

What Can Students Do with Their Writing Beyond Our Courses? Build an Expanded Writing Portfolio

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Where Does Student Writing Go and What Do They Do with It?

- ▶ Many of us have our students collect and reflect on their writing during our courses, but what can students do with that writing after they complete our courses?

- Your Course
- Concurrent or Future Courses
- Degree Program
- Beyond

So What Can Students Do with Their Writing?

- ▶ To continue to improve as writers and to help connect what they are learning in one course to another course, our students can create an expanded writing portfolio.

What Is an “Expanded Writing Portfolio”?

- ▶ Such a portfolio goes beyond the student’s work in one writing course in high school or college.
- ▶ This portfolio may focus on writing in the discipline (WID) or be more interdisciplinary (WAC).
- ▶ Students can expand their portfolio beyond any course, degree, or college requirements.

What Are Potential Benefits of the Expanded Portfolio?

- ▶ Creating an expanded portfolio promotes “writing for transfer” or applying learning in one course to another course and beyond.
- ▶ One meaning of this concept is “Writing used as a tool to help people think about the purposes and goals for their learning”; another meaning is “A writing-based course or a writing program that is designed to help students acquire skills, processes, and attitudes that they can use (‘transfer’) in later courses or professional work” (Thaiss).

What Are Potential Benefits of the Expanded Portfolio?

- ▶ This collection of writing students compile becomes a resource they can share with others (including schools and potential employers) to demonstrate their interests and abilities.
- ▶ Creating and revising their portfolio can encourage students to value their own writing and make it public.

How Can We Help Students Build an Expanded Writing Portfolio?

- ▶ Connecting the writing portfolio to the course's and/or school's learning outcomes is one way.
- ▶ Emphasizing reflection and application of writing, skills, and new knowledge is another.
- ▶ Both of these approaches fit with what Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak call “teaching for transfer” (TFT).

What Are Some Forms the Expanded Portfolio Can Take?

- ▶ The most practical form is an e-portfolio (using tools such as Google Drive, Padlet, and Weebly) because of its flexibility.
- ▶ Most e-portfolios include student writing samples and reflections. Here's are two examples for consideration: <http://ellimedinger.weebly.com/index.html> and <https://getrice.wordpress.com/>

Where Does This Lead in Terms of Recommendations?

- ▶ Writing teachers should collaborate to devise practical ways of integrating portfolios that extend beyond the reach of our individual courses.
- ▶ We should ask not only what students should learn (know or be able to do) by the end of our course but also how students can apply that learning to other courses now and in the future.

Questions for Discussion

- ▶ Please share your ideas and experiences:
 - What types of assignments (portfolio-based or otherwise) do we currently use that promote transfer/application of learning in one course to another?
 - How might we create, integrate, and evaluate a portfolio designed to help students connect learning in two courses (e.g. Comp and Comp 2) or learning across the curriculum?

Works Cited

- ▶ Thaiss, Chris. “Writing for Transfer: Increasing Student Motivation and Preparing Students for Present and Future Needs.” Labette Community College, Gribben Lecture Series. Parsons, KS. 4 Oct. 2013. Lecture.
- ▶ Yancey, Kathleen Blake, Lianne Robertson, and Kara Taczak. *Writing Across Contexts: Transfer, Composition, and Sites of Writing*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2014. Print.