

Instructor Expectations for Initial Design of a Communication ePortfolio

This resource is meant for classes participating in the Communication ePortfolio project at Old Dominion University as a review of four Communication ePortfolios. The first, a general (and generic) page is designed to give you general direction and ideas for completing your initial page design. The other three pages offer insight into above average, average, and below average completion of Part 1 work. **Remember to always use your instructor's directions and requirements for information specific to your class.**

General ‘What We’re Looking For’: <http://amclietz.wix.com/commportfolio2>

This link and sample outlined student page is a great place to start if you are on the ‘Creating’ side of Part 1. This sample page provides an overview, (or outlined approach), to the required parts of a Communication ePortfolio. All required pages are present (Home, About Me, Course Projects, Resume, Blog, and Contact), and all pages have relevant information, specific notes, and prompts for how you might approach the completion of your page. Review this page carefully before submitting your Part 1—this page serves as a checklist to confirm all required components of your assignment are completed (along with your Part 1 directions provided by your instructor).

If you have a page already, and are ‘curating’ for Part 1—be sure to take screenshots of your page before you begin editing—your instructor might require those! Unless otherwise instructed, you are not building multiple pages—but one space to share coursework from several classes. If you are working on the project in multiple classes, be sure to clearly label items (blog posts, added projects, etc.) to identify the course the work relates to. Move through each page critically to identify what might need to be improved or updated. Also check out the PDF resources titled ‘How do I curate a Communication ePortfolio’ or ‘Next Steps for ePortfolio Curation’ or provided by your instructor.

Above Average, A, Sample: <http://amclietz.wix.com/commportfolio1>

This sample page is a mock-up of what an “A” submission would look like for creating Part 1. You’ll see that all required components are not only completed, but also thoughtfully developed in each section. Areas like the footer, header, and links on the page are ‘cleaned up’—meaning that only the necessary information is there (for example, an email in the footer) and the social media links go to the correct page.

On the home page, the buttons on the homepage are fixed to remove redundancy (in that two buttons do not go to the same subpage). The welcome note is clear—adding an introduction to the goals of the page.

Moving on to the About Me page: this subpage is organized, and relates mostly to professional goals. Not every ‘About Me’ page has to follow this exact layout or approach to content—but remember that the goal is to make a professionally oriented online space to highlight and accentuate your professional image online by sharing specifically completed COMM writing assignments. It will help to keep that in mind as you design your page.

Moving on to the Course Projects page, this is where the majority of your work this semester will be displayed. After the initial creation of your page, (or Curation if you had a page developed in a previous semester)—you will continue to add sample work to highlight your abilities throughout the semester. See your assignments directions for your classes for more details.

This sample Course Projects page (<http://amclietz.wix.com/commportfolio1#!projects/cm8a>) helps to show how your work should be presented to an external audience—this sample student includes information like the project name and title of the class.

Remember, no one outside of ODU would know what COMM 302 or COMM 315 means. This page also shares a brief sample description of a project that might be added. This is exactly the difference between ‘average/OK’ work (as in, just adding the material to meet the average completion of an assignment), and the above-average completion of developing your page as the semester goes on.

Looking to the Resume page (<http://amclietz.wix.com/commportfolio1#!resume/c46c>) we can see that this is thoroughly completed—no ‘to be added’ or missing parts. It is clean, organized, and includes relevant information on the page. A PDF copy of your resume can be added, but to earn average to above-average credit—you should be utilizing a resume template, or adding content manually, to fill in this requirement. You’ll see that the professional themes present in the Homepage match the goals outlined in the About Me page and are echoed here on the Resume page—keeping a clear them and presentation of the sample student.

The contact page is clean and simple, and the Blog page is in an actual blog format (using the template available from WIX). The sample blog posts shared here offer insight and direct you on how you might finish your initial blog posts, and provide tips for thorough completion of blog-oriented assignments.

Average, C, Sample: <http://amclietz.wix.com/commportfolio1>

This page *technically* meets all of the requirements, so rather than identify how it does—let’s discuss why it’s at ‘average’ or C level completion and not above-average.

The layout, template, and overall design area great here, and a strong start to develop an ePortfolio in a creative way, however each page is lacking development, or depth in some way.

First, on the opening page we see a combined Home and Blog page. Ideally, you would have these pages separated to clarify the purpose of your ePortfolio on your homepage. This About page is brief and meets basic requirements, without really identifying much about the author, or owner, or the page. It lacks depth in showing personality while maintaining a professional presence.

Next, we can easily see that the Resume page is underdeveloped. A PDF attachment is available (for the sake of an example, I’ve used a generic resume template). This meets very average (bordering on below average) completion of the resume subpage. Not everyone will take the time to download and review a resume, and it would be better to have the attachment along side an organized listing of work and professional experiences, education, certifications, etc. on this subpage.

The Course Projects page is set-up adequately, with spaces ‘saved’ to add content as the semester goes on. Even more appropriately, there are buttons to direct a reader on accessing the content (titled ‘Click here to review sample work’). However, until material is added it might be a better idea to keep the buttons off the page, or disabled if possible. Additionally, depending on the emphasis area of the coursework you’re completing, or the type of work you want to go into these sample photos (<http://amclietz.wix.com/commportfolio1#!course-projects/wl3cs>) beside the placeholders for course projects to be added *may or may not* be appropriate. You’ll need to use your best judgment in choosing from the samples WIX provides—these are added as a reminder to be critical of each part of your page as it represents your professional image online. Again, the contact page is simple and meets requirements at an average level—but it would be wise to include an e-mail address, or perhaps a link to social media utilized for professional reasons (LinkedIn for example). Don’t forget to make sure that the message boxes are activated, and appropriately go to your personal email. If you prefer to streamline things, including your email is sufficient.

Below-average, F, Sample: <http://amclietz.wix.com/commeportfoliof>

While this page appears to be a decent start to the project (in that the design and layout are aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate), there are a few clear reasons why a submission similar to this would not earn average credit.

As we move through our review of sample pages, we can see that the ‘F’ sample starts off with a Homepage, but without any verbiage indicating what the page includes, or the goals of the page—just a video without even a description of its relevance. Someone might argue ‘well Professor, that’s unique and provocative’—perhaps, and perhaps you’re willing to take a more artistic or risky approach to developing your online image professionally—but to meet the goals of a Communication ePortfolio (and therefore earn credit) you’ll want to more concretely attend to each of the page requirements shared by your instructor. Your homepage can certainly include a video—along with language welcoming a reader or visitor, and indicating the goals of the page. Due to accessibility issues, videos and images should include a brief description of the media that is shared. This allows those that perhaps cannot see, or hear, to still enjoy and review information shared within your ePortfolio.

On the About page we see that the background changes, and the lack of attention to detail makes the language on this page harder to read. There are typos, and it indicates to your instructor (or peers, or potential employer) that the author or owner of the page did not care to put much effort into the design. A simple design tip would be to keep the background clean, light in color, and repeated throughout all of the subpages. A highlight of this template is that the blog page is present, set-up in an appropriate blog format—this would be ideal for any Communication ePortfolio.

The resume is present (in that it exists), but without depth or detail. Again, typos are present, and little thought appears to be applied to sharing skills, completed projects or tasks, or general abilities. A few tips to takeaway from this sample—generally, a reverse chronological order to your work and education experience is a good place to start if you have not made a resume before. (Meaning, most recent, to oldest). And if you in college, or have completed an Associates degree, a HS education is assumed and not necessary to add to your resume. Don’t disregard experience as a caretaker, babysitter, or similar job that was informal or unpaid. Look to the Internet for ideas on organizing those experiences and highlighting their connection to professional skills—time management and resource management are just two related areas to this type of work.

On the drop down menu below Resume we see the Course Projects area and ‘Spring/Summer’—a leftover to the template. This is present as a reminder to make sure that anything left from the template should be utilized towards the goal of the page—or removed. The same can be said of the Contact page here—present, as required, but not set-up or organized in any major way. The Course Projects page is also not set-up, and does not include language about the types of material to be added, a listing of titles of courses, or anything that indicates the purpose of this area. The page needs to be set-up and ‘ready to go’ after Part I, but yes, your instructor absolutely expects ‘tweaking’ and continued improvements to be made over the course of the semester.

Once this initial work is done you’ll move on to the more intensive Communication writing and theoretical exploration of communication topics, you’ll be adding writing samples, projects, and work to your Communication ePortfolio to highlight and showcase your communication abilities to peers, internship opportunities, managers, or potential employers. Your instructor looks forward to supporting your work on this project throughout the semester!