


Chapter 7

Portfolio Assessment in Higher Education: General Uses and Various Applications

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores portfolio assessment in undergraduate education, offering practical guidance for students and instructors. It examines three common portfolio formats: websites, USB flash drives, and compact discs. The chapter provides strategies for effective implementation. These strategies include but are not limited to the planning and the selection phase of your portfolio contents and the design considerations needed for enhancing your portfolio's aesthetics to improve self-branding and viewer engagement. Other strategies in the chapter include some sample ideas and adaptable rubrics drawn from several generalizable fields of study, with the goal of providing applicable and adaptable resources for readers. Since the chapter is written for a broad and transferable understanding of the topic of portfolio evaluations, the chapter's material is relevant to students, instructors, and instructional support professionals across a wide range of disciplines in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

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WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO

Portfolios provide a valuable means for students to demonstrate and gauge their abilities in a field of study (Carpenter, Ray, & Bloom, 1995). Portfolio assessments can be considered a form of inquiry-based learning because this form of evaluation prompts students to respond to a series of questions, determining how and which samples of their documentation best answer those aforementioned questions (Hollins, 2019). A portfolio project is also a dynamically reflexive assignment, because instructors provide feedback directly within the student-created project when they return the assignment to the student. This fosters a collaborative and thought-provoking learning environment for both students and instructors.

As a multifaceted examination tool, that showcases work samples, the portfolio's "contents" are often guided towards a specific audience. These samples are gathered over a designated period and compiled into a structured format, which is the portfolio itself. As previously stated, portfolios serve as a form of evaluation, that is increasingly electronic in nature (Syzdykova, Koblandin, Mikhaylova, & Akinina, 2021). Evolving from their origins in the visual arts as an entirely paper-based product, portfolios have transitioned to the digitized format prevalent today (Thomas, 1998; Davis and Ponnampereuma, 2005). The transition and mass adoption of portfolio assignments in diverse fields of study has been hastened by the development of personal computers. While portfolios are often exclusively presented digitally, they can also be simultaneously presented in a traditional, paper-based format. If a paper format is also chosen, it is crucial to ensure a professional presentation through high-quality digital printing and the use of a glossy paper; and, it is recommended to use appropriate packaging solutions that could include a leather binder, or a coil or hardbound binding.

The work samples within a portfolio can encompass a variety of items that can include student writings, speeches, video productions, artwork, and other exemplary

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