



## Creating Digital Portfolios

### What the New Media Writing Studio can do for you

Creating an online portfolio can be a time-consuming process. If you need help, advice, or support after today's workshop, please contact us at [newmedia@tcu.edu](mailto:newmedia@tcu.edu) or check out our open lab hours at <http://www.newmedia.tcu.edu>.

### What is a digital portfolio?

A digital portfolio is an online collection of work, selected and organized for a particular purpose and audience.

### Why create a digital portfolio?

- **Assessment:** You may be asked to construct a portfolio of your work for purposes of evaluation
- **Personal repository:** You may want to gather your professional work (or more) so that you can access it easily. Your e-college website is unavailable to students after they complete your course and is always unavailable to people outside your class. A professional website lets you share your materials with students and colleagues and include a wide variety of materials.
- **Job or Award:** Increasingly, candidates for academic jobs are making their materials available online. This trend does not mean you can skip sending your application letter, vita, and other materials the committee asks for, but a professional website or portfolio allows you to supply additional material for the committee to consider. Online portfolios also allow you to link to information on the web and to include non-print evidence such as multi-media student work or classroom presentations that you've created. You can even include a video of yourself teaching.
- **Reflection:** Shaping a representation of yourself for an audience provides an opportunity for you to reflect on who you are as a professional—and the value of your work collectively. When included, these reflections can play a role in the message you convey as you guide your audience in their reading of your portfolio.

### What format should I use?

Two popular choices for digital portfolios are **blogs and websites**. Try to look at examples of both in your field to get a sense of which format will work for you. Looking at others' websites will also help you see what works and doesn't work from an audience's point-of-view.

**Blogs** (weblogs): Professional blogs are online spaces for public commentary, usually focused on a particular issue or disciplinary interest. Blogs allow frequent, even daily updates and are organized with the most recent posting on the top of the page. Some blogging programs allow for the creation of static pages (and some allow you to suppress the by-date organization on the homepage) and because they are easy to use and require no special software, they are a good option for creating a professional portfolios.

Examples of professional blogs by academics in English

<http://alicerobison.org/>

<http://culturecat.net/>

<http://alexreid.typepad.com/>

<http://cyberdash.com/>

**Blog** sites that will host your blog for free:

[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)

[www.livejournal.com](http://www.livejournal.com)

wordpress.com (no ads)

edublogs.org (no ads, specially designed for teachers and students)

**Websites:** In general, websites that serve as professional portfolios are made up of a set of linked static pages that do not require frequent updating. Unlike a blog, that typically opens with the most recent post, a website opens to a homepage that presents an overview of the materials that reside on the site and gives users a first impression of you. Additional pages, usually organized into categories (e.g. Teaching, Scholarship, Professional Service, Administrative Experience), are linked from the homepage.

Examples of profession websites by academics in English

<http://melaniekill.com>

<http://home.eserver.org/geoff/>

<http://metaspencer.com/>

<https://www.msu.edu/~devosda/>

Religion

[http://www.divinity.duke.edu/portal\\_memberdata/mfulkerson](http://www.divinity.duke.edu/portal_memberdata/mfulkerson)

<https://www.amherst.edu/people/facstaff/sniditch>

Physics

<http://www.physics.harvard.edu/people/facpages/randall.html>

[http://web.mit.edu/physics/facultyandstaff/faculty/walter\\_lewin.html](http://web.mit.edu/physics/facultyandstaff/faculty/walter_lewin.html)

## What should my website include?

Virtually anything can be presented in a digital portfolio: short or long texts, images, audio, video, presentations. When selecting what to include consider

- What evidence represents me as my best self?
- What does my audience expect or want to see? What genre conventions, if any, apply to (digital) portfolios in my field?
- What formats do my materials need to be in?
- How can I organize my materials so my audience can easily find the material they're looking for? (Unlike print, websites are not read top to bottom in consecutive order)

## Planning your website

After you've looked at some examples of professional blogs or websites in your field and have some ideas about what you'd like your website to include, it's a good idea to map out the structure of your website. What categories will you use to organize your material? What will be in each category? You can literally draw a map that shows the home page,

the subpages, and the material that will be included in each subpage, as well as any images that you want to use on each of those pages.

### Where to host?

Both websites and blogs reside on a server (a computer with a lot of storage space) that users access when they type in the URL or website address. You'll need to decide where you want to publish your digital portfolio—where you want your material to reside.

### Website hosting

TCU offers students and faculty free server space and an easy way to publish your work online. Keep in mind that once you graduate, your website will be deleted. If you've created all your files offline, you can publish your website somewhere else after you leave TCU, but if you anticipate wanting to keep your website long-term, you might want to choose another host from the beginning.

### TCU Hosting

Every student and faculty member has a folder called wwwpub located on your U drive or M drive (your personal drive on the university server). Your university drive can be easily accessed from any networked computer on campus. See <http://www.tr.tcu.edu/fsweb.htm> for more information.

If you create a webpage in html, name it index.htm and save it in your wwwpub folder available on your university drive (m or u), it will be viewable from this URL: <http://personal.tcu.edu/yourusername>

To create more than one website in your wwwpub folder, create a new folder inside your wwwpub folder and name it something logical, e.g. professional. Save the homepage for the site you're naming <professional> inside the folder named <professional>, inside the wwwpub folder. To access this site, your URL would be <http://personal.tcu.edu/username/professional>

### Free website hosting using templates that can be minimally modified

Google sites: <http://www.google.com/sites/overview.html>

### Free hosting (you design your own site)

Award Space: [www.awardspace.com](http://www.awardspace.com)

FreeHostia: [www.freehostia.com](http://www.freehostia.com)

AtSpace: [www.atspace.com](http://www.atspace.com)

DotEasy: [www.doteasy.com](http://www.doteasy.com)

### Fee hosting. Buy your domain name or expand services (you design your own site and use your own name or choice of names in the URL)

1and1.com

www.godaddy.com

www.fatcow.com

### What software do I need?

Websites can be created using a number of tools. Dreamweaver is a widely used software product that allows you to design a website without knowing html (hypertext mark-up language) code. Instead, Dreamweaver is a WYSIWYG program (What-you-see-

is-what-you-get). That means you can see what your website will look like as you design it, just as you do when you produce a Word document.

**One caveat:** Produced by Adobe, Dreamweaver is relatively expensive and is available in a limited number of labs at TCU, so you'll need to arrange to have access to Dreamweaver if you choose to use it. Many of the principles for creating a website in Dreamweaver apply to other WYSIWYG webdesign programs. Kompozer (<http://kompozer.net/>) is a free download-able webdesign program. You can also learn to design webpages by working from a CSS template and making changes directly in the html code using a free downloadable software program like html-kit (<http://www.chami.com/html-kit/>).

If you plan to work with Dreamweaver, you might want to gather some additional resources to help you work with the software. You can find numerous Dreamweaver guides in any bookstore or online. Look through several to see which one best matches your learning style and experience level. For helpful tutorials, we recommend the Adobe Classroom in a Book series. Just be sure you know which version of software you'll be working with before you purchase a guide.

**New Media Writing Studio Workshop**  
**Introduction to Creating Digital Portfolios with Dreamweaver**  
**February 13, 2009**

Below are some questions to help you start thinking about what your portfolio might look like. These are brainstorming questions, so write down the first things that come to mind and try not to over-evaluate your responses:

What 3 or 4 words describe you as a professional?

If you wrote a professional autobiography, describe what the book jacket would look like:

Make a list of texts, images, objects, that represent you as a professional. List at least 5 things.

When a department or program is hiring someone in your field, what qualities do they want that person to have?

Ideas for what your digital portfolio might include:

Ideas about what your digital portfolio might look like (think—"How would I describe my professional style?"):

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Thank you for attending today's workshop. Please complete the following brief evaluation to help us improve our services to the TCU community.

1. Why did you attend today's workshop?
2. What did you learn or gain from attending today's workshop?
3. What additional support or resources will you need to meet your goals?
4. How can the NMWS help you in the future?
5. Additional Comments: