

**PART 7. ADDITIONAL DATA: STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS**

At the beginning of the course, and before the Connector Project, students completed a [questionnaire](#) (See [Appendix B](#)) in which they provided demographic data.

**Table 11. Student Demographics by Percentage of Students**

		1st Rotation	4th Rotation
Student Demographics		% of Students	% of Students
Semester in Vis Lit	1st	78	16
	2nd	22	84
Major	ARCH	50	39
	ARTP	28	26
	IDES	0	19
	TXCD	22	16
Year in school	1	72	55
	2	6	32
	3	22	6
	4	0	3
	>4	0	3

KEY: ARCH = Architecture; ARTP = Art majors and Art minors; IDES = Interior Design; TXCD = Textiles and Clothing Design; Fashion Merchandising

**7.1 Was the sample group representative of the program as a whole?**

The sampled class was in the Fall semester or the first rotation of the program year, which typically runs Fall-Spring, with repeats of selected courses in the Summer as the program budget allows.

The mix of students was consistent with program guidelines:

- Students are encouraged to enter the program the first semester of their freshman year if possible.
- A limited number of students may enter the program Spring or Summer semester.
- Students may take the two semesters and eight courses of Vis Lit in any order.
- Each studio course will have a mix of majors, with approximately 50-60% of the students from Architecture and Interior Design, 25 to 30% from Art and 15 to 20% from Textiles.

**7.2 Previous experience in Visual Literacy**

As expected, most of the First Rotation students (78%) were in their first semester of Vis Lit, and had no prior Vis Lit courses.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the First Rotation class was almost the inverse of the Fourth Rotation class, in which 84% of the students were in their second semester of Vis Lit and had taken three other Vis Lit courses, Analysis & Composition, Perceptual Drawing and Color.

<sup>9</sup> The remaining 12% of the First Rotation students were in their second semester of Vis Lit. These second semester students had entered the program in the previous Spring or Summer semester and had completed the recommended courses of Analysis & Composition and Perceptual Drawing.

### 7.3 Previous academic experience (year in school)

Vis Lit is intended as a first year program and the demographics were consistent with this expectation, as 72% of the First Rotation students were freshmen. However, the Vis Lit program, and the participating departments, are accommodating increasing numbers of transfer students, both external transfers from other schools and internal transfers from other majors. I expected that more of these transfer students would be in the second semester, reflecting the logistics of curriculum evaluation and approvals for transfer students, and the demographics bear this out. The second semester Fourth Rotation class had a smaller number of first year students—55%—than the First Rotation class.<sup>10</sup> reflecting, perhaps, the time lag for course and program approvals for transfer students.

## PART 8. REFLECTION AND QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

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After analyzing the data from these First Rotation or least experienced students, I found one thing I expected and several things I didn't expect.

I expected that these First Rotation students would, like their Fourth Rotation counterparts, find visual methods of brainstorming more effective, and this conclusion is clearly supported by the data.

What I did not expect was how similar the data would be. The same three visual methods (*Drawing*, *Discussing using visuals* and *Exploring materials*) were again the most used, the most preferred and the most effective, and the students had a clear preference for drawing. I was surprised by the popularity of drawing, given that most of these First Rotation students had not yet had a formal drawing course. What this underscores for me is the potential for students to explore drawing-as-visual thinking regardless of formal training in drawing-as-representation.

The mix of methods used by the First Rotation students did have some significant differences from the Fourth Rotation students:

- First, I was struck by the differences in how the First and Fourth Rotation students approached materials. Exploring materials was widely used by both groups, but was much more effective for the Fourth Rotation students (77% versus 33%). Also, while 19% of the Fourth Rotation students included materials samples as part of their brainstorming evidence, none of the First Rotation students did. My speculation is that the more experienced students are more familiar with the consequences of different materials and more comfortable with the process of finding inspiration in them. This is consistent with an express objective in many of the Vis Lit courses to have students gain greater experience with a range of materials and material consequences.
- I was surprised by how many of the First Rotation students used writing to brainstorm (72% compared to 45% of the Fourth Rotation students). I am curious whether this preference for writing is just a statistical artifact of this particular group or whether this difference would remain with a larger sample.
- Finally, I noted with surprise that while 83% of the First Rotation students found discussing with visuals to be highly effective, only 50% preferred that method of brainstorming. I surmise that the Fourth Rotation students, all of whom preferred this method, are more comfortable with the use of visuals because of their experience with visuals as an accompaniment to class explanations and critiques.

I was most surprised by the similarity in overall quality between the work of the First Rotation and Fourth Rotation students. This similarity in quality is good news for my course and for the program, because my course is supposed to be a "stand-alone" course which can be taken by any Vis Lit student, with any skill level, at any time and without prerequisites. Therefore, the fact that both inexperienced students and experienced students can perform well on the same project suggests that I am, in fact, successfully teaching both groups of students, at least on this project, and that is a reassuring.

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<sup>10</sup> A student's year in school does not necessarily reflect any prior design experience. In my student advising, I generally see that both internal transfer students, from other departments or majors, and external transfer students, most of which are from community colleges, have generally concentrated on their general education courses, or have pursued upper level courses in an unrelated field.

What puzzles me, and what I want to reflect on further, is that my subjective assessment of First Rotation versus Fourth Rotation students is that the Fourth Rotation students are much, much easier to teach--that they are more capable by a factor of two or three hundred percent. The results of this inquiry simply don't support my assumption.

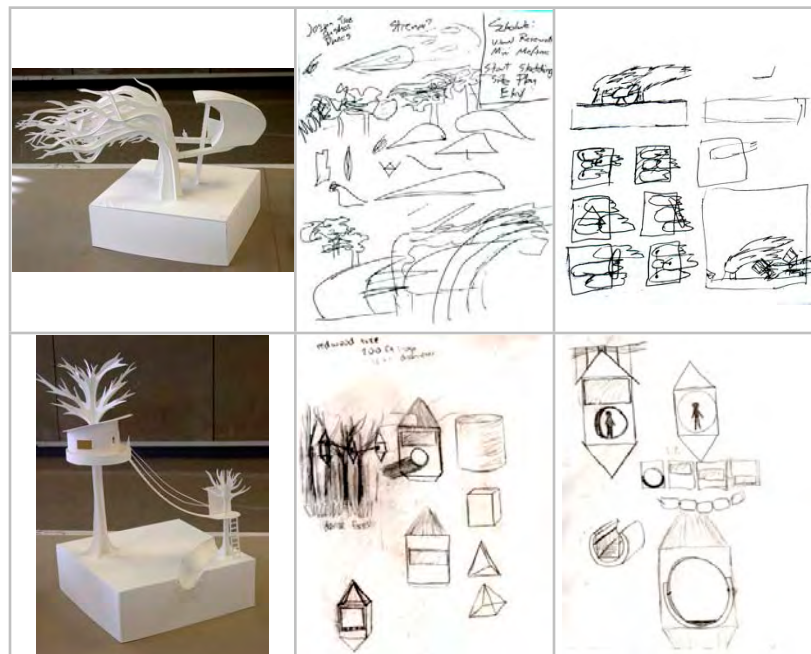
I suspect that I am confusing different sets of skills—personal skills such as time management and self discipline and the ability to interact effectively with colleagues in studio—and design skills such as an understanding of values or scale or technical skills such as the ability to accurately measure and securely join materials. What I suspect is that the Fourth Rotation students do have more well developed skills of time management and much greater ease and effectiveness in the studio environment as a whole—which means that the class sessions feel “easier” to me. At the same time, these Fourth Rotation students are still first year students and still need to encounter, and reinforce, basic design concepts and skills in each of their four courses.

I have been wondering for several semesters whether there should be more difference in the content of my course in the fall semester and the spring semester and what those differences should be. What this inquiry suggests to me is that I need to think about two related sets of questions: what the general substance of the course should be in the fall and the spring, and what accommodations I could make (in scheduling? in delivery?) to meet the different maturity levels of the fall and spring classes.

The unexpected result of my first inquiry is that I showed some of the the Fourth Rotation students' examples of visual brainstorming to the First Rotation students when I introduced the Connector project. Then, I had these First Rotation students also submit a reflection and visual evidence in their next project, which was a personal shelter. In the spring semester I had my spring semester students look at these evidence samples in connection with a new project (a pair of shoes that significantly alters the way one contacts the ground, either physically or psychologically or both) and submit visual evidence of their thinking in that project.

What I am finding by having students continuing to look at and to generate this sort of visual evidence is that their evidence and their projects are both becoming richer:

**Table 12. Personal Shelter project and visual evidence**





**speculate:** conjecture, consider possibilities, take risks to achieve an end  
**draw:** depict or describe; pull or lead in a particular direction  
**design:** conceive, fashion, invent, devise; work out the form for something

*Experience is what you have when  
what you expected does not occur.*  
—Lee Shulman

*The opposite of a correct statement  
is a false statement. But the  
opposite of a profound truth may  
well be another profound truth.*  
—Niels Bohr

*Your mind is a muscle. Use it.*  
—Ann Hamilton

*Nothing is a mistake. There is no  
win and no fail. There is only make.*  
—John Cage

*Forget perfectionism.  
Perfectionism is neurosis. Your  
goal is excellence, and that will  
come to you if you love and are  
devoted to drawing.*  
—Ciel Bergman

*Push it. Examine all things  
intensely and relentlessly. Probe  
and search each object in a piece  
of art; do not leave it, do not course  
over it, as if it were understood, but  
instead follow it down until you see  
it in the mystery of its own  
specificity and strength.*  
—Annie Dillard

*Forget about inspiration. You won't  
get anything done sitting around  
waiting for it to strike. Creativity is  
work and requires the total  
investment of body and mind.*  
—Twyla Tharp

*I'm not smarter than other people.  
It's just that I'm able to stick with a  
problem longer.*  
—Einstein

*Most of my advances were made  
by mistake. You uncover what is  
when you get rid of what isn't.*  
—Buckminster Fuller

## What is this course about?

This course, Speculative Drawing & Design, is a design course, not a drawing course. You will be doing lots of drawing, but you will be using drawing the way designers do: to investigate, describe, document, and communicate. You will be using drawing to think visually and to ask “what if” as you solve problems and develop your ideas. You will gain skills in construction and hone your craft as you employ basic elements of design in both 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional projects.

The aim of this course is for you to become a flexible, independent and self-directed designer. I want you to experience design as a continual process—of creating, making, evaluating and making again—which you can apply to other contexts and to other media in your continuing design education.

This course is tactile and hands-on. The classroom studio is a laboratory where you can experiment, take risks and go beyond easy solutions. My role is to facilitate your work and your learning, including helping you with materials and techniques and giving you useful feedback on your designs. But your own discoveries—the problems you encounter and the solutions you generate in studio, as you are working, and with the help and feedback of your colleagues, will be the primary way you will learn in this course.

I hope that you will demonstrate your personal commitment to and personal investment in your work by doing lots of making, that you will **PUSH** beyond what you already know and do, and that you will find your own voice and your own vision.

This course, like the other Vis Lit courses, is only eight weeks or one-half semester long, so it's essential that you get to work right away.

## How does this course fit into the Vis Lit curriculum? How does it relate to my major?

Vis Lit is an interdisciplinary foundation design program for all first year students in the design disciplines, including Architecture, Art, Interior Design, Textiles and Clothing Design. Vis Lit recognizes that all of these design areas share a common core of concepts and skills which are as applicable to a building as to a dress, a web page or a painting, and that design education is enriched by a diverse mix of students, faculty and approaches.

This course is relevant to you and your major because you will practice the general process of design as well as learn specific skills of composition, technique and critique. You will use this process and apply these skills again and again in your other courses as you work toward mastery. You are building a foundation in this course for your upper level study as well as testing out what area of design you are best suited for.

This course is different from the other Vis Lit courses in that you will be working on a small number of projects which you will be expected to develop as fully as possible. Because these projects are open-ended and relatively unstructured, they allow for a wide variety of responses. This means you will have the opportunity to express yourself and find your own voice as a designer. It also means that you will need to become comfortable with getting, changing, developing and discarding ideas and to manage your time wisely.

This course takes an expansive view of drawing which includes manipulated photos, transfers, rubbings and collage as well as journal work, pattern making and visual thinking. Your drawings will always be part of a larger whole and serve another function in addition to being “a drawing.” You will use the drawing skills you already possess and learn ways to enhance those skills to strengthen your design process.

This course is paired with 141A, Color, which takes a very different approach to design by using more structured exercises to dive deeply into one subject which is relevant to all fields of design. In the other semester of Vis Lit, 140 A & B, students study Analysis & Composition, which is a rigorous exploration of the principles of composition, and Perceptual Drawing, which is an intensive representational drawing course.

## What can I learn in this course?

### 1 You can learn to be a designer

- to engage in design as an iterative process of making, testing, questioning, critiquing and making again;
- to love questions as much as answers and to welcome “failures” and “mistakes”;
- to become comfortable with uncertainty and not knowing as you search for solutions;
- to be flexible and adaptable; to work with what is at hand and to learn to do a lot with a little;
- to give and to seek out honest feedback; to apply relevant feedback to your own work.

### 2 You can learn to push

- to **PUSH** beyond the easy solution or the expected response;
- to **WORK** outside your comfort zone (what you already know and do; your perceived limitations; your untested assumptions);
- to **ENGAGE** in flexible, imaginative self-directed thinking and making;
- to **UNDERSTAND** the distinction between stopping and finishing a design;
- to **EXPLORE** and to **EXPRESS** your voice and your vision
- to **MAKE** work which has presence: visual authority, expressiveness and engagement (the *ah!!!* effect)

### 3 You can learn basic design skills

- to **recognize** and **use** effectively (in both 2- and 3- dimensions) some **basic elements of design**:
  - positive and negative space
  - scale
  - gesture
  - a full range of values
  - framing
  - point of view
  - visual weight, visual balance and visual unity
- to **use drawing** as visual thinking and visual problem-solving;
- to **use drawing** to communicate;
- to approach **drawing in a free manner** and to use both traditional and digital drawing media;
- to **use basic techniques** of cutting, gluing, construction;
- to **use impeccable craft** in making your work.

## How can I help myself learn in this course? What does my instructor expect of me?

### 1 I expect you to work cooperatively in studio and to help maintain the studio space

Studio is a cooperative, collaborative environment where we are all designers, co-creators and colleagues. I expect you to maintain complete engagement, focused effort and a relaxed intensity in studio. We are not competing against each other in studio. Instead, we are working together to do our best work.

To be successful in this course you will need to work as much possible in studio where you have the

supplies and tools you need and where you can get help and feedback from each other from me. Working together in the studio on a common problem and seeing what others are doing is the best way to learn. As a result, the best predictor of your grade in this studio class is the amount of time you spend working in studio.

I expect you to be willing to help to each other, to be diligent about cleaning up and maintaining your workspace, the studio and the studio tools, and to practice safe working habits.

## **2 I expect you to get, give and use feedback**

Giving honest, thoughtful feedback is the most generous gift you can give a designer and being able to critique work—your own and others’—is essential to your own success. I expect you to look at, see, question, discuss and reflect on your own and others’ work continually.

I expect you to be open to all feedback, to consider it, and then to apply it skillfully to your work. I also expect you to listen thoughtfully in the critique of others’ work as you can always learn something which is relevant to your own work.

You will have formal critiques, informal critiques (pin-ups), and individual critiques (desk crits) of your work. Sometimes I will be critiquing your work. Sometimes you will be critiquing your own work or someone else’s. The purpose of all these critiques is the same: to help each of you to do your best work.

Our critiques will be concise and practical. We will be critiquing your designs based on the project criteria and asking two basic questions of your design: (1) What works (what meets the project criteria)? And **visually** why does it work? (2) What needs work (what doesn’t yet meet the project criteria)? And what suggestions do we have for what the designer could do to make the design work? Participating in critiques by being willing to point out what’s not working and to suggest alternatives will help your colleagues AND strengthen your own design skills.

**PLEASE NOTE:** I expect you to refine, revise, develop or remake your work based on the feedback you receive in critiques. There will always be a time gap between the final critique and the due date for a project for this purpose. Applying the feedback you get in critiques is often the difference between average and superlative work.

## **3 I expect you to bring your tools and materials to class**

You will need some basic drawing, cutting and measuring tools and supplies (see materials list) and you will need to bring these basic tools and supplies to studio every day. (There are lockers in the hall.) I will let you know when you need to bring other specific materials to studio. I want this course to be affordable so I encourage you to scrounge, re-use and share materials and supplies whenever possible.

## **4 I expect you to attend class**

Attendance is necessary for success in this course and I take attendance at each class. You can’t succeed in a studio class without coming to studio.

“Attending” class means arriving on time, being prepared and being ready to work. If you can’t come to class I expect an email. If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what you missed from another class member and for making up the work. (Some studio experiences can’t be replicated outside class.)

## **5 I expect you to plan your time and meet your deadlines**

This course is only eight weeks long and the workload is intense. You can plan on an average of nine hours a week of work outside class, depending on how effectively you use your in-class work time, but this is only an average. Projects may extend for two or three weeks, so you will need to plan your work periods, taking into account your other obligations. The projects are complex and the schedule allows for revising and remaking but not for procrastinating! Plan to *begin* the project when it is first assigned.

## **6 I expect you to push, to do your best, and to be willing to make mistakes**

One of the strengths of Vis Lit is the diversity of its students. Everyone in here has different interests, different experiences and different strengths. During this course, you can share your gifts (and each of you has them), learn more about others’ expertise, and develop skills in new areas. The goal for everyone in this course is the same: to start where you are and push beyond what you already know and do.

Keep asking yourself: have I taken advantage of each design opportunity in this project? Have I pushed my design as far as I can?



At the same time I hope that you will welcome “failure.” I hope that you will reframe “failure” as “the opportunity to learn a whole lot in a really short time.” Viewed this way, failure is an extremely efficient way to learn as it shows you immediately what doesn’t work and pushes you toward what does work.

Playing it safe and doing only what you know will work will only get you safety, and mediocrity. Keeping your failure rate at a high level will, paradoxically, result in many more successes, as you will discover something you don’t already know. Better a bold failure than a timid success: you will learn more and your designs will get better faster.

Welcome mistakes! Mistakes, which are often just unexpected or unknown consequences, often are the most successful elements of a project. Don’t worry about controlling everything. “Give chance a chance,” as chance can be a great muse.

Do your best, with the intention to improve. Working in this way will lead you to excellence.

### How will I be graded?

I will determine your grade for the course based on the following scale, which reflects my valuing both the process of making as well as what is made.

#### Attendance is 20% of your grade

20 points

You will start with 20 attendance points. **2 points will be deducted for each absence; 5 points will be deducted if your absence is on a critique day or photography day.** Critique/photography days will be announced in advance. No absences are excused. However, I do not deduct any points for your first 2 point absence and I may give you opportunities for extra credit points for attendance.

Some Friday classes may be reserved for work days and attendance will be optional. These work sessions will be announced in advance.

#### Your studio projects are 80% of your grade

80 points

Your studio points from all your projects will be totaled and divided by the total points possible to get a percentage, which will then be multiplied by 80% to get your studio project points. Each project will have a grade sheet with specific criteria, and these criteria will have been specified in the project assignment. The grading criteria will address both your design product and your process.

#### There are a maximum of five discretionary points possible

5 points

I MAY award you up to 5 discretionary points for outstanding improvement over the course period or extraordinary personal commitment IF your numeric grade does not adequately reflect your overall performance. (For example, if you had a disastrous start but then excelled on your later projects or you had an extremely brave and extremely bold “failure.”) I very rarely award these discretionary points.

I will calculate your final grade by adding together your attendance points, your studio project points and your discretionary points, if any (105 points maximum). I use a grading scale of 97-100 = A+, 93-96 = A, 90-92 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-, etc.

To be graded, your work must have your **NAME** legibly attached and your work must be ready for display (i.e. your work must be sturdy and drawings must be spray fixed if necessary.)

You will get a grade sheet returned after each project, so you will know how you are doing. If you ever have a question about your grade, please see me.

### What do I do if I have a question? Or need help?

Each studio session includes time for individual help. If you have questions that aren’t answered during studio, my office hours are Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30 to 2:30 in the studio at 105 Woods. Or, you can e-mail me ([eingraham2@unl.edu](mailto:eingraham2@unl.edu)) or call me at 730-6596 (cell). E-mail is the best way to reach me or to make an appointment to talk to me.

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*Just stop thinking, **worrying**, looking over your shoulder, wondering, **doubting**, **fearing**, hurting, **hoping for some easy way out**, **struggling**, gasping, **confusing**, itching, scratching, **mumbling**, **bumbling**, **grumbling**, humbling, stumbling, **bitching**, moaning, **groaning**, **grinding**, grinding, **GRINDING AWAY** at yourself.*

*Stop it and just do.*

—Sol LeWitt to Eva Hesse



## connector project

(\*approach/avoid; allow/prevent; distance/proximity; freedom/constraint)

- 1 You are to make a “cooperative connector” which joins you and your partner at two locations on your bodies and which functions to keep you and your partner “in sync” in some way, whether loosely or tightly, physically or psychologically. You may use any **inexpensive or found materials** (tyvek, fabric, vinyl, paper, corrugated cardboard, metal, wood, plastic, re-purposed garments or hardware, etc). Aim for 80% found/re-purposed/in-class materials and no more than 20% purchased.
- 2 This is a **collaborative** project. You will draw names in studio to determine your partner(s) and the locations to be connected. Groups may combine to form larger groups.
- 3 Your connector has the following **required elements (basic project requirements)**:
  - Each person will draw a location and mirror that location on his/her partner’s body. Thus, two people will be connecting at two locations. (You will have left-right symmetry.) You may break this symmetry if you have a good design reason for doing so (e.g. you have a larger group).
  - Your connector must be designed and fabricated (articulated, manipulated) by you, not readymade, although it may incorporate readymade components. It should also not be simply a recreation of an existing device in other materials or at a larger scale.
  - You must use a **rigid** material AND a **flexible** material AND a **textured** material.
  - Your connector must intentionally connect to your partner and must be supported without your holding it. (You can’t simply wrap materials like a scarf or hold them in your hand.)
  - You and your partner must be able to move while wearing your connector without it falling off or breaking.
  - Your connector may not touch the ground between you and your partner.
  - Each connection must be reasonably direct. Aim for between 12” and 24” in length.

**Due dates** brainstorming/idea generation:  
first pinup:  
critique:  
due for grading and photographing:

**Objectives** Getting and developing an idea; getting and giving feedback; learning to work  
(why collaboratively;  
you’re Thinking materially and learning construction techniques;  
doing this) Working with a “site” and exploring scale, gesture and positive and negative space in 3  
dimensions;  
Working under a deadline with “relaxed intensity”;  
Developing your craft and exploring your personal expression

**Criteria** Your connector meets the **basic project requirements**.  
(what you’ll Your connector is completed **on time** and is **ready to photograph**  
be  
graded on) You used **excellent craft**. (Your connector is sturdy, wearable and functional; joints are strong; cuts are clean;  
there is no visible glue or tape unless the tape is used as a design element.)  
Your physical connections are **intentional** and the **transitions** between your connector and your body are well  
thought out and visually effective.  
You have a **strong overall design or composition**. (Your design is **volumetric**, carefully  
considers both **positive and negative space** and the distance or proximity between  
you and your partner, and has a **clear [exaggerated] gesture**.)  
You showed **material thinking or invention**: you experimented with materials or chose  
unexpected materials or manipulated or combined materials in unexpected ways.  
You **pushed** beyond the expected or conventional response in your overall design. (Your  
overall design is exceptionally inventive or exceptionally expressive or exquisitely  
crafted.)

**Cooperative Connector Grade Sheet  
Fall 2006**

**Name:  
Partner:**

	Missing 0	Poor 1-5	Below Average 6	Average 7	Good 8	Excellent 9	Superlative 10
Your connector <b>meets the project requirements</b> . (It connects at the required locations, uses the required materials, does not touch the ground, and is between 12" and 24" in length.)							
Your connector is completed <b>on time</b> and is <b>ready to photograph</b> .							
You used <b>excellent craft</b> . (Your connector is sturdy, wearable and functional; joints are strong; cuts are clean; there is no visible glue or tape unless the tape is used as a design element.)							
Your physical connections are <b>intentional</b> and the <b>transitions</b> between your connector and your body are well thought out and visually effective.							
You have a strong <b>overall design</b> or composition. (Your design is volumetric; carefully considers both positive and negative space and the distance or proximity between you and your partner; has a clear [exaggerated] gesture.)							
You showed <b>material thinking or material invention</b> . (You experimented with materials or chose unexpected materials or manipulated or combined materials in unexpected ways.)							
You <b>pushed</b> beyond the expected or conventional response in your overall design. (Your overall design is exceptionally inventive or exceptionally expressive or exquisitely crafted.)							
<b>Total points (70 pts possible)</b>							

**What works well (Be specific):**

**What needs work (Be specific):**

**Connector Project  
Brainstorming Survey**

**Name:**

Each partner must complete this form. You will receive 20 project points for completing this questionnaire. Please answer every question.

**Section 1**

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Please check **each** brainstorming method you used:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Making lists	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exploring found objects / materials
<input type="checkbox"/>	Looking at images from books, magazines or the internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discussing with my partner using visual aids
<input type="checkbox"/>	E-mailing my partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discussing with my partner without visual aids
<input type="checkbox"/>	Talking on the phone with my partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drawing on photos of myself / my partner
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing

**Section 2**

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Which brainstorming methods in Section 1 do you prefer? (Rank the top three.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why?

Which methods did you find most effective? (Rank the top three.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why?

**Section 3**

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Attach one page of **visual evidence** of your most effective brainstorming methods.

**Prior Vis Lit courses:**

Analysis & Composition     Color  
 Perceptual Drawing     Other:

**Name:**

**Major:**

**Year:**

*Please answer each question by checking the appropriate box.  
 There are no right or wrong answers and your answers will not affect your grade.*

1	2	3	4	5
<b>strongly disagree/ almost never</b>	<b>disagree/ infrequently</b>	<b>neutral/ sometimes</b>	<b>agree/ often</b>	<b>strongly agree/ almost always</b>

1 I'm confident about my ability to get an idea.

2 I get lots of ideas.

3 I work in my sketchbook or journal every day.

4 I'm comfortable talking about my ideas.

5 I use drawing to communicate my ideas.

	1 strongly disagree/ almost never	2 disagree/ infrequently	3 neutral/ sometimes	4 agree/ often	5 strongly agree/ almost always
1 I'm confident about my ability to get an idea.					
2 I get lots of ideas.					
3 I work in my sketchbook or journal every day.					
4 I'm comfortable talking about my ideas.					
5 I use drawing to communicate my ideas.					



### Rotunda Gallery Exhibition of Connector Projects

Rotunda Gallery Exhibition, "Freedom and Constraint: Woven, Resisted and Joined—Making Connections to Women in Iran" 2006

Student exhibition in collaboration with Wendy Weiss, Textiles, Clothing & Design  
Supporting the E.N.Thompson Forum Lecture and Campus Visit by Asir Nafisi, author of *Reading Lolita in Teheran*



Liz Ingraham  
Visual Literacy 141 B / Speculative Drawing & Design



### III. Evaluating Teaching Portfolios

**Review** (next page) College of Arts and Sciences Rubric & Outline for Peer Review Comments

#### **Discussion Questions:**

Which categories do you feel provide the most useful evidence for assessing a teaching portfolio?  
Are there other categories that you would add to these guidelines?



## College of Arts and Sciences Rubric & Outline for Peer Review Comments

<b>RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES TEACHING AWARD NOMINATIONS</b>	<b>Exceptional</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Substandard</b>	<b>No Evidence Provided</b>
<b>Teaching Goals and Methods</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the instructor’s file reflect teaching goals? Are goals consistent with the aims of the discipline and the institution?</li> <li>• Are there in-class opportunities to actively engage students in the material and/or practice skills to achieve course goals?</li> <li>• Do out-of-class activities contribute to student achievement (e.g. extracurricular activities, group projects, electronic discussions, service learning, web-based assignments, etc.)</li> </ul>					
<b>Evidence from Students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do students rate this instructor—in the classroom, as a mentor, or advisor? How do these ratings compare to departmental norms?</li> <li>• Is there other student evidence commenting on the instructor’s abilities?</li> </ul>					
<b>Evidence from Colleagues</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do colleagues rate this instructor? Do they view the instructors’ courses as appropriate in rigor and intellectual challenge for the level and discipline?</li> <li>• Has the instructor positively impacted other instructors?</li> </ul>					
<b>Evidence of Student Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence illustrates that students achieve the instructor’s goals?</li> <li>• Does student performance reflect appropriate levels of conceptual understanding and critical evaluation?</li> <li>• Does the instructor use appropriate evaluation &amp; assessment?</li> <li>• Do an appropriate percentage of students achieve competence in the stated course goals?</li> </ul>					
<b>Professional Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the instructor reflect upon student achievement?</li> <li>• Is there evidence of changed teaching practice over course offerings in reaction to prior student understanding?</li> <li>• Is there evidence of efforts to develop professionally (peer review, new teaching methods, innovative approaches, etc.)?</li> <li>• Has the instructor contributed to departmental, campus, or national efforts for promoting student learning?</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments</b>					

**IV. Web Conference Slides**





## Developing and Evaluating Teaching Portfolios

Dr. Amy Goodburn  
Associate Dean & Professor of English  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
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## Background Experience

- Associate Dean of curriculum, faculty development, & assessment for 350 faculty in 17 departments & 12 programs
- Co-coordinate Peer Review of Teaching Project. Helped over 200 faculty to write course portfolios on their teaching.

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## WebConference Goals

### Teaching Portfolios

- Identify different purposes
- Provide history of use
- Examine “real world” examples
- Discuss criteria for assessment
- Outline processes for getting started

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● ● ● | I. What is a Teaching Portfolio?

- Streamlined and reflective document
- Captures the hidden work of teaching
- Makes claims about teacher's goals
- Provides evidence of student learning

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● ● ● | Why Teaching Portfolios?

- Traditional Evidence for Evaluating Teaching
  - student course evaluations
  - peer observation visits

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● ● ● | Challenge

- If we want to make the intellectual work of teaching visible for others' use and review, we need alternative forms of evidence about our teaching.

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## History of Teaching Portfolios

Process Movement in Composition Studies:  
Value of portfolios for showcasing  
process-based intellectual work &  
for sponsoring deep/sustained reflection  
(Yancey, Weiser, Huot, etc.)

Scholarship of Teaching Movement:  
Make the intellectual work of teaching visible &  
available for peer review  
(Boyer, Schon, Edgerton, Seldin, etc.)

Professional Colleges:  
Portfolios of professional work  
as disciplinary/professional expectation  
(Journalism, Art, Architecture, etc.)

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## Purposes for Documenting Teaching

- Formative purposes  
aid reflection & inquiry
- Summative purposes  
demonstrate & showcase effectiveness

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## Formative Uses

- Identify questions & issues to explore
- Reflect on teacher goals & strengths
- Generate course development ideas
- Promote dialogue with other teachers
- Collect initial data on student learning

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## Summative Uses

- Showcase teaching effectiveness
- Assess faculty development efforts
- Demonstrate expertise for job search
- Assess outcomes for accreditation
- Collect evidence on goals achieved

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## Challenge: capturing teaching in a portfolio

“Compounding the complexity even further is the issue of self-representation—the challenge of making public what is often private, making reflective what is generally automatic, and representing as static what is generally in flux and transitional.” (Ruth Mirtz, 2002)

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## Teaching Portfolio Contents

Edgerton, Hutchings, & Quinlan, 1991

- Course planning & preparation
- Instructional presentations
- Evaluating students & providing feedback
- Currency in the field

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## Relationship Model

Minter and Goodburn, 2002  
Representing participants involved in all aspects of the learning process

- Students
- Peers
- Self

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## AAHE descriptive features

- Structured:  
organized, reader-friendly
- Representative & comprehensive:  
whole scope of one's teaching
- Selective:  
supports larger claim about teaching

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## Materials about Self

- Teaching responsibilities
- Course syllabi, evaluation activities
- Discussion of efforts to improve
- Teaching philosophy statement
- Short and long-term teaching goals
- Descriptions of curricular revisions
- Mentoring & advising activities

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## Materials from Colleagues

- Peer observations of classroom
- Departmental reviews of syllabi
- Letters re: former student success in other courses/programs
- External reviews of course content or activities from peer institution
- Evaluations from colleagues in team-taught or sequenced courses

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## Materials from Students

- Student course evaluation data
- Samples of student work w/feedback
- Student grade distributions
- Video, transcripts of class discussions
- Awards/recognitions from students
- Testimonials from former students
- Scores on departmental exams or national certification tests

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## Recap

- A teaching portfolio is a rhetorical document that makes a claim about aspects of one's teaching and provides evidence of student learning to support that claim.

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● ● ● | II. Framing Student Work

- Table of Contents  
Organizes various sections
- Reflective Framing  
Commentary on how artifacts support  
claims about your teaching  
Provides conceptual roadmap

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● ● ● | General Principle

- If you include student work, you must  
provide narrative commentary to  
guide the reader's understanding of  
how it supports your overall claims.

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● ● ● | Narrative Commentary

- Why did you include it?
- How did you use it in the classroom?
- How do you know that this artifact  
represents or affected students'  
learning?
- How does this artifact illustrate your  
goals or claims about your teaching?

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## Providing Student Examples

- A sequence of 2-3 projects over time showing feedback and revision
- Final projects that range across levels of performance
- Class survey responses
- Group projects with student commentaries
- Samples of responses to selected exam questions w/reflection
- Pre- and post-test responses to modules

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### Goodburn's Portfolio on English 101

**Reflection on Student Work from English 101**

This student's draft sequence comes from my "English 101: Writing from Literature" course in the fall of 2004. For their second project, students were asked to research the role of literature in American (or colonial) history. I've included this draft sequence in my portfolio to illustrate both my learning goals for students and the practices I employ to help students achieve these goals.

This project asks students to engage in primary and secondary research on a self-selected topic within the parameters of the class theme. It is organized into several stages: proposal, a preliminary review of research, a first draft, a final draft so that students can receive feedback and guided response from me and their class peers. The entire project unfolds over six weeks during the middle of the semester. This project is one of three formal writing projects that students complete, along with weekly 2-3 page journal responses to the assigned literature.

I've included Tan's proposal and two pages of her initial draft to illustrate how I respond in writing throughout students' drafting processes. In this case, I tried to meet her several useful secondary sources and to develop a more focused thesis for her project. One of her main challenges was finding secondary sources related specifically to her topic. In my response, I tried to suggest key words she might use to refine her searches. I've also included the first three pages of her final project, which culminated in 15 typed pages, with my final grade comments. Since the bulk of my comments occur during the drafting process, the end comments focus on a holistic assessment of her project and the final grade.

On a secondary note, Tan's project also reflects my scholarly interest in helping students connect their religious identities with theoretical and intellectual conversations in the academy. During the semester, Tan and two other students expressed appreciation for opportunities to write about religious identity within the class. If the student examined her church's Bible study group for project two and another used the genre of a spiritual autobiography for the final writing project, one of 17 students in this class, it received "A's" on their second project, I received "B's" and 2 received a "C." Tan's project is reflective of "A" work.

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## Example: Writing from Literature Project Sequence

- Reflection Statement
- Project Prompt
- Informal Writing w/Teacher Feedback
- 1st Draft w/Teacher Feedback
- 1st three pages of Final Draft
- Teacher's final evaluation comments

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## Calvin Garbin's Teaching Portfolio: A Case Study

- Teaching Statement
- Abbreviated Vita
- Quantitative Evaluation Summaries
- Nomination Letters from Colleagues
- Nomination Letters from Students
- Examples of Students' Web Pages and Conference Posters

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## Reading a Sample Portfolio

- Do you feel that you have enough evidence about Professor Garbin's teaching to make a judgment about whether or not he deserves a teaching award?
- If not, what evidence would you need?

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## Recap on Framing Student Work

- What is your purpose?
- What argument do you want to make about your teaching?
- Who will be the readers?
- What evidence is most compelling?

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## Electronic Portfolio Benefits

- Can incorporate video footage, podcasts, artwork, etc.
- Student work can be archived more efficiently
- Facilitates accessibility for audiences and can be used outside institution

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## Electronic Portfolio Challenges

- Some software applications are inaccessible to readers
- Readers may prefer a print format
- Requires faculty expertise and support
- Can focus on presentation over substance

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## Peer Review of Teaching Project Archive for Portfolios

- Electronic portfolios are accessible to public audiences for review & use
- Database of over 200 portfolios from 14 institutions across range of disciplines and course levels at [www.courseportfolio.org](http://www.courseportfolio.org)

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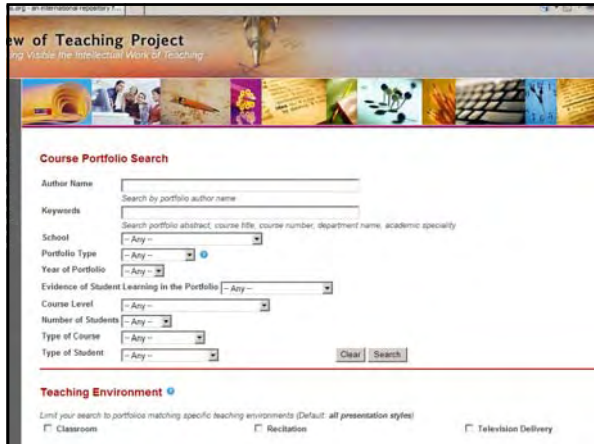
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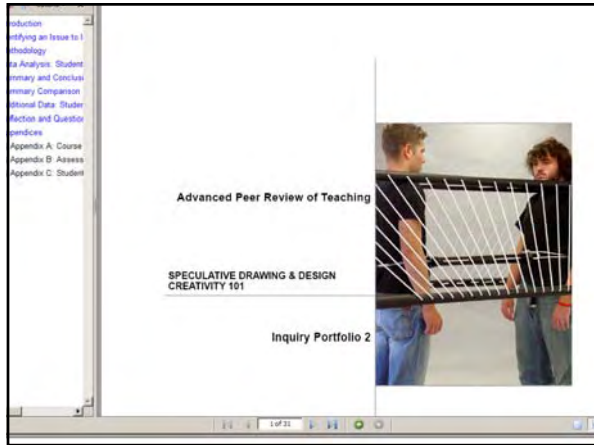
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● ● ● | **Course Portfolio Example**

Professor Elizabeth Ingraham  
 Visual Literacy Program

- Documents impact of brainstorming methods for students' learning in speculative drawing course
- Collects images of students' plans and final projects and survey responses

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Elizabeth Ingraham  
Henry Ford II

Optimizing Creativity & Design / Creativity 101

Table 6. Comparison of Completed Projects to Substantiating Evidence

Project Overview	Project Details	Substantiating Evidence	Project Type	Learning Activity
	2018		Highly High	High/High
	2018		Highly High	High/High
	2018		Highly High	High/High
	2018		Highly High	High/High

Ingraham Portfolio  
Page 11

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Ingraham's Course Portfolio

- How would you compare the experience of reading Professor Ingraham's electronic portfolio to that of reading a print-based version? Which do you prefer?

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Institutional Formats for Teaching Portfolios

Challenge:

How can institutions provide teachers flexibility in the design and format of teaching portfolios while ensuring the needs of readers and institutions are being met?

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## Some Format Options

- o Peter Seldin recommends 8-10 pages
- o Washington State U uses flexible template but no more than 5 pages
- o John Zubizarreta recommends institutions define specific criteria for narrative length, substance, amount, and types of evidence

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## Criteria for Summative Teaching Portfolios (Seldin,1984)

- Emphasize different kinds of evaluation from a variety of sources
- Document student learning
- Demonstrate coherence between philosophy and practice via narrative
- Provide concrete evidence in appendices

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## III. Evaluating Teaching Portfolios

- o Challenge: Once faculty develop teaching portfolios, how can we ensure that they are read and evaluated fairly?
- o How can institutions create communities of readers for teaching portfolios?

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● ● ● | **Research on Evaluating Teaching Portfolios**

- Judgments on teaching portfolios for promotion and tenure cases were statistically reliable as long as faculty readers worked from specific criteria (John Centra, 1993)

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● ● ● | **How Faculty Read Teaching Portfolios (Quinlan, 2002)**

- Compare/contrast against a norm
- Compare/contrast w/own practices
- Hold up an ideal
- Moderate evaluations w/context

6 out of 7 felt qualified to make judgments about teaching from portfolio

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● ● ● | **Questions for Portfolio Evaluation (Murray)**

- Is real evidence of accomplishment presented?
- Is there evidence that students actually learned in the teacher's course?
- Are teacher efforts to improve reflected in student & peer evaluations and/or students' performance?

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## Using Rubrics for Evaluation

- o Categories of Evidence
  - student work
  - course design
  - innovation or creativity in instruction
- o Levels of Achievement
  - exemplary, very good, satisfactory,
  - mastery, developing, novice

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METRIC FOR EVALUATING COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES TEACHING AWARD NOMINATIONS	Exceptional	Strong	Satisfactory	Substandard	No Evidence Provided
<b>Teaching Goals and Methods</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the instructor's file reflect teaching goals? Are goals consistent with the aims of the discipline and the institution?</li> <li>• Are there in-class opportunities to actively engage students in the material and/or practice skills to achieve course goals?</li> <li>• Do out-of-class activities contribute to student achievement (e.g. extracurricular activities, group projects, electronic discussions, service learning, web-based assignments, etc.)</li> </ul>					
<b>Evidence from Students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do students rate this instructor—in the classroom, as a mentor, or advisor? How do these ratings compare to departmental norms?</li> <li>• Is there other student evidence commenting on the instructor's abilities?</li> </ul>					
<b>Evidence from Colleagues</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do colleagues rate this instructor? Do they view the instructor's courses as appropriate in rigor and intellectual challenge for the level and discipline?</li> <li>• Has the instructor positively impacted other instructors?</li> </ul>					
<b>Evidence of Student Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence illustrates that students achieve the instructor's goals?</li> <li>• Does student performance reflect appropriate levels of conceptual understanding and critical evaluation?</li> <li>• Does the instructor use appropriate evaluation &amp; assessment?</li> <li>• Do an appropriate percentage of students achieve competence in the stated course goals?</li> </ul>					
<b>Professional Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the instructor reflect upon student achievement?</li> <li>• Is there evidence of changed teaching practice over course offerings in reaction to prior student understanding?</li> <li>• Is there evidence of efforts to develop professionally (peer review, new teaching methods, innovative approaches, etc.)?</li> <li>• Has the instructor contributed to departmental, campus, or national efforts for promoting student learning?</li> </ul>					

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## Reviewing the College of A&S Rubric

- o Which categories do you feel provide the most useful evidence for assessing a teaching portfolio?
- o Are there other categories that you would add to these guidelines?

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● ● ● | **IV. Developing Institutional Cultures for Portfolios**

- Challenge: How can faculty and administrators develop institutional cultures that support and promote the effective and ethical use of teaching portfolios?

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● ● ● | **Challenges for Administrators**

- Developing a community of readers
- Encouraging faculty buy-in
- Providing support, models, & resources
- Creating an institutional culture for improved teaching

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● ● ● | **Common Faculty Concerns**

- Collecting and reflecting upon student work is time-consuming
- The return on the time investment won't be fairly compensated
- The work is a distraction from one's "real" job as a researcher

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## Questions for Administrators

- What info. would you like about campus teaching from portfolios?
- How might teaching portfolios align with institutional assessments & priorities?
- What contexts are most appropriate for teaching portfolios at your institution?
- What incentives will you provide teachers?

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## Creating a Culture for Teaching Portfolios

- Start slowly
- Instill ownership
- Communicate implementation
- Use models to provide examples
- Encourage department conversations around portfolios
- Hold workshops
- Provide mentoring/advising
- Foster peer consultation and review

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## Steps for Faculty

- Start small w/a course portfolio
- Collect student work and reflect upon it every semester (use consent forms)
- Make a file for each class w/syllabus, assignments, feedback, evals., etc.
- Update vita and philosophy statements
- Explore websites for "tool kits"
- Find a partner or small group to share excerpts, peer respond, class visits

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## National Resources for Teaching Portfolios

- o Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CASTL)
- o Visible Knowledge Project (VKP)
- o Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning & Online Teaching (Merlot)
- o Peer Review of Teaching Project

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## Recap

- Teaching Portfolios can promote
- o faculty ownership of assessment
  - o departmental discussion & sharing
  - o teacher reflection & inquiry
  - o feedback loop for improved learning
  - o scholarly approaches toward teaching

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## Discussion Questions

- o Now that we've explored different types of teaching portfolios and issues related to developing institutional communities that use them, what remaining questions or concerns do you have?

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## Contact Information

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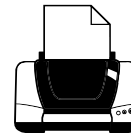
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## V. Resources/References

### Outline for Peer Review Comments on a Course Portfolio

The following headings identify four major topics that could readily be part of an external review of a course portfolio. We encourage you to use these or similar headings to identify the portions of your comments related to these specific issues in teaching. You need not reply to all the prompts, but they are provided to begin your reflection on the course portfolio.

Please feel free to make your comments in either a narrative format or as identified single sections. You can expand on your reactions to the intellectual quality or effectiveness of this professor's teaching beyond the types of issues that we have posed. Remember that your frank but constructive reactions to what is presented will be very helpful in the development of the course and course portfolio.

#### Course Intellectual Content

Please evaluate the quality of the *course's intellectual content*. This may include but is not limited to:

- appropriateness of course material both for the curriculum and the institution
- intellectual coherence of course content
- articulation of intellectual goals for learners and congruence of those goals with course content and mission
- value/relevance of ideas, knowledge and skills covered by the course

#### Quality of Teaching Practices

Please evaluate the *quality of the teaching practices* used in the course. This may include but is not limited to:

- organization and planning of contact time; congruence between planned and actual use of contact time
- opportunities to actively engage students in the material
- opportunities (in or out of class) for students to practice the skills embedded in course goals
- creative or effective uses of contact time that seem likely to improve student understanding
- activities scheduled outside of contact time that contribute to student achievement (e.g. extracurricular activities, group projects, electronic discussions, etc.)
- course structures or procedures that contribute especially to likely achievement of understanding by learners

#### Quality of Student Understanding

Please evaluate the *quality of student understanding*. This may include but is not limited to:

- appropriateness of student performance, in light of course goals, course level and institution
- performance levels that reflect challenging levels of conceptual understanding and critical evaluation of the material appropriate to the level of the course and of the students
- appropriateness of forms of evaluation and assessment, given the stated goals of the course
- creativity in providing students with ways to demonstrate their understanding of and ability to use the ideas and content of the course
- alignment between the weighting of course assignments in grade calculation with the relative importance of the course goals
- demonstration of an appropriate percentage of students that they are achieving competence in the stated course goals, or identification of reasons why they might not be reaching these levels of competence
- revisions or modifications to the course that could improve performance

#### Evidence of Reflective Consideration and Development

Please evaluate the *evidence of reflective consideration and development*. This may include but is not limited to:

- substantive reflection by the faculty member on the achievement of the goals for the course
- identification of any meaningful relations between teaching practice and student performance
- evidence of changed teaching practice over successive course offerings in reaction to prior student understanding
- evidence of insightful analysis of teaching practice that resulted from consideration of student performance

#### Reviewer's Experience of Teaching in this Area

What similar courses have you taught? (e.g., class size, level, content). Have you taught using a similar format? (e.g., course structure, presentation format)

## Materials for Teaching Portfolios

### One's self as a teacher:

- Statement of teaching responsibilities, including course titles, numbers, enrollments and student demographics, and how courses fit into overall mission of the department.
- Course syllabi detailing course content and assignments, teaching methods, readings, and evaluation activities, highlighting how courses evolved in response to student feedback
- Steps taken to improve teaching, either through the improvement of individual courses or in general through activities to enhance teaching skills or background knowledge.
- Instructional innovations attempted and evaluations of their effectiveness.
- Descriptions of non-traditional teaching settings, such as work with laboratory assistants, service-learning, out of classroom contact with students.
- Activities involving advising of graduate students, undergraduate honors thesis students, student internships, including names and completion dates, works in progress, etc.
- A teaching philosophy statement including goals for future.
- Honors or other recognition such as a teaching award or nomination for such an award.
- Descriptions of curricular revisions, including new course projects, materials, etc.
- Videotapes, websites, handouts, computer programs, or other artifacts from your teaching
- Contributions to or editing of a professional journal on teaching in the discipline.
- Service on professional or university committees dealing with teaching issues.

### Student Evidence

- Student course evaluation data, including present and former students, majors and nonmajors, graduates and undergraduates, assistants and mentees
- Samples of student work along with the professor's feedback to show the range of student performance and how the instructor has dealt with it.
- Samples of student grade distributions for courses and reflections on student performance
- Student journals compiled during the semester and reflecting student growth over time
- Student awards/recognitions based on work produced in your courses
- Testimonials from former students and/or their employers
- Student scores on class examinations, departmental exams, national certification exams.

### Peers' Evidence

- Statements from colleagues who have observed you or who have taught students in subsequent courses.
- Evaluations of one's teaching presentations/workshops for colleagues
- Statements from TAs you have supervised who have taught labs or discussion sections
- Statements from colleagues who have reviewed your teaching materials, such as course syllabi, assignments, testing and grading practices.
- Evaluations from other faculty in team-taught courses.
- A statement by department chair assessing your teaching contributions to the department.
- Evidence of help you've given to colleagues leading to improvement of their teaching.

## Additional Resources

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Several websites also provide examples of how others are documenting their teaching.

Peer Review of Teaching Project: [www.courseportfolio.org](http://www.courseportfolio.org)

CASTL <http://gallery.carnegiefoundation.org>

<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/KML/KEEP/index.htm>

VKP <http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/vkp>