

## ***Elements of A Professional Academic E-Portfolio***

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### ***a) What is an academic ePortfolio?***

The academic ePortfolio is a selective set of online, reflective, integrative, and personal documents that present how you have developed as a scholar-teacher ***in your discipline***. It offers evidence of your accomplishments and activities across all aspects of your academic life; i.e., research, teaching, and service and outlines your growth. It extends your CV and provides future employers with a comprehensive portrait of your academic training, achievements, and future career goals. It's a living document that needs to be modified over time.

### ***b) Why would I develop an ePortfolio?***

- Document teaching, research, and service activities and accomplishments during graduate study to bolster your credentials as you enter the postgraduate academic job market.
- Demonstrate how you have developed and grown as a scholar, teacher over time: demonstrate your ability to learn from your experiences, reflect on your strengths, identify areas for improvement, and discuss the next steps in your scholarship, teaching, and service.
- Model reflective practice.
- Develop and describe your identity as an academic in your discipline.
- Provide a personal, holistic portrait of yourself as scholar, teacher, colleague, and member of the academy.
- Afford ease of access to materials and artifacts that demonstrate your academic activities, achievements, and future goals.
- Demonstrate to a potential employer that you are technologically savvy.

### ***c) How would I develop an ePortfolio?***

**(1) Collect:** save documents that ***represent*** your activities, accomplishments and best work in the discipline (refer to sample documents listed on the final page).

**(2) Reflect:** Think about your growth and development as a scholar-teacher in each of the areas (i.e., research, teaching, service) over your graduate career, review your achievements and consider future areas for learning and enrichment. ***Develop reflective narrative and support your reflection with evidence.***

Reflective questions: *What did you learn as a result of this activity? How did it benefit you?*

For example, you served as an article reviewer – go beyond stating that you did serve as reviewer (CV) but talk about what you gained from the process. *How are you a better writer? How has the quality of your articles improved? What do you have yet to learn and why?*

**(3) Select:** selectively pick from the collected documents those that are representative of your work as a teacher-scholar in your field (i.e., teaching ,research, service) and that demonstrate competencies expected of a junior faculty member (e.g., scholarly writing, graphic presentation of research data, creativity, collaboration, ability to author instructional materials, ability to conduct class effectively)

**(4) Connect:** Check for cohesion among the various portfolio elements (research, teaching, and service) so that the various elements build on each other and support each other; e.g., your research expertise is evident in your teaching section – you are interested in developing a graduate seminar on poverty in the U.S.

**(5) Collaborate:** Obtain constructive feedback from peers, faculty within and outside UD. Review and provide feedback on peer's portfolios.

#### **d) How would I organize an ePortfolio?**

**a) Entry page / welcome page / home page:** with brief synopsis of author, meaningful quote, pictures representative of professional identity – professional yet personal voice designed to get the reader interested in the portfolio, communicate your passion and interest *in the field*.

Reflect: *How have your teaching, research and service activities shaped your professional growth and development, how do you perceive yourself as a teacher and scholar in your field? How did you become the person you are today?*

The welcome page is your chance to invite the viewer to explore your portfolio and to give them a sense of who you are as a person and academic in your field. This page is the first impression the viewer will have of you, so you will want to use this space effectively. Include details that make you sound unique, experienced, and enthusiastic. Make the tone welcoming. Before writing, consider what prospective viewers (e.g., employers) need to know about you and your academic work.

Your welcome page may include about 3-4 brief paragraphs. You may also include a visual or two that are appropriate and present a professional image. Consider using photos of you engaged in your research lab, with a campus activity, or at a professional conference. Outline briefly the purpose of the portfolio and invite the viewer to review your work. Guide them on how to navigate its contents and provide link to CV (PDF).

You may develop a **biographical page** that describes your professional identity, constructs your **personal story**. The page may also briefly outline the purpose of the portfolio and its organization / navigation.

Reflect: *Who are you as an academic in your discipline? What is important to you? What opportunities have you had? What choices have you made and why?*

**b) Main pages and subpages with reflective narrative** that represent aspects of your professional accomplishments and activities – please refer to “Structural Framework” section of the handout.

**Main pages:** e.g., teaching, research, and service

Organize each main page into **subpages** that provide further examples, evidence, and reflection on a particular area of expertise: For example, you may subdivide research into research statement, research interests, conference presentations, publications.

Each **subpage** needs to relate back to the main page. It contains a reflective statement that introduces each page and gives the reader a sense of how this section pertains to your teaching, research.

Reflect: *What do we learn about your research / teaching from this section? What do you value? What are you interested in and why? What do you plan to pursue in the future? Why? How?*

**The narrative needs to go beyond a description or listing of items as stated in your CV. Please refrain from copying and pasting portions of your CV.** The reader wants to know what is not obvious from the CV - he/she is interested in discovering what you learned from these experiences, why you engaged in them, how they contributed to your development as a faculty.

Reflect: *What picture do your scholarly presentations paint of you as a scholar? What story do they tell?*

**Main pages and subpages in each area need to be connected and integrated and provide evidence of your accomplishments.** The documents (evidence) provide a context for the reflective narrative, they support the narrative and help tell a compelling story.

**Example:**

**Main page:** Teaching in Biological Sciences

**Reflective narrative:** *What would you like the reader to know about your teaching in the discipline? What promoted your interest in teaching? What is important to you as a science educator? Why? How is it exemplified in your teaching, your student feedback?*

*What does your teaching statement reveal about your approach to teaching biology? What does it communicate about you as a science teacher? How does the teaching statement reflect your growth as an instructor?*

**Evidence:** Teaching Statement / Philosophy – actual teaching statement attached as PDF

**Subpage:** Teaching Materials – sample syllabus attached as evidence (PDF)

**Reflective narrative:** *How is your syllabus reflective of your teaching philosophy? What would you like the reader to know about the syllabus? What is distinctive of your syllabus? How does it convey your approach to course design in your discipline?*

**e) How might the structural framework of an academic ePortfolio look?**

- Teaching in Your Discipline

| <b>Possible subpages, content, and evidence</b>  | <b>Reflective narrative</b>   |
|--|---|
| teaching statement - objectives, methods, assessment (attached as PDF)   | <i>What would you like the reader to know about your teaching in the discipline? What promoted your interest in teaching?</i>   |
| teaching experiences / appointments, guest lectures, student advisement  | <i>How have you developed as a teacher as a result of these experiences? What did you learn about student learning, teaching as a result?</i>                                   |
| teaching effectiveness: measures and enhancement efforts (e.g., summary of student rating data, summary of unsolicited student feedback, copy of teaching award, mentor to junior TAs) | <i>How have these data informed your instructional approach? How might you have adjusted your teaching over time? Why / how is obtaining student feedback important to you?</i> |
| course materials, e.g., sample syllabi, assignments, exams, surveys, rubrics; short video segments of your teaching, instructional use of course management system, e.g., Sakai        | <i>How do the materials reflect your teaching philosophy, your approach to student learning, assessment?</i>  |
| curriculum development – new courses, course revisions   |   |
| teaching interests based on subject expertise, prior appointments  |   |
| teaching and research – how your research informs your teaching and vice versa   |   |
| scholarly teaching: articles, presentations, participation at teaching conferences; review of teaching materials, textbooks  |   |

- Research and Scholarship in Your Discipline – possible content and subpages

| <b>Possible subpages, content, and evidence</b>  | <b>Reflective narrative</b>   |
|--|---|
| research statement (attached as PDF)   | <i>What would you like the reader to know about your research in the discipline? How have you grown as a researcher? Why are you passionate about your field?</i>     |
| research appointments, fieldwork   | <i>How have you developed as a researcher as a result of these appointments? What did you learn about the research process, collaborating with peers as a result?</i> |
| research publications and presentations given, under review, in preparation (sample paper, conference proceedings) | <i>How have these publications shaped your thinking as a scholar in the field? So what?</i>   |
| grants obtained, grants participated in  |   |
| research interests   |   |

- Service to the Profession, the University, the Community

| <b>Possible subpages, content, and evidence</b>   | <b>Reflective narrative</b>   |
|---|---|
| membership in professional organizations, conference participation – committee service, panel moderator | <i>Why did you engage in service activities? What have you learned as a result of service? How have you benefitted from providing service? What do you enjoy?</i> |
| membership in department / College/ University committees, membership in student organizations          | <i>How is service perceived in your discipline / department?</i>  |
| advisor to academic student organizations   | <i>How has this advising responsibility impacted your teaching?</i>   |
| Service to community  | <i>How does this service interface with your teaching, research? How have you benefitted? What have you learned about yourself, your discipline as a result?</i>  |

- Honors and News (recent awards, accomplishments)

Reflect: *What have you gained from being awarded a Fellowship? How has the award informed your thinking about scholarly work in your field, collaboration with colleagues across disciplines, applied research?*

***f) How do I present myself effectively online?***

- Keep the text short, to the point and, ideally, limited to one screen.
- Refrain from offering text / lists that readers need to scroll down.
- Present documents (e.g., CV, research statement, teaching statement) as PDF attachments; do not copy the entire document into a webpage.
- Use easy to read font.
- Limit off-page navigation (don't link to your current graduate institution as the general website doesn't directly pertain to your career development and training); you want to keep the reader on your page, accessing your materials.
- Use charts to summarize data.
- Use student quotes to add personal voice to the portfolio.
- Use images that represent your work, your values.
- Make sure that the images, graphs, videos, and quotes pertain directly to the focus of a page: why is this image there? What does it contribute to the page? How does it orient the reader to the content of the page?
- Although you may have many examples of academic work, they should have a similar organizational structure (e.g., a picture on the left, header at the top of the page, and text to the right of the image) so that visitors to your portfolio can easily find information.
- Ensure online dossier is written as professional document (grammar, punctuation, spelling)

Be sure to get feedback on the quality and effectiveness of your ePortfolio from your advisor, faculty in the discipline, recent program graduates who have secured faculty positions to ensure its ease of use, clarity of communication and function as a rhetorical document. Keep in mind that you are developing a "generic" portfolio that is not tailored to the requirements of a specific faculty position, specific department, or institution.

ePortfolio template in Google Sites, includes resources and showcase:

<https://sites.google.com/site/hetcpportfolio/home>

Graduate students' academic ePortfolio at the University of Delaware, June 2011.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgm9Qh\\_W0Ls&feature=player\\_embedded#at=23](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgm9Qh_W0Ls&feature=player_embedded#at=23)

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