Project 9
Final portfolios

Timing: 5 to 7 hours

Project overview

By engaging in print and design projects, students develop their abilities to produce different types of work and see how their skills can be used in industry. Students have experienced multiple roles and taken part in various parts of the design and production process. Students can use these experiences to determine the direction they might wish to pursue as they leave this course.

In this project, students improve their portfolios from Project 5 and redesign them to better address their overall design and technical skills and career focus. In creating the PDF Portfolio, students focus on design and content to communicate well and optimize employers' perceptions of them.

Student product: PDF Portfolio

Project objectives

At the completion of the project, students will have developed the following skills:

Project management skills

- Planning and creating a PDF Portfolio
- Organizing and managing content
- Conducting a review and redesign
- Providing constructive criticism
- Creating flowcharts

Design skills

- Investigating and incorporating layout and color consistently
- Designing consistent pages
- Designing for a specific audience and purpose

Research and communication skills

- Communicating information to particular audiences
- Planning and conducting research strategies
- Understanding and practicing lifelong career skills:
  - Job research skills
  - Presenting skills
- Soliciting and providing feedback
- Taking notes on critique
- Demonstrating the realization of redesign goals
- Creating a marketing plan

Technical skills

Acrobat Pro

- Packaging multiple documents

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Project materials

- Adobe Photoshop CS6 Extended installed on all machines
- Adobe InDesign CS6 installed on all machines
- Adobe Illustrator CS6 installed on all machines
- Adobe Acrobat X Pro installed on all machines
- Guide: How to create an e-portfolio flowchart
- Guide: Peer review
- Guide: How to prepare and organize files for a PDF Portfolio
- Guide: How to create and personalize a PDF Portfolio

Background preparation resources

- Technical and content information
- ISTE NETS*S Standard for Students

Project steps

Updating a PDF Portfolio

(Suggested time: 250–300 minutes)

1. Introduce this culminating activity as a way for students to reflect on the project work they've completed. Students have been focusing on the design and development of various projects; this is a good time for them to focus on the type of work they plan to pursue after this course.

2. Discuss the goals of this project:
   - Update their PDF Portfolio
   - Create a basic marketing plan
   - Plan and create a flowchart for a portfolio
   - Select and organize content for a PDF Portfolio

3. Review the concept of a portfolio, its purpose and its audience (Project 5 Portfolios).

4. In a class brainstorm, discuss the ways in which students plan to use their electronic portfolios going forward and how that might change their target audience and purpose. Some questions to aid the discussion might include:
   - Do you plan to look for a job or internship? If so, what kind of job or internship?
   - Do you plan to apply for a program or school? If so, what type of program or school?
   - How are the goals of the portfolio different, depending on where you plan to go next?
   - What should the portfolio contain?
   - How should the content be presented?

5. Allow students time to review their portfolios and analyze how they might change these to represent their new skills well. Ask students to look specifically at their learning plans to see how they addressed the goals in this plan. Explain that students are to engage in a review similar to what they did in Project 5, but this time reviewing their portfolios with respect to the career and learning goals and type of audience they plan to focus on after they finish this course.

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6. Allow students time to look through their work over the entire course and reconsider the content and design of the portfolios. They should consider the following when writing up their lists of redesign tasks:

   Content:

   - What is the purpose of the portfolio? How does the purpose affect the type of content you should include?
   - Who is the intended audience for the portfolio? How does the audience affect the type of content you should include?
   - Is the current content relevant to the purpose and audience? If not, what should you remove and what other projects should you include?
   - Is the language level appropriate for your intended audience?
   - Do the pages have any spelling errors, punctuation errors, or grammatical errors?

   Design:

   - *Uniformity and Consistency:* Are design elements repeated to help identify the portfolio as a complete package? What attributes of the portfolio maintain or violate consistency?
   - *Structure:* Is the structure logical, or do portfolio components appear to be randomly placed?
   - *Typography:* Does formatting improve or reduce readability? Are appropriate fonts, spacing, leading, and so on used? Is there appropriate hierarchy?
   - *Accessibility:* Are the text and titles clear and easy for all users to read (color, size, etc.)?

7. Review the concept of a flowchart from Project 5 and ask students to create a new flowchart for this portfolio, incorporating the changes from the redesign tasks.

   Guide: How to create an e-portfolio flowchart

8. After students have had some time to devise their redesign plans, divide them into groups of three or four. Ask each group to review each student portfolio, one at a time, discussing the designer's revised goal, target audience, and plan for redesign. Each group should provide thoughtful feedback to the designer with respect to planned changes. Explain that students should determine which redesign suggestions to implement in their PDF Portfolios.

   Guide: Peer review

9. Allow students time to create a final list of projects and elements to include in their PDF Portfolios.

10. Allow students time to update their portfolios, creating any additional assets in Photoshop and Illustrator and any additional layout and text in InDesign using the various techniques learned. Ask students to create a final PDF Portfolio.

    Guide: How to prepare and organize files for a PDF Portfolio

    Guide: How to create and personalize a PDF Portfolio

Presenting a portfolio

(Suggested time: 50–100 minutes)

11. To prepare students for real-world experience, allow them time to research job opportunities and requirements on recruitment sites to help them visualize and plan for career goals and expectations. Ask students to create a basic plan on how they will market their skills and approach jobs of interest.

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Note: You might ask students to spend time researching careers as they did earlier, reassessing their earlier choices.

12. Allow students time to create a presentation in which they present their PDF Portfolio and explain the following:
    - Their career goals.
    - The types of jobs they are seeking, using specific examples from their research.
    - A plan for meeting the requirements and skill set of the jobs they are seeking.
    - The skills, qualifications, training, and so on necessary for a job in their career area.
    - What they have learned by making a portfolio and throughout the course.
    - What they feel they still need to learn to realize their career goals.
    - How they improved or changed their content or design and how the changes grew out of their revised purpose and target audience. Explain they might want to include their old portfolio to show the changes.

13. Allow students time to present their portfolios to the class.

Extension activities

You can extend the project in the following ways:

- *Career/education planning:* Ask students to create a five-year plan outlining the steps necessary to reach their career goals. This may include education, internships, jobs, and so on. Also ask students to begin to research and plan resumes appropriate for their desired career field.
- *Reflection supplement:* Ask students to write up their career goal plans and how those plans impacted the decisions they made in planning their portfolios. This document will help students reflect on their process and provide a framework for continued evolution of their PDF Portfolio as they begin to conduct a job search.
- *Web portfolio:* Ask students to create a web-based portfolio. You can use the materials from Project 4: *Web portfolio* from the Digital Design curriculum.

Assessment

- Project rubric

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Background preparation resources

- Review the student step-by-step guides referenced in this project.
- To view video tutorials aligned with the skills required to complete this project, visit the Visual Design CS6 show on Adobe TV: http://tv.adobe.com/show/visual-design-cs6/
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of Photoshop, see Photoshop Help.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of Illustrator, see Illustrator Help.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of InDesign, see InDesign Help.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of Acrobat, see Acrobat Help.
- You might supplement this project with the following design and typography books:
  - Lupton, E. (2010). *Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, & Students, Second Edition*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
  - Lawler, B. (2009). *The Official Adobe Print Publishing Guide, Third Edition.* Berkeley: Adobe Press.
  - Williams, R. (2007). *Robin Williams Design Workshop, Second Edition*. Berkeley: Peachpit Press.

Portfolios

- The Adobe Acrobat Pro curriculum guide on creating e-portfolios using PDFs: www.adobe.com/go/eportfolios.
- Examples and instructions for visualizing information and using flowcharts, mostly for a website but can be applied to a PDF: www.jjg.net/ia/visvocab/#page.
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Research and Improvement, Classroom Uses of Student Portfolios: www.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ConsumerGuides/classuse.html.
- Information and examples of a variety of electronic portfolios: http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic82.htm.
- Examples of PDF portfolios: http://wwwimages.adobe.com/www.adobe.com/content/dam/Adobe/en/education/pdfs/highschool-student.pdf and http://wwwimages.adobe.com/www.adobe.com/content/dam/Adobe/en/education/pdfs/design-student.pdf

Print production and graphic design careers:

- AIGA Career guide: www.aiga.org/guide-careerguide/
- Lists of possible careers in graphic and publication design: www.oswego.edu/student/career/careersin/arts.html.
- Department of Labor information and statistics for jobs in graphic design and desktop publishing: www.bls.gov/oco/ocos090.htm.

ISTE NETS*S Standard for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

1. Creativity and Innovation

   Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

   a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
   b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

2. Communication and Collaboration

   Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:

   a. interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts or others employing a variety of digital environments and media.
   b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.

3. Research and Information Retrieval

   Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:

   a. plan strategies to guide inquiry.
   b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
   c. evaluate and select information sources and technology tools based on appropriateness of specific task.

4. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

   Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students::

   a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
   b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

5. Digital Citizenship

   Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:

   a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.
   b. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.
   c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

6. Technology Operations and Concepts

   Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations. Students:

   a. understand and use technology systems.
   b. select and use applications effectively and productively.

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Assessment

	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
Research	Absent or incomplete.	Research covers a design and/or print production career area by going to specific job-recruitment websites. Research is evident in the portfolio content by providing career information such as job description, qualifications, skill set, technical knowledge, required training, and salary information.	Research clearly covers a specific design and/or print production career area by going to specific job-recruitment websites. Research is evident in the portfolio content by providing specific career information and examples such as job description, qualifications, skill set, technical knowledge, required training, and salary information.
Review and redesign	Absent or incomplete.	Review and redesign analyzes the necessary changes to the original portfolio and plans and manages the content. Review and redesign considers and assesses intended career and/or education goals and changes the initial purpose and audience accordingly.	Review and redesign analyzes the necessary changes to the original portfolio and plans and manages the content. Review and redesign carefully considers and assesses intended lifelong career and/or education goals and changes the initial purpose and audience accordingly.
Peer review	Absent or incomplete.	Peer review expresses both strengths and weaknesses of the planned changes to the PDF Portfolio. Reviewer offers suggestions for improvement and considers how the portfolio supports career goals.	Peer review expresses both strengths and weaknesses of the planned changes to the PDF Portfolio. Reviewer offers clear suggestions for improvement and provides specific examples. Reviewer considers and offers suggestions on how to strengthen the portfolio to support career goals.
Flowchart	Absent or incomplete.	Flowchart is detailed and includes an appropriate organizational structure for the planned content.	Flowchart is detailed and includes a clear and logical organizational structure for the planned content. Flowchart includes all content that should go in the PDF Portfolio.

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	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
PDF Portfolio - content	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused.	PDF Portfolio highlights student's completed projects and the information is geared toward a specific career goal and audience. PDF Portfolio includes descriptive narratives for each project, highlighting skills relevant to the design and/or print production career area of interest.	PDF Portfolio highlights student's completed projects, is well organized, and the information is geared toward a specific career goal and audience. PDF Portfolio includes clear and descriptive narratives for each project, highlighting skills relevant to the design and/or print production career area of interest.
PDF Portfolio - design	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused.	Overall design of PDF Portfolio and highlighted projects employs appropriate use of design principles, layout design, image composition, color theory, and typography. PDF Portfolio showcases student's technical skills in Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, and Acrobat. PDF Portfolio's organization includes links and bookmarks.	Overall design of PDF Portfolio and highlighted projects employs design principles, layout design, image composition, color theory, and typography that allow the portfolio to meet the goal of showcasing student work to potential employers. PDF Portfolio clearly showcases student's technical skills in Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, and Acrobat. PDF Portfolio's organization includes efficient and appropriate use of links and bookmarks.

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	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
Presentation	Absent or incomplete.	Presentation focuses on intended career goals and includes appropriate information about specific job opportunities and requirements. Presentation presents the portfolio and explains how, through their portfolio examples, students meet or plan to meet the requirements and skill set of the jobs they are seeking. Presentation includes examples from the previous portfolio to highlight how they improved or changed the content and/or design. Presentation reflects on what they have learned in making the portfolio and throughout the course. Presentation analyzes and considers what they still need to learn to realize their career goals.	Presentation focuses on intended career goals and includes specific and clear information about particular job opportunities and requirements. Presentation presents the portfolio and clearly and concisely explains how the examples in the portfolio meet or plan to meet the requirements and skill set of the jobs they are seeking. Presentation includes examples from the previous portfolio to provide specific examples and a rationale for improvements or changes to the content and/or design. Presentation reflects on what they have learned in making the portfolio and throughout the course. Presentation analyzes and considers what they still need to learn to realize their career goals.

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