

(Supporting PowerPoint available at

## **What is a portfolio?**

At its most basic, a portfolio is a collection and presentation of your “master works” and will change over time as your knowledge, experience, and abilities expand and grow. It is a snap-shot of you at a particular point and time in your career.

## **What is an e-portfolio?**

This is the term for an electronic version of a portfolio. Like a “hard copy” portfolio, an e-portfolio is a collection and presentation of your “master works” that develops over time. As it changes over time, you want to create a structure & format that is flexible & adaptable. One advantage of an e-portfolio over a physical portfolio is that you can back it up so that you have multiple copies and you’re less vulnerable to losing items. You also have more fluid control of organizing and editing of your materials over time. If you want, an electronic portfolio can be posted online, or electronically sent to a potential employer or graduate school.

## **Why have a portfolio?**

You are required to have a portfolio to complete your teacher education program to illustrate how you have met both the Vancouver Island University Faculty of Education program outcomes and those of the B.C. College of Teachers. You will do presentations of this portfolio at various points in your VIU program. You also create versions of your portfolio to present to potential employers. It is one way they get familiar with you and your abilities prior to selecting you for an interview and/or position. Portfolios are also for your personal growth as they allow you to reflect on how you have developed—and continue to develop—professionally over time.

## **First Step: Generating Content**

It is likely that you already have materials created for your education courses or in the work of your practica. These are elements that you may choose for your e-portfolio. You will continue to create content across your career. Which brings me to my next point: all those electronic documents need to be organized so you can find what you want when you need it to illustrate how you’ve met the [expected outcomes](http://www.viu.ca/education/programs/outcomes.asp) (<http://www.viu.ca/education/programs/outcomes.asp>).

## Teacher Education Program Outcomes

**N.B.:** Refer to <http://www.viu.ca/education/program/outcomes.asp> for the most accurate & up to date version of the Program Outcomes

### **OUTCOME 1 – PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES**

- 1A. *Reflection and decision making*
- 1B. *Communicating with families*
- 1C. *Contributing to the life of the learners, the school community, and the district*
- 1D. *Ongoing professional growth and development*
- 1E. *Understanding educational issues*

### **OUTCOME 2 – BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE**

- 2A. *Knowledge of content*
- 2B. *Knowledge of the theoretical foundations of educational thought in our society*
- 2C. *Knowledge of the theoretical foundations of learning*

### **OUTCOME 3 – CAPACITY TO PLAN**

- 3A. *Pre-assessing the learning needs of students*
- 3B. *Interpretation of prescribed learning outcomes to plan for instruction and management of appropriate learning experiences*
- 3C. *Design coherent instruction using appropriate resources*
- 3D. *Designing assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student learning*

### **OUTCOME 4 – CAPACITY TO TEACH**

- 4A. *Creating an inclusive learning environment for respect, rapport, and critical thought*
- 4B. *Managing classroom procedures, behaviour, and physical space*
- 4C. *Communicating clearly, accurately, expressively, and appropriately to engage students in learning*
- 4D. *Assessing, evaluating, and reporting student learning*
- 4E. *Demonstrating flexibility, responsiveness, and support for students*

## **Second Step: Organizing for Expected Outcomes**

While you can organize your files in any manner you wish, ultimately one key reason to have a portfolio is to show that you have achieved the required outcomes to become a teacher in the Faculty of Education of Vancouver Island University in British Columbia. Therefore, one choice for organizing your data is to create a series of folders labelled according to the expected Faculty of Education outcomes. The next page has an outline of the expected outcome

### ***Building a File Structure***

#### **Where to Start Building It**

If you are working on campus, I would strongly recommend building the file structure on your U: drive. If you don't know how to access this while on campus, minimize all programs. Somewhere on your desktop there should be an icon for My Computer. Double-click on My Computer. You should see—on about the 3<sup>rd</sup> row of information—a list of Network drives. One should be have your name or student number on it with a (U:) somewhere after it. This is your U drive: a virtual storage space for your files on the VIU Campus. You can connect to your U drive off-campus as well, but you have to set up your computer to do that. (Directions for establishing a virtual network connection are available from VIU's IT department online [http://www.viu.ca/technology/students/BasicComp\\_StuRemoteAccess.asp](http://www.viu.ca/technology/students/BasicComp_StuRemoteAccess.asp) ) Otherwise, if you are working from your own computer, create the file structure in My Documents.

#### **Naming Conventions**

I recommend naming files and folders with all lower case letters and NO SPACES as this will make it easier for you to copy files to a server if you decide to eventually build a website/page for your portfolio. Servers aren't too space-friendly so that's why the underscore ( \_ ) is recommended. Once upon a time, servers didn't recognize differences between capitals or lowercase characters and they hated blank spaces. While this has changed a bit, to keep it all on an even keel stick with lowercase letters with words separated by underscores.

#### **Creating the File Folder Structure**

- 1) Open the drive or folder where you want to store your portfolio archive (Somewhere on your U: drive or in My Documents on your own computer).
- 2) Create a new folder. (Right click in an empty area of the open drive or folder. Select "New" then "Folder".)
- 3) Right click on the "New Folder" and rename it "evidence\_archive". This will be the main storage "warehouse" for the content you think you might use for your portfolio.

- 4) Inside the evidence\_archive folder, create 4 sub-folders corresponding to the outcomes named as below. (Right click in an empty area of the evidence\_archive. Select New→Folder. Right click on the New Folder. Name it appropriately. Continue until all 4 folders have been created. These 4 should be located inside the evidence\_archive)
  - background\_knowledge
  - capacity\_to\_plan
  - capacity\_to\_teach
  - professional\_qualities
- 5) Inside each of these you sub-folders will create more subfolders using a similar process as follows:
  - inside background\_knowledge
    - content
    - educational\_theory
    - learning\_theory
  - inside capacity\_to\_plan
    - designing\_assessment
    - instructional\_design
    - interpreting\_outcomes
    - preassessment
  - inside capacity\_to\_teach
    - classroom\_communication
    - classroom\_management
    - evaluation\_reporting
    - inclusive\_environment
    - student\_support
  - inside professional\_qualities
    - home\_communication
    - community\_contribution
    - educational\_issues
    - pro\_d
    - reflection\_decision
- 6) Now you should have a series of folders into which you can copy, move and store content you have generated. Your job is to start selecting items to place in these folders. This is the first step to organizing for a portfolio presentation. Later you will copy files from the evidence\_archive folder to a portfolio\_presentation folder that will be used to build the actual presentation.
- 7) Copy or back up this evidence\_archive folder occasionally. You can copy it to a CD, DVD or Memory Stick. Be sure to **BACK IT UP PERIODICALLY!**

## **Naming Files: evidence\_archive**

Now you should begin to move documents into appropriate evidence\_archive file folders. It's a good idea to start with a set of naming conventions that will supply needed information in a glance. You don't want lengthy file names—or folder names for that matter if you can avoid it—but you still would like to be able to get the gist of what's in the file from the name. Also, you will probably have versions of an item that you will update over the course of your program at VIU. For example, you might anticipate a series of lesson plans. You might call a lesson plan, "lessonplan" or "l\_plan" in general and add some other identifying information including a semester/year. So "lessonplan\_sci3\_f08" would be a lesson plan for grade 3 Science from fall 2008. You can create your own system if you want, but start with the end in mind; think about how you want to retrieve this information. If you take the time to set-up some naming conventions and a file structure upfront, it saves a lot of search time later.

## **Naming Files: portfolio\_presentation**

Some final comments on file types & names.

- Keep files in web friendly formats if you can. If you want all your files to open seamlessly in a web-browser, they will have to be web-friendly. Thankfully, the new versions of Word, etc. make it simple to export as a PDF. PDFs can be read by web-browser plugins. HTM, HTML, XML, Flash files, etc. are friendly.
- When you create your portfolio\_presentation folders, you want to name the actual files in a revision—easy to swap in/out—manner. So that when you have files for newer/better ones you don't have to comb through your actual presentation to redo (rename) your links. For example, in your evidence\_archive → instructional\_design you uploaded something called "lessonplan\_sci3\_08" but in your "portfolio\_presentation" folder it should be in instructional\_design as something far more generic like "lessonplan\_1". This way, 5 months later when you develop a fantastic new lesson plan in English, you put in in "evidence\_archive" as "lessonplan\_eng9\_08" but copy this new lesson plan into the portfolio folder and call *it* lessonplan\_1. Keep your science lesson in the evidence\_archive as well—you never know when you might apply for a science position! When you do, simply swap the files back with science now in the lessonplan\_1 place in the portfolio\_presentation. When you swap, you still may have to edit any comments if specific to the plan.
- Remember: keep a copy of the original files somewhere—until you're sure you don't want them anymore.