School of Information Sciences  
College of Communication and Information  
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville

ePortfolio Guide  
(2nd edition)

As one of the three exit requirement options, the ePortfolio provides an opportunity to integrate one's learning across the entire SIS program and to present one's capstone achievement in the program. The ePortfolio focuses on both learning process and learning outcomes. As a student-driven process, developing an ePortfolio engages the student to take a systematic look at the learning experiences through self-reflection, self-evaluation, and synthesis and integration of knowledge with real world applications. Further, the ePortfolio process also nurtures lifelong learning skills to prepare students for the 21st Century challenges facing information professionals.

“ePortfolio” will be used as the official spelling and lower case spelling will not be used, in light of the usage in the International Journal of ePortfolio (IJeP), a new scholarly journal for ePortfolio research (http://www.theijep.com/about.html).

1. About ePortfolio

The ePortfolio consists of two essential parts: 1) the process, during which the learner collects and organizes evidence of learning outcomes, and reflects on learning and professional growth; and 2) the product, a Web-based ePortfolio, by which the learner presents learning achievements and showcases professional competences in connection with his or her learning and career goals.

2. ePortfolio as Process

Throughout the program, the student will work closely with the student’s advisor on setting up learning goals, evaluating milestones, and reflecting on learning experiences. The student will collect learning artifacts, write journal entries of reflective thoughts, and organize learning artifacts and the reflections using an appropriate organizational system. The student will adopt appropriate information technologies to build the ePortfolio repository. The student should balance the amount of artifacts to be preserved with a focus on showcasing significant learning achievements, critical thinking, and self-evaluation of learning rather than reporting on assignments or projects that have earned good grades.

3. Web ePortfolio as Product

The content and structure of a Web-based ePortfolio as a product must include the following four sections using the same section headings:

Reflective Summary
- Introduce the student’s learning goals, outcomes, and achievements in the program that support professional goals.
Integration of Knowledge of Information Sciences

- Articulate and synthesize three essential concepts and/or theories fundamental to the field
- Apply the above articulated concepts and theories to real-world situations.

Personal Experiences

- Showcase and reflect on four different educational and/or professional products created by the student (in case of collaborative work, the student should describe the nature of his/her role and contribution). Related these products with the competences below).
- Demonstrate mastering of five competences defined by the relevant professional associations and career paths. Related these competences with the products (above).

Projection

- Conclude on how to further professional growth and career development.
- Include a professional Résumé or Vita.

4. Procedure

Required Course

The student must have completed the course INSC 505: Capstone for Career Success: Designing ePortfolio. The course will cover the ePortfolio development process and Web technologies for presentational ePortfolios.

ePortfolio Advisor

The ePortfolio advisor is an important source of information and mentoring. The ePortfolio advisor also serves as the Major Professor as defined by the Graduate School and will be identified as such in the relevant forms (e.g., Admission to Candidacy and Graduation Application). An ePortfolio student may transfer from the current academic advisor to another advisor as appropriate.

Students planning to graduate with an ePortfolio must work closely with their advisors to gauge progresses over time in developing their ePortfolios (see milestones checking in Procedure). In case of lacking adequate progress at the time Graduation Application form is due, the student should be advised if or not ePortfolio is a viable option in a given timeframe.

The ePortfolio Committee

Each student choosing ePortfolio will have an ePortfolio Committee chaired by the student’s advisor and two faculty members who serve on the Non-thesis ePortfolio Subcommittee for the semester. The two members will attend the ePortfolio Showcase as evaluators of the ePortfolio. The student’s advisor is the Major Professor of the student’s Committee. In the case of the advisor of an ePortfolio student is a member of the ePortfolio Subcommittee, Chair of Non-thesis Committee or another faculty member will serve the student’s Committee as a member.
Important Due Dates

Inform Advisor. The student must have submitted to the advisor the SIS Student Planning Form to choose ePortfolio no later than \textit{second week} of the semester preceding the graduation semester. The student must meet advisor to report on progress in developing ePortfolio no later than \textit{second week} of the graduation semester.

\textit{ePortfolio Workshop}. Two ePortfolio Workshops will be held in Spring and Fall respectively. The students are advised to attend the workshop in the semester preceding their defense in the Showcase. The students who have applied to graduate with an ePortfolio for the following semester will receive specifics about the workshop, showcase and defense once they have discussed with their advisor on choosing ePortfolio or have submitted graduation forms. Summer ePortfolio graduates must follow the Spring ePortfolio schedule by notifying SIS Student Coordinator in the fall semester, although they will not need to submit graduation packet until Spring.

\textit{Web ePortfolio Draft}. The student must submit the draft ePortfolio to advisor no later than \textit{two weeks} (or on a mutually agreed-upon date) before the ePortfolio is due to the Committee. The Web ePortfolio, approved by the student’s advisor, is due \textit{four weeks} before the ePortfolio showcase day (see below). The Web ePortfolio URL should be submitted to the committee using the online SIS ePortfolio Submission Form.

The student’s ePortfolio committee (chair/advisor and two members) will evaluate the ePortfolio within \textit{two weeks}. The committee will provide input on the ePortfolio. In case of revisions are needed, the advisor will communicate the suggestions to the student on behalf of the committee. The student is expected to incorporate revisions or respond to suggestions for defense at the showcase.

\textit{ePortfolio Showcase}. In both Spring and Fall, a SIS Web ePortfolio Showcase will be held on the same day of the SIS comprehensive examination unless otherwise notified. (Summer graduates must defend their ePortfolio in Spring and follow the schedule for Spring graduates.) The Graduate School requires that all ePortfolio students must attend the showcase to present and defend their ePortfolios in person. The student must be able to answer the questions raised by the evaluators who take on the role of \textit{devil's advocate}. 

\textbf{SIS ePortfolio Guide, Dec 2013 – P. 3}
## Milestones Checking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting advisor</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; semester</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; or 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</th>
<th>...... semesters</th>
<th>Preceding final semester</th>
<th>Final semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning goals</td>
<td>Planning form</td>
<td>Planning form</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; wk Confirm for ePortfolio</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; wk Report on progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>IS 505 (model &amp; ePortfolio site structure)</td>
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<td>Finalize</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synthesize knowledge (essay(s) of 3 concepts)</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Finalize</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Experiences (5 competences in 4 artifacts)</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>Finalize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection (goals and self-evaluations)</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Finalize</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projection (&amp; Resume)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Finalize</td>
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<tr>
<td>ePortfolio workshop</td>
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<td>Finalize</td>
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<tr>
<td>ePortfolio to Advisor</td>
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<td>2 weeks before</td>
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<tr>
<td>ePortfolio to Committee</td>
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<td>4 weeks before</td>
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<tr>
<td>Showcase defense</td>
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<td>9a.m.–1p.m.</td>
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5. ePortfolio Evaluation

The Web ePortfolio is evaluated as a whole. All elements of the ePortfolio as defined in Section 3 above must be accessible and readable. The following evaluation criteria apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID:</th>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Evaluator:</th>
</tr>
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*Use additional sheets to attach the form if needed*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>1,2,3</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Relevancy of 3 theories and the selected application scenarios</td>
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<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Effectiveness of 4 artifacts to demonstrate 5 competences</td>
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<td>C3</td>
<td>Professional preparedness (as in reflection and projection)</td>
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<td>C4</td>
<td>Quality of writing (effective communication)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>Usability (organization, page layout, and navigational design)</td>
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<td>C6</td>
<td>Critical thinking (reflection not reporting nor padding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C7</td>
<td>Resume</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C8</td>
<td>Showcase</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation:
1. Meets expectation
2. Needs improvements as suggested
3. Does not meet minimum expectation
   a. Must defend again
   b. Consider to take comprehensive examination

Notes: (must be atomic with numbering as referenced above under Notes)
**Evaluation Results and Report**

The student will receive the evaluation results through the advisor. The committee will make a decision based on the Web ePortfolio and the defense at the showcase. If a student passed or failed, Report of Final Examination must be signed by the advisor as Major Professor and the two committee members. The signed Report must be submitted to the Graduate School by due date.

The committee, however, may recommend conditional pass pending on suggested revisions. In this case, the student must respond to the suggestions in writing and/or make satisfactory revisions within *two weeks* in order to have the Report signed and submitted to the Graduate School by the due date ([http://gradschool.utk.edu](http://gradschool.utk.edu)).

**Graduation Specifics**

The student must have submitted Admission to Candidacy and Graduation Application to the Graduate School by the deadlines. (See the forms and dates at [http://gradschool.utk.edu/](http://gradschool.utk.edu/))

The Web-based ePortfolio showcases are only available in Spring and Fall. Students planning to graduate in the summer must request to defend their Web-based ePortfolios in Spring semester. This request should be submitted in writing to advisor and SIS Student Coordinator.

The ePortfolio Student’s Candidacy Form and Report of Final Examination must be signed by the student’s advisor as Major Professor and the two members who evaluate the ePortfolio. The advisor participates in the evaluation process as Major Professor, a role similar to a thesis chair.

A switch from one Exit Requirement option to another (e.g., to Comprehensive Examination) is only allowed in the following semester by reapplying for Graduation and Admission to Candidacy. Administratively, once the ePortfolio student has submitted the Admission to Candidacy and Graduation Application to the Graduate School, he/she must complete the ePortfolio requirements in order to graduate. If a student plans to switch to a different option, the student may do so in the following semester by submitting relevant forms.

[Approved by the faculty May 9, 2012. Revised and approved December 4, 2013]

**Attached Q & A**
**SIS ePortfolio Q & A (December 25, 2013)**

1. **When should I take IS 505 ePortfolio?**
   We recommend the second semester or upon completion of the required courses to ensure sufficient time in developing your ePortfolio. Students must take the ePortfolio class no later than the semester preceding the semester they will defend at the ePortfolio Showcase.

2. **Who is my ePortfolio advisor?**
   Your academic advisor is your ePortfolio advisor who will sign your graduation forms as Major Professor.

   You may transfer from your assigned academic advisor to another faculty member to serve as your ePortfolio advisor. If you decide to transfer your advisor, do so as soon as possible in order to work closely with your advisor throughout the process of developing your ePortfolio. ePortfolio advisor transfer should complete no later than the semester preceding your ePortfolio defense semester.

3. **How often should I contact my advisor?**
   You must fill out and update your program planning every semester and indicate your choice of ePortfolio on the Student Planning form.

   You must initiate communication with your advisor on your ePortfolio progress and seek input on your work-in-progress ePortfolio.

4. **When will I defend my ePortfolio?**
   Students must defend their ePortfolios in ePortfolio Showcases held in both Spring and Fall semesters. There will not be ePortfolio showcase in summer. If you plan to graduate in summer with an ePortfolio, you must defend your ePortfolios in Spring.

5. **When will the ePortfolio workshop be held?**
   There will be an ePortfolio workshop in both Spring and Fall semesters. An ePortfolio workshop will be held in Fall semester for student who will defend in the following Spring semester. An ePortfolio workshop will be held in Spring semester for students who will defend in the following Fall semester.

6. **What are the due dates for submitting my ePortfolio?**
   There are at least 4 due dates for every ePortfolio student before the showcase:

   1. You must inform your advisor if you are on the track for ePortfolio option no later than the *second week* of the semester preceding your graduation semester (summer graduates should follow Spring graduates schedule). This is to ensure that you will be included in the ePortfolio workshop.
2. You must meet your advisor on your progress in developing ePortfolio no later than the **second week** of the semester you plan to defend your ePortfolio in the Showcase.

3. Your ePortfolio is due to your advisor for approval at least **two weeks** (or a mutually agreed-upon date) before the due date when you must submit it to the ePortfolio committee.

4. Your ePortfolio, approved by your advisor, is due to the ePortfolio committee **four weeks** before the Showcase date (typically the same day for Comprehensive Examination)

In the case that you received pass pending on revision, you must respond to the suggestions in writing and/or make satisfactory revisions within **two weeks** in order to meet the Graduate School’s due date for reporting the final result.

[Here is how to figure out the schedule by backtracking from the Showcase day (the same day as comprehensive examination day): If you plan to defend your ePortfolio in Spring 2014 (the Showcase day is set for March 28), your ePortfolio approved by your advisor is due to the committee on **February 28, 2014** (four weeks before the Showcase). Your ePortfolio is due to your advisor for approval by **February 14, 2014** (two weeks before it due to the committee or on a mutually agreed-upon date). You must meet your advisor to report on your ePortfolio progress no later than **January 17, 2014**. You must have notified your advisor in planning form no later than **August 30, 2013**]

7. **How to submit my ePortfolio to the committee?**
   You need to submit your URL through online **SIS ePortfolio Submission** form from the school’s Website.

8. **Who will serve my ePortfolio Committee?**
   Your ePortfolio Committee has **three** faculty members: your advisor as a chair and two faculty members serving the Non-thesis ePortfolio. The ePortfolio Committee members also sign your graduation forms (Admission to Candidacy and Graduation Application in the preceding semester and Report of Final Examination after Showcase defense).

   If your advisor is also serving the Non-thesis ePortfolio Subcommittee, the chair of the Non-thesis Committee or another faculty member will serve your ePortfolio Committee as a member.

9. **What sections should I include in my Web ePortfolio?**
   • Reflective Summary (your learning goals and self-assessment of outcomes)
   • Knowledge of the Field (essay(s) on **three** selected concepts/theories relevant to Information Sciences)
• Personal Experiences (your selected four artifacts/products demonstrating five competences/skills)
• Projection (looking forward; resume)

10. In Knowledge section, do I write three essays or one essay to include three concepts/theories and their application?
• You may choose to write one well-structured essay to articulate all the three concepts and their applications. You should title your essay and provide an Introduction.
• You may write three essays if you see appropriate. You should provide an overview about the three essays. Each essay should have a title.
• You may write one essay for one concept and another essay for two concepts. You should provide an overview about the two essays. Each essay should have a title.

11. In Personal Experiences, how do I relate competences with products/artifacts?
• Design a page for Personal Experiences. Have a section to introduce your four products/artifacts. Under each product, provide an overview and build links to the competences.
• In the page for Personal Experiences, have a section to articulate your five competences. Each competence should be defined as what it is and make hyperlinks to the artifacts/products that showcase the competence.

12. Can I include group project in my ePortfolio?
Yes. You must describe the nature of the collaboration and your role and contribution to the project. Reflect on your experiences in teamwork.

13. In my Web ePortfolio, should I list all my courses?
No. Your transcript has all the courses and grades as your academic report. SIS ePortfolio is not a report to duplicate information already in your transcript.

However, you may reflect, in your journal entries or summary reflection, on the memorable experiences in specific courses as evidence of learning. The courses you have taken outside the university may be reflected as an integral part of your learning.

14. What theme should I use for my ePortfolio site?
There are many free themes in WordPress. We recommend Retro-fitted for its effective navigational support and balanced layout. You may choose other themes for your ePortfolio site as long as you can achieve good usability in different Web browsers.

For a relatively small fee for upgrade, you can modify themes.
15. Who will have access to my ePortfolio?

You may put password protection on your ePortfolio site. You must grant your Committee full access.

The school will seek your permissions on access to your ePortfolio in the following categories:

- Open access
- To serve as examples for other students
- To serve as examples for program accreditation
- To be included in nominations for the School’s Outstanding ePortfolio Award

Any questions not yet covered above? Contact ePortfolio Coordinator Dr. Peiling Wang at peilingw@utk.edu