WR 39C: ARGUMENT & RESEARCH

Your ePortfolio: Components and Grading Criteria

Logistical Matters: The submission deadline of your final ePortfolio is [DATE] at 12:00 pm, high noon. To submit your ePortfolio please make it publicly viewable. (We will talk about how to enable the publicly viewable option.)

I. Its Contents

A. The Basics

Required Artifacts:
- Reflective Introduction (5-8 pages, approx. 1500 words minimum)
- Historical Conversations Project, Graded Version (with or without final grade and comments)
- Advocacy Project, Graded Version

While the required elements will give a basic shape to your ePortfolio, the specific details of its organization are yours to construct. Think of your portfolio as a growing archive of evidence that will become full of interesting pieces of evidence as the quarter progresses. You will quickly accumulate artifacts that document your learning. Some of these artifacts will become particularly meaningful. Use them—things like drafts, instructor or peer comments, organizational notes, before and after versions of sentences and paragraphs, final versions of your essays—to document the work you have done, demonstrate your role in your learning, and articulate your intellectual strategies as they pertain to college level rhetoric, composition, and communication.

Be creative and attentive when making choices about organizing the sections and pages in your portfolio. For example, are the compositions going to serve as the primary organizational elements by following the introductory essay in sequential order? Or, are you going to place the compositions and other examples of your best writing together in one “Showcase Writing Section” and organize the other elements of your portfolio in a different manner, along thematic lines (“Revision Strategies,” “Productive Mistakes”) or in terms of notable developments in your writing (“My Breakthroughs”)?

B. Reflective Introduction (5-8 pages, double-spaced, approx. 1500 words minimum, 10 pages max)

This document introduces you as a college-level writer, thinker, and communicator to a community of your peers. Its fundamental purpose is to illustrate the role you have played in your learning over the course of the quarter in 39C. You take responsibility for the quality of your work in this document (and in your ePortfolio) by assessing your performance. The reflective introduction accomplishes two major objectives: (1) it is an analytically incisive introduction that delivers and substantiates arguments about your development as a writer and communicator; and (2) it offers a balanced analytical assessment of your progress.
Guiding Suggestions for Writing the Reflective Introduction

-The reflective introduction should be an analytically rigorous essay that documents the rich textures of your learning this quarter and perhaps throughout the WR39 sequence of courses (39A, 39B, and 39C).

-Think of the rest of your ePortfolio as an archive of evidence that you will use in support of the arguments put forward in the introductory essay.

-Refer to the various pieces of evidence from the archival portion of the portfolio in the introductory essay. Guide the reader to them and clearly explain your artifacts.

The introductory essay should document the progress you have made over the course of the quarter in the following four areas (You may choose to focus on the first three if you cannot address the fourth):

1. Your Composing Process

Guiding Prompts: You do not need to answer all of the following questions, select those you find useful.

-Explain what you have learned about the process of generating a research-based composition.
-What have you learned about arranging the elements of your composition? Have you become more skillful and able to control your presentation of evidence and integrate various pieces of evidence into a coherent and meaningful argument?
-How did conducting research all throughout the drafting process help you to make decisions about the organizational logic of your compositions and essays? In what ways, specifically, did you formulate and reformulate research strategies, framing questions, and guiding claims/arguments by using research?
-Explain how your process of writing drafts, source evaluations, and annotations evolved over the course of the quarter. Did you become more effective at pre-writing tasks?
-Have you experienced moments when the light bulb suddenly illuminated? Can you explain why and how this happened?
-Use specific examples from your portfolio.
2. Rhetoric, Argumentation, & Multi-modal Communication

Guiding Prompts: You do not need to answer all of the following questions, select those you find useful.

-What have you learned about argumentation and persuasion through the process of generating two multi-modal compositions?
-Explain how creating a multi-modal composition helped you to articulate your arguments and understand your ethos as the author.
-Can you explain how you arrived at the solutions you chose to advocate? Did you experiment with other solutions before deciding on the one(s) you chose to advocate? Was there a specific moment when your thesis became clear to you, and can you explain what you did to arrive at such a moment of clear insight?
-Explain and demonstrate why and how you used various arguments and counter-arguments and numerous and different sources to strengthen your claims.
-Use specific examples from your portfolio.

3. Revision

Guiding Prompts: You do not need to answer all of the following questions, select those you find useful.

-Explain your process of revision. How big of a role does revision play in the process of generating and discovering arguments?
-Explain how you benefitted from feedback from your teacher and from your peers both in workshops and in office hours. How do you respond to criticism? What sort of critic are you becoming? Use examples of feedback you received on your work-in-progress, your final versions, and in workshops, as well as advice you gave to your peers to address these questions.
-Analyze how you benefit from writing multiple drafts in terms of argumentative presentation, evidentiary support, and narrative development.
-Explain and analyze the types of revisions that benefit you. Do you make broad, conceptual revisions? Do you make structural revisions and reorganize paragraphs? Do you rewrite sentences? Do you make fine word choices? Do you alter your body of evidence through research or omission?
-Use specific examples from your portfolio.

4. Transfer

Guiding Prompts: You do not need to answer all of the following questions, select those you find useful.

-Now that you have completed the sequence of courses that fulfills the Lower Division Writing Requirement, look back to where you were at the beginning of the quarter, or even at the beginning of your college-writing experience, and look forward to where you would like to be and assess how your practices and habits of researching, writing, and organizing have changed and evolved.
-Have you already applied what you learned in the WR 39 series to writing assignments in other classes? Explain using specific examples, if possible.
-Are you using a variety of strategies to approach your writing assignments in all of your classes? Did the WR39 series of courses influence your ability to make effective choices about how to approach other writing assignments such as lab reports, memos, blue book exams, short response papers, and any other examples of writing you have been assigned in school? Did the WR39 series of courses influence the ways in which you communicate when you write or communicate outside of school, perhaps in your communities or in your extra-curricular activities? Are you using the same strategies in different contexts as you consider the demands of different situations, both in school and out?
-Use specific examples from your portfolio.

C. Supporting Materials for Your Portfolio

1. Selections & Selecting

Your portfolio should be richly textured, populated by numerous artifacts. All of the “process” work you do for class will generate artifacts; put them into your portfolio as you go along, knowing that you will continue to organize and reorganize it over the course of the quarter. But select the most meaningful artifacts carefully, and write detailed captions for them so that whoever views your ePort understands your reasons for choosing a specific piece of evidence.

Possible Artifacts:
-Examples of your best writing
-“Before-and-After” examples of writing you revised
-Source evaluations and annotations
-Research proposal and prospectus
-Examples of your writing from other classes in comparison to the writing for your WR 39C course
-Instructor & Peer feedback
-Reflections on your work
-Cellphone pictures of your notetaking strategies, diagrams of your arguments, or other things that represent you and your learning.
-Your source materials: video, pdf files, websites, cartoons, etcetera and so forth
-What else might you select?

II. Portfolio Grade (30% of Final Course Grade)

A. Reflective Introduction, Captions, and Organization

-The grade for the reflective introduction will establish the base grade for the portfolio.
-The quality of the captions and the clarity and creativity of the portfolio’s organization may move the base grade up or down, in increments of 1/3, by one full letter grade. There may be no adjustment. For example, suppose you write a good reflective introduction and receive the grade of B on it, but you submit a very well organized portfolio with detailed captions that explain handfuls of artifacts in meaningful ways. Your overall grade for the portfolio may move up by 1/3, and you would receive the grade of B+ for the portfolio. Suppose you get a B on your essay but submit an excellent ePortfolio, one that’s meticulous in its organization and is bursting with artifacts and detailed captions. Your grade may go up by 2/3, and you then receive the grade of A- on the final ePortfolio.
-There may be no adjustment of the base grade if the intrinsic qualities of the ePort—clarity, creativity, and organization—are the same as the reflective introduction.

**Guiding Questions for the Instructor:**

-What is the overall quality of the reflective introduction? Are the arguments substantive and supported by artifacts?
-Has the student made persuasive arguments about his or her progress in the three or four specified areas in the reflective introduction and throughout the portfolio?
-Are there enough artifacts to substantiate the arguments? Is it richly textured? Are the captions useful? Are a number of captions well detailed?
-Is the portfolio well organized?
-Are there typos, grammatical glitches, and other surface-level hitches?