

Genre Writing Portfolio

While portfolios are standard practice in many writing courses, the details of this project also spring from the discussions we've had in class and your collaborative project work identifying a disconnect between your college work and future career work (i.e. "the real world").

The guidelines below offer the outline for each piece that will be included in the final version of the portfolio. We will also review notes on each type of writing during class. If you miss one of these sessions, it is your responsibility to review the posted notes and **see me outside of class** to clarify your understanding.

Three of the four parts of the portfolio have rough/revised draft deadlines. The final version of these pieces will be due as part of the final portfolio (see deadline below). Therefore, it is important you continue to work on your final version outside of class, even after we have moved on to a new writing. As always, please use my office hours for further help with your writing at any stage of the process.

4 Required Elements

1. **A cover letter for the final version of the portfolio.** This cover letter is directed to personnel at a job you have located that represents the type of work you would like to do in the future, or the dean or department chair of a graduate program you wish to pursue. Therefore, to write this letter, you will need to find a listing on a career website for such a job or consult the school website for this program. Focus the cover letter on introducing yourself to the company representative/university administrator and highlighting how the enclosed portfolio represents the kind of successful research, communication and writing skills necessary for such a job/program.

A standard cover letter is 3-4 paragraphs (rarely more than a page), single spaced, block format, with an inside address, salutation and closing. I will post examples for your review, but you can locate these easily online.

This part is completed last. However, you can certainly start looking now for the job or graduate program.

2. **An analysis of your online persona.** Start by running a search for yourself online, the way a future employer/grad school representative might. Collect the sites that are most prominent; if you have a large social media presence, consider limiting your analysis to 3-4 key sites. Using elements of both visual and rhetorical analysis, synthesize the information you located. What did this search reveal? How would you sum up your overall social media profile? *Relate this information to at least one of the essays about technology and identity from chapter 6.* How does this compare to other identities you possess? Think about the ideas from your photoessay, for instance.

Finally, conduct some primary research about the job field or program you wish to enter. We're used to hearing the consequences of posting the "wrong things" on social media, but more attention today is focused on how a social media profile connects to your job market. How do companies/schools/grad school reps in this field use various forms of social media? How important is a positive or strong social media presence in this line of work? How can you tell? (hint: here again, look at job listings and articles about this industry).

Cite in MLA or APA format any secondary sources (including the text essay) you quote, paraphrase or summarize material from both in text and on a Works Cited/References page. The final analysis should be a minimum of 1000 words in MLA essay format.

First rough draft due in class 10/23; revised draft due in class 10/28. See syllabus policies for rough draft workshops. Full credit given only for participation in both workshops.

3. **Response to an author in your field of work/study.** For this writing, locate a scholarly publication or forum related to your major or career field and an article written for this publication/forum on a topic of interest to you. Your response to this piece should be directed to a primary audience of both the original writer as well as the primary audience for this publication/forum. In other words, you shape your response around the idea that your colleagues in the field are listening to you speak back to the writer.

It will be important to have a focus for your response beyond a vague, "here are some things I'd like to say about that article." Here are some ideas for a focus—pick one as a main theme of your response, not all of them:

- a. Why do you feel compelled to write in response to this piece?
- b. Why is the issue under discussion important to keep discussing?
- c. Do you agree or disagree with the original author?
- d. Do you want to expand the discussion in a new direction?
- e. How does the article relate to other ideas within this field?

The format of the response should be an open letter to the editor-style writing. Single space, with double-spacing between paragraphs. Head the letter "To the Editor" or a similar style greeting—see samples from your publication. Do not title your response (the publication generally assigns the title); include your name at the end, instead.

This will be a longer letter than typically found in a newspaper, for instance; minimum 700 words. Include the title and author of the original article in the opening of your letter.

First rough draft due in class 11/4; revised rough draft due in class 11/6. See syllabus policies for rough draft workshops. Full credit given only for participation in both workshops.

4. **Summary and critique of preliminary research.** This piece reflects the start of your research project, the guidelines for which are separate and will be located under Assignment Guidelines. Once you have selected a topic, locate and review 5-7 research sources for potential use in your project. In this writing, summarize the key ideas of these sources and how they relate to one another (500-600 words) and critique the validity and usefulness of these sources (500-600 words). Include an MLA Works Cited or APA References page at the end (this page is not included in the word count).

Rough draft due in class 11/18; revised rough draft due for conference session Weeks 13-14.

The final draft of this portfolio is due during exam week by Thursday, 12/18 at 11:59 PM to the assignment dropbox ONLY. Submissions to other locations will not be credited. Merge all documents into one file submission, with the cover letter at the top. Do not include rough drafts. The dropbox will close after this deadline and no late submissions accepted—no exceptions.