

ENG 101: Reflective Portfolio Letter

Due on December 13, 2015 before 4:00pm (along with all components of Digital Portfolio)

Assignment overview and guidelines

Develop a letter addressed to the Portfolio Assessment Committee that shows how you've achieved the learning outcomes for our first-year composition course. This letter should exhibit and discuss in detail concrete examples from your portfolio. Your letter should not simply say what you have learned; rather, you should use the work you have produced during the course to *show* how you have achieved the course learning outcomes.

Write between 750 and 1250 words, not including the exhibits that you reference in the letter.

Display your letter, labeled as "Reflective Portfolio Letter," as either the first Page visitors to your website see, or a Page immediately visible on your course landing page that is reachable with a single click.

Use a minimum of **five** artifacts as exhibits in your letter.

- At least one artifact should come from a blog entry.
- At least one artifact should come from a multimodal exercise.
- At least one artifact should come from a formal essay.

The Portfolio Assessment Committee is composed of a number of first-year writing instructors as well as graduate students from across the university who serve as fellows in the Writing Program. Several of these individuals helped create the Program learning outcomes, and they are excited to see how students have achieved those outcomes.

How to approach the Reflective Portfolio Letter

- Develop an argument in which you show how you have achieved the course outcomes; write in the first person and support the assertions you make about your learning by including exhibits from your portfolio (see below)
- Explore each piece of your writing process (such as blog entries and other forms of low-stakes writing, multimodal exercises, prewriting, group exercises, formal essays, plans for revision developed with peers and your professor, and revisions) and the part each piece plays in producing a "final" product or products
- Discuss your failures and how they turned into successes
- Describe your successes; then discuss how you intend to improve in other areas that need further development

How to use artifacts as exhibits in the Reflective Portfolio Letter

As stated above, the Reflective Portfolio Letter requires that you support assertions you make about your learning by including exhibits from your portfolio.

Examples of exhibits may include:

- A link to the part of a document that you discuss in your letter
- A screen capture with a detailed caption
- A screencast in which you show and talk about one or more artifacts
- Quoted or block quoted material from an artifact
- Reported or quoted feedback from others
- A series of illustrations (or quotations) that show how a particular artifact or part of an artifact evolved

Use the course Learning Outcomes as Guides for Reflective Writing

The Portfolio Assessment Committee will be interested to see how you've achieved the outcomes listed below. As you write, try to apply the same rhetorical vocabulary described in the outcomes.

Outcome 1: *Rhetorical composition*. You will compose texts in multiple genres, using multiple modes with attention to rhetorical situations. By composing a variety of texts using a number of composing technologies, you will demonstrate understanding of audience, purpose, and constraints. You will use and adapt generic conventions, including organization, development, and style.

- Suggestions for responding to Outcome 1: Describe your portfolio. Guide your reader through the works it contains. Describe how these projects allowed you to practice writing for an audience in various ways, emphasizing in your description your attention to organization, style, and word choice. Discuss the genres in your portfolio (multimodal compositions, blog entries, and formal essays, for example). How do those genres speak to different audiences and rhetorical situations? How were you able to use a range of genres to make arguments?

Outcome 2: *Critical thinking and reading resulting in writing*. As you undertake scholarly inquiry and produce your own arguments, you will summarize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the ideas of others. You will encounter the ideas of others in a variety of texts generated both inside and outside the classroom: print, visual, aural, oral, and spatial. You will learn accepted and ethical ways to integrate other texts into your work and how to rightly handle citation and adaptation. You will use writing as a critical thinking tool.

- Suggestions for responding to Outcome 2: Think about what you have learned this semester as a critical thinker and reader. What realizations do you have about yourself as a person engaged in inquiry and scholarship? What projects in your portfolio best represent your growing abilities to craft an argument, read the arguments of others, and incorporate and challenge ideas from the arguments of others? Explain one or two important choices you made in this project/these projects and how that work developed you as a critical thinker and reader.

Outcome 3: *Writing as process*. You will understand and practice writing as a process, recursively implementing strategies of research, drafting, revision, editing, and reflection. In learning about your own writing process and doing guided reflective writing about that process, you will learn to critique your own and others' works. You will also become aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text.

- Suggestions for responding to Outcome 3: Describe the changes in one of the projects included in your portfolio; describe those changes as they occurred from the project's inception through its "final" form. Did you use strategies for idea and writing development discussed in the course, such as outlining, prewriting, taking notes, meeting with peers, talking through your thoughts aloud, emailing your professor about an idea, and blogging? Ultimately, your writing process includes each step you take from the initial notes you sketch on a napkin to an outline to a first draft and eventually, a final product.

Outcome 4: *Familiarity with contemporary debates surrounding animals*. You will identify and describe several ways in which humans and animals interact in the industrialized world as well as how the human/animal divide has been recently engaged by scientists, writers, philosophers, policymakers, and other interested parties.

- Suggestions for responding to Outcome 4: Compare your familiarity with human-animal relationships at the beginning of the course to your familiarity with those relationships now. What issues, perspectives, and realizations did you have about human-animal relationships through your engagement with course readings, class discussions, and/or the development of your projects? How were your ideas challenged, reinforced, and/or complicated?