reflection should approximately 1000 words in length. This counts toward the course's total 7,500-11,500 required words (See ICaP ENGL 106 Outcome #2).

The Assessment Committee has also created a rubric where you can customize the point values for the final reflective cover letter and portfolio. Rubrics can be found in the Instructor Materials Sharepoint Folder.

How will I submit the Portfolio for Assessment?

You will submit Portfolios for assessment through Qualtrics, using the Protocol provided here: https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/english/icap/assessment/assignment.html. The Assessment Coordinator will also email instructors near the end of the semester with this information.

Portfolio and Reflective Cover Letter Assignment Sheet

Assignment Prompt

You have spent an entire semester brainstorming, revising, editing, and reflecting on several writing projects. The final Portfolio is your opportunity to showcase your best work in English 106/108. You will collect your work from this semester into a Portfolio and introduce it with a Reflective Cover Letter. Your Reflective Cover Letter (about 1000 words) will explain how you have met and engaged with the outcomes of the course in your work, and it will also explain the choices you have made in revisions. Your Portfolio will include your first draft of each major project and your final draft to show how your writing has grown. You will determine what order the projects appear in and explain why in the Cover Letter: they should progress from the project you still think needs work to your best.

Required Materials

Your Portfolio must include the following:

- A Reflective Cover Letter
- The First and Final Draft of each Major Class Assignment or Project

Reflective Cover Letter

To help you write the Reflective Cover Letter, include material that addresses the following:

1. Discuss how you have met ICaP outcomes
    a. Cite specific examples within your compositions and how they illustrate you meeting a specific outcome(s).
    b. Refer to the growth of your compositions throughout the semester and how you were able to revise your practices, strategies, or thought processes
2. Explain how your thoughts, practices, and style have developed throughout the semester, from project to project, or genre-to-genre
    a. Cite specific changes you have made from draft to draft
    b. Discuss how you were able to address audience(s) or situations given to you
3. Explain the order in which you put your projects in the Portfolio.
    a. Give specific reasons to support your choices in order.
    b. Why is your best work better than others you completed? What was different about it? Why did you succeed more in some projects than others?
4. Explain how you incorporated feedback from peers and the instructor (or why you chose not to)
    a. Cite specific projects and advice
    b. Discuss how you were able to implement or take advice, which led to new thinking strategies
5. Use common terminology taught in class that relates to your writing process
6. How will you use the skills you have learned in 106/108 in other courses?

Who is my audience?

The Reflective Cover Letter should be addressed to your instructor and administrators of the Composition Program at Purdue. Your overall goal is to show them that you have met the outcomes of the course. This is not an argument for your grade; rather, you should focus on showing them evidence that your writing meets the course outcomes in a formal way. First-Person writing is acceptable because you should be referring to *your* writing process and experiences in the Cover Letter.

Course Outcomes & Questions to Consider

As you write your reflective cover letter, consider answering some of the following questions to help you talk about your experiences with the course outcomes. You are not required to answer all of these; they are intended to help you think about how your work falls into these categories. Your Reflective Cover Letter should address the outcomes and how your work meets them.

1. **Demonstrate rhetorical awareness of diverse audiences, situations, and contexts.**
    a. How has writing to different audiences, situations, and/or contexts changed our processes and/or approach to writing?
    b. How did you modify your rhetorical moves in terms of diverse audiences, situations, and contexts?
2. **Critically think about writing and rhetoric through reading, analysis, and reflection.**
    a. How have all of these assignments changed, altered, or strengthened your approach to writing? What challenges did you have to consider?
    b. What role did reading and analyzing sources play in your process for writing? How has this changed or stayed the same?
3. **Provide constructive feedback to others and incorporate feedback into their writing.**
    a. How did you use feedback from your instructor and peers in specific essays?
    b. How did the instructor and/or peer-review feedback make you rethink your choices?
    c. What did you learn by giving constructive feedback to peers?
4. **Perform research and evaluate sources to support claims.**
    a. How did you conduct research and what do you think went well and/or could have gone better?
    b. What skills did you develop to help you evaluate sources of all types?
    c. What changes will you make in future research to evaluate and support your claims?
    d. How will research skills enable you to research/evaluate potential sources?
5. **Engage multiple digital technologies to compose for different purposes.**
    a. How does composing in word-processing format differ from composing in other mediums (e.g., website development, posters, infographics, etc.)?
    b. What challenges did you overcome in working with different technologies?

Portfolio of Writing

Your Portfolio will include the first and final drafts of each major project from the course. They will appear after the Reflective Cover Letter. You will choose an order to put them in that shows your progress as a writer in this course.

How should I format my Portfolio?

Your Reflective Cover Letter and Portfolio will be submitted as a single document. The Reflective Cover Letter will appear first and your project drafts will follow it. Your drafts should be inserted into the document without comments from your instructor or peers. You are not required to change the formatting of your projects; you should include the drafts as you originally submitted them.

A template is available on Brightspace.

[Instructors: Indicate here where you will place materials on this process. In asking the students to compile the work as a single document, we are emphasizing digital literacy practices associated with our outcomes.]

Grading

[Instructors: indicate here how you will grade your students. Use language that reflects the practice of your classroom and pedagogy. The assignment should be worth 5-10% of the student's final course grade but should not exceed that amount. If you choose to use a rubric, feel free to insert it in the document at this point.

Additionally, feel free to change the heading "Grading" to whatever best matches your classroom practice.]