**Portfolio Options for spring 2011**

**March 16, 2011**

Dear Colleagues,

I’m writing to explain choices that you have in setting up your xx33 portfolios.

As you might recall, the portfolio research group (Jennifer Campbell, Richard Colby, David Daniels, Doug Hesse, Matt Hill, Jeff Ludwig, Heather Martin, Jennifer Novak, Rebekah Shultz-Colby) last year formulated options for WRIT 1133 portfolios. Option 1 emphasizes argument; Option 2 focuses on student reflection; Option 3 invites you to re-imagine and revise the prompt in ways you find meaningful within the context of your course.

With these options, we encourage everyone to develop 1133/1633/1733 Portfolios that are a systematic and organic outgrowth of your own course structure. Students we interviewed said that completing the portfolio was a good learning experience that was more valuable when integrated into their classes. We realize that there are a number of ways to do this effectively, and we look forward to learning more about how faculty prefer to foster student learning through these final collections and articulations of their work.

In fall 2010, the portfolio group studied aspects of student writing contained in the new prompts. We will continue to include findings as part of our university assessment report.

In order to upload the prompts to Portfolio, we’ll need you to decide which option you’ll use and tell Amy, via email, by April 2. If you’re going to craft your own prompt, Amy needs the exact wording of that prompt by April 2 as well. The default is Option 1. IMPORTANT CAVEAT: Anyone teaching WRIT xx33 for the first time must choose either option 1 or option 2.

Doug Hesse

**Option 1: “Making a Case”**

**What is the rhetorical situation?**

Create a portfolio that shows a group of DU writing instructors, including your own professor, how well you have achieved the goals of WRIT 1133. Your readers will find two ingredients most helpful and convincing. (1) They’ll want to read several examples of your writing, and (2) they’ll want to read your analysis and discussion of those examples. Together, these ingredients should show your audience how well you’ve achieved the course’s goals.

**What should I include in the portfolio?**

Your final portfolio should consist of four pieces of writing. Please include three papers you have already written, one of which may come from a DU course other than WRIT 1133 (for example, from WRIT 1122 or from any other course). You will also include an introductory essay that describes and analyses those papers. To be most effective, the introductory essay will probably need to be about three to four pages long.

**How should I select papers for the portfolio?**

Choose three papers that together demonstrate your understanding and accomplishment of three goals of 1133:

• Demonstrate practical knowledge and understanding of academic research traditions (for example, text-based/interpretive; measurement-based/empirical; and observational/qualitative) through effectively writing in **at least two** of those traditions.

• Demonstrate practical knowledge and understanding of rhetorical differences between writing for academic audiences and writing for popular audiences.

• Demonstrate practical knowledge and understanding of using sources in your writing. This includes finding, evaluating, synthesizing, critiquing, and documenting published sources appropriate to given rhetorical situations.

**How should I write the introductory essay?**

Your introductory essay should:

* introduce the papers you’ve selected, explaining the assignment and/or rhetorical situation for the work. Remember that most of your readers will be unfamiliar with your class.
* use those papers as evidence to illustrate the extent to which your writing has met the course goals. Please refer to or quote specific elements from your papers to support your claims.

Because, in effect, you’re making an argument about your writing, your readers will value an ethos characterized by honesty, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness. In addition to discussing the strengths of your work this quarter, you might also discuss limitations of your papers. This kind of discussion will help us understand how we might improve our courses.

**How should I submit my portfolio?**

Although you will be presenting four different writings, please cut and paste them into **one** single document. Appearing first in this document should be your Introduction and Analysis. The order of the other documents is up to you.

Upload that file into DU’s portfolio system.

Thank you!

**Option 2: “Reflective”**

**What is the rhetorical situation?**

How have you developed as a writer and researcher during WRIT 1133? Create a portfolio in which you explore this question. Your professor and other DU writing instructors will be very interested in your self-analysis and reflection. To do this well, you’ll need to select several examples of your writing, and you’ll need to explain and discuss the pieces you’ve chosen.

**What should I include in the portfolio?**

Your final portfolio should consist of four pieces of writing. Please include three papers you have already written, one of which may come from a DU course other than WRIT 1133 (for example, from WRIT 1122 or from any other course). The fourth piece is a reflective essay that describes and analyses those papers. To be most effective, the reflection will probably need to be about three to four pages long.

**How should I select papers for the portfolio?**

Choose three papers that illustrate the writing and research skills you developed in the course.

**How should I write the reflective essay?**

Your reflective essay should:

* Explain the papers you’ve selected, explaining the assignment and/or rhetorical situation for the work. Remember that most of your readers will be unfamiliar with your class.
* Reflect on you have learned through writing these assignments. Please refer to or quote specific elements from your papers to illustrate your observations. You might also talk about your drafting processes and what you learned or how you grew during the course. Try to connect your work to the concepts and strategies that your class emphasized. .

Your readers will value an ethos characterized by honesty, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness. In addition to discussing the strengths of your work this quarter, you might also discuss limitations of your papers. You might also reflect on how your writing and researching abilities transfer to future writing situations.

**How should I submit my portfolio?**

Although you will be presenting four different writings, please cut and paste them into **one** single document. Appearing first in this document should be your Reflection and Analysis. The order of the other documents is up to you.

Upload that file into DU’s portfolio system.

Thank you!

**Option 3: Created by Individual Professor**

Note to Colleagues: The third portfolio option allows you to design your own portfolio. As you write your prompt, please meet some important criteria:

1. Students must select and present two or more pieces of writing they produced in the course.

2. Students must include at least three pages of writing about the pieces they’ve chosen. This may also include writing about the course itself.

3. The portfolio should help readers understand how students have met the goals of WRIT 1133.

4. Students should upload their portfolios to the DU portfolio.

In designing your own portfolio and prompt, you could combine prompts 1 and 2 and ask students to argue for how their portfolio demonstrates how their writing meets course goals **and** ask students to reflect on how they have grown as a writer. Or you could create an entirely different option of your own choosing, as long as it meets the criteria above.