

English 505

Project 1: Web Portfolio

Description

Working individually, you should plan, design, and publish a web-based portfolio. Much of the course will be devoted to producing and maintaining this site. The web portfolio will begin as a simple web page and you will be expected to develop that over the first 8 weeks of the class. The purpose of the assignment is to learn basic web page and site design and construction and to have a place to showcase your professional accomplishments, academic work, and/or personal interests. While all three of these elements will be there, you should choose one of the three as a central focus for the site: professional, academic, or personal. Such a choice will determine things such as your conception of audience, the content you choose to place in your site, your site design, and your writing tone and style.

Requirements

The portfolio should contain (at minimum) the following:

- a homepage that visitors can use to get an overview of your work
- a navigational system that is clear and easy to follow
- an appealing, professional design
- profession-related documents (a resume, info and links related to your field, examples of your professional work)
- academic-related documents (responses to weekly reading, rhetorical analyses of other web sites, proposals for the 2nd and 3rd projects, Projects 2 and 3, any how-to documents, info and links related to your area of study)
- any other work that would help represent your experience, talent, and interests
- a links page to other sites related to your site's content

Your portfolio should contain content and audience appropriate multimedia components that will encourage an interactive user experience that is both informative and entertaining.

Process

Step 1 (week 1-2) - Get Started: Use the basic HTML template provided on the first day of class or Composer/NVU to start a draft of the project. Get a basic page/site posted to your Mason web space.

- Participation: get initial web page up and running

Step 2 (week 3) - Research and Plan Sites: Start planning your site by defining goals and audience. Search the web for sites generally related to your field and interests. Also look specifically for web sites of people in your field as examples to follow for your site. You should

collect 5 quality sites related to your field and 5 homepages that might be used as models/examples. Begin posting these links to your web page/site.

- Participation: put up a separate links page on your initial site
- Participation: write site specification document (in class)

Step 3 (week 4) - Site Design: Start planning a revision of the portfolio web site. Extend the work of your site specification document to include a map of the site's structure. Include new sections that you will need to create. At a minimum, create sections for professional work or personal interests, class work, and the final project.

- Participation: create a site diagram (can be hand-drawn or produced in a program)

Step 4 (week 5) - Page Design and Navigation: Extend the site structure to specific pages and navigation. Prepare a visual representation of your basic page layout and give titles and descriptions of each page's content that will follow this basic template. Look at the Web Style Guide for examples of these.

- Participation: design a page layout (can be hand-drawn or produced in a program)
- Formal grade: turn in the revised and updated site spec as a proposal

Step 5 (week 6) - Web Resume and Narrative: Two important aspects of your electronic portfolio will be your web resume and your introductory narrative. The resume should have a logical links structure and your narrative should be appropriately professional (not, hi my name is or welcome to my homepage or I like ____, even for a personal page this is a novice voice).

- Participation: post resume, write a short "About" paragraph for your site (about you or about the site) and decide where to place it on your site (main page, a separate about page, as an opening to your resume?)

Step 6 (week 7) - Presentation/Peer Response: By week 7 you should have enough supporting materials for your portfolio to present a draft to the rest of the class in a 5-10 minute presentation. Get a navigable version of your site ready and posted to the web. The first 5 minutes of your presentation you can click through and explain your understanding of the site. The next five minutes students can click around individually and write down feedback. Peer response will be unprompted (open-ended) but should focus on design and navigation.

- Participation: present web site in class

Step 7 (Spring Break) – Project 1 Due: After collecting peer feedback from other students, you should revise your portfolio in response to the feedback and finish any revisions to the site. Then submit the URL of your portfolio to me for evaluation by Friday during Spring Break (see syllabus for specific date). This gives you extra time to finish the project if you need it. The portfolio can obviously be turned in earlier but I will start grading them that Friday. This will be the final grade for the portfolio. You will be able to continue to revise the portfolio as the semester continues and I will revisit these revisions upon request.

Grading

Participation: Each week you will get a participation grade for completing that step of the assignment. You will receive participation credit for completing each step of the process on time.

Final: This project counts as 30% of the course grade. I will evaluate your portfolio on the basis of its professionalism, its overall design, and the quality of its information. Page design and basic site construction will be emphasized.