

Portfolio Components

The primary project we will complete in SSC 499 is an Assessment Portfolio. For those that took SSC 101 when you entered the Division of Social Sciences, you should have been compiling your work and maintaining a working Professional Portfolio over the course of your studies at DSU. In SSC 499, we will take your work and create a useful Professional Portfolio. For those that did not take SSC 101, you will need to find examples of your work in the courses you took, to the best of your ability.

The portfolio is a workbook that documents your activities and accomplishments, and that provides evidence of your abilities, skills, knowledge, and accomplishments. It is useful to you in your job search and on-going professional development. The Assessment Portfolio, which you will submit at the end of SSC 499, shows your growth over your time at DSU, and is useful to the Division of Social Sciences in evaluating and assessing our programs.

The Professional Portfolio

Professional portfolios are entering the workplace in America. Portfolios have long been common in some professions, mainly in the arts. Teachers now commonly use portfolios as well. As work in the U.S. is moving from a career format to a project format, and more people are hired as consultants or on a contingent basis, portfolios will likely replace résumés as a record of your accomplishments. Certainly, it will be advantageous to have a more complete record of your capabilities. One of the goals of SSC 101/499 is to provide you with an opportunity to initiate a professional portfolio.

A professional portfolio should be a complete record of your work and accomplishments. You can use the portfolio when you apply for a job, when you seek a raise or other advancement in your career, when you apply for a grant or other funding, and for similar purposes. In each case, you will not use your entire portfolio; rather, you will use selected portions that emphasize the things you have done that are relevant to the purpose at hand. So, for example, if you are applying for a job as a counselor, you would include records that demonstrate your credentials and work in counseling.

The Assessment Portfolio

For SSC 499, you will submit a subset of your Professional Portfolio that we will call the Assessment Portfolio. The purpose of this document is to provide a representative record of your work at Delta State University. We seek examples of coursework that span your entire time at DSU, from your freshman/first year to graduation. When compiling a portfolio for a professional purpose, you likely will include materials that present you in the best light; however, that is not the purpose for the assessment portfolio. We are not looking for samples of your work that represent your experience, not just the best papers and projects you completed. In other words, don't just include work that you got an "A" on; it is fine, in fact, it is desirable to include work that was not as good. Our purpose is to see your advancement through your program, not the best things you have done.

Compiling an Assessment Portfolio:

In compiling your assessment portfolio, you draw on the work compiled in your professional portfolio, and include examples of the work that you have done, such as course papers, writing assignments, projects, and the like. Select the most representative examples of your work. You do not have to include only the best work, rather, you should select a variety of types of work to include.

Portfolio Components

The following should be included in a complete Assessment Portfolio:

Title Page

In addition to the title, this page should indicate the name of the student, the degree program and degree sought, and the dates of attendance at DSU

Table of Contents

List each item in the portfolio independently

Résumé

Follow a standard format, and present a professional résumé of your academic and professional experience

Statement of Purpose

In a brief (1-2 page) narrative, explain what you hope to accomplish in your studies at DSU, and in your professional career. If you update this, keep the older copies as a record of how your purpose has changed over the course of your studies

Statement of Values

Prepare a brief (1-2 page) essay in which you express your values, what you think is important, and the role that your values will play in your education. Prepare a similar statement at the end of your studies, and include both in your portfolio as a record of the effect of education on your values

Coursework

Include representative examples of the work you have completed in your courses at DSU. You should include at least two works from each year, and you should aim to provide a variety of different types of work, including but not limited to:

- Argumentative Paper
- Reflective Paper
- Analytical Research Paper
- Informal/In-class Writing
- Book Review
- Practical Project
- Research Proposal

Awards and Honors

Include awards and honors you have received at DSU, including academic recognition, dean's list, honor societies, community recognition, and awards for extra-curricular activities such as sports or music

Scholarships/Fellowships

Include information on any scholarships or fellowships you have received, particularly those that are given for academic achievement

Professional Experience

Describe and evaluate professional experiences you have had during your time at Delta State, including internships, teaching experience, and other work experience carried out in conjunction with your studies, including promotions and other benefits stemming from your education

Extra Curricular Activities

Include evidence of participation in outside activities that pertain to your professional development, such as participation in academic conferences, participation and leadership in student organizations, athletics, musical groups, student government and the like

Evaluations

Include examples of evaluations, including some of the following:

Evaluations of your work from instructors and your advisor

A reflective essay that you prepare at the end of each course, in which you state what you think are the most important things you learned in that class, and how the course fits into the program as a whole

An evaluation of the quality of each course, including the value of the material covered and the quality of instruction by the professor; Include suggestions for changes and improvement

A self-evaluation at the end of each academic year, in which you reflect on how well you did, how hard you tried, your progress in the program, and your plans for the following academic year, including ideas of how you can improve your work and engagement in your program

An evaluation of how extra-curricular programs contributed to, advanced, or detracted from your studies

An evaluation of the Social Sciences Division as a whole and of the degree program that you completed, to be written at the end of your studies

Career Goals

A statement of your career goals, prepared near the end of your studies at DSU

You will submit your Assessment Portfolio at the end of SSC 499, and it will be evaluated by DSU faculty. We will keep a copy on file in the main office of the Division of Social Sciences, and will use it for our evaluation of our programs and accreditation.