

# COMM 4979: DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

**This is to be meant as a sample and the syllabus for your semester and instructor may differ.**

Successful communication professionals must be able to showcase their work for relevant audiences. In this course, you will build upon the work you have done during your undergraduate career to create a complete, compelling digital portfolio to help you succeed in your professional endeavors. This course suffices the immersion course requirement for Communication Majors.

**By the end of this course, you should be able to:**

- Explain the function of a digital portfolio.
- Identify a target audience for your portfolio based on your career goals.
- Select work from your academic career that is suitable for showcasing your skills.
- Create two new pieces to supplement your existing work.
- Write a descriptive personal statement to help frame your work for audiences.
- Compile and publish a complete digital portfolio to the web.

## **Format:**

This course is a studio course. Resources will be provided asynchronously to help you meet the standards expected for each submission, and standards will be clarified in detail to help you succeed. That said, the expectation is that you will **work steadily, throughout the semester**, to build a compelling digital portfolio comprised of the pieces outlined in the course.

## **Credit Hours and Workload:**

The University of Connecticut expects 3 hours of combined instruction and work for every credit hour of a course; as such, for every credit hour of COMM 4979, it is expected you'll devote 3 hours per week, on average to this course. Students enrolled in the traditional 3 credits, then, should expect to spend about 9 hours per week working on this course. The following assessments and scale are designed to account for this workload.

## **Assessments:**

- Academic reflection and Career Planning Statement (1 point)
- Existing Work Selection Statement (1 point)
- New Piece #1 Justification and Submission (3 points)
- New Piece #2 Justification and Submission (3 points)
- Personal Statement and Updated Resume (2 points)
- Complete Finished Portfolio (6 points)

NOTE: All assessments are evaluated as either “meets standard” (full credit) or “doesn’t meet standard” (no credit). Feedback will be provided when a project does not meet the standard to help you improve this portion of your work.

**Grading Scale:** This course is graded S/U (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.) All students must submit the final portfolio. Depending on the number of credit hours you are enrolled in, the amount of total points to earn an S grade will differ:

3 Credit Hours	14 Points for S grade
2 Credit Hours	11 Points for S grade
1 Credit Hour	8 Points for S grade
NOTE: Regardless of current point total, all students <u>must</u> submit final portfolio for an S grade. Failure to submit portfolio equals an automatic U grade.	

## COMPONENTS:

### Academic Reflection & Career Planning Statement (1 Point)

To build a successful portfolio, you need to start by thinking about your academic career to date, and the professional career you’d like to build next. Think about your most-sought next steps in life, and what from your college experience can best help you to attain those next steps. Where are your strengths? Your weaknesses? How can you best tell the story of your work and education to move forward in your career? What do you need to do to impress your target audience?

To Meet the Standard: The submission must be a thoughtful, detailed reflection of where you stand currently, where you want to go, and how you intend to use a digital portfolio to help you get there, including persuading your target audience about your abilities. Strong work in planning leads to strong results.

### Existing Work Selection Statement (1 Point)

Your final portfolio will have at *least* five pieces that showcase your skills; you'll later create two pieces as part of this course. The remaining work should come from your personal, academic, creative, and professional experiences to date. In this submission, you'll select at least 3 prior experiences to document in your portfolio, explain why you've chosen them, and describe how you intend to portray them in your portfolio as examples of your abilities and potential as a professional.

To Meet the Standard: This statement should demonstrate that you've given extensive thought to the work you've done to date, and hand-picked (at least 3) unique personal/academic/creative/professional works that fit together logically and will support your professional next steps. The descriptions of how you intend to portray these works in your portfolio should show that you're using your skills as a communication expert to package your abilities and impress your target audience. It should be clear that you're ready to stop *thinking about* your portfolio and start *building* it.

### **New Piece #1 Justification and Submission (3 Points)**

### **New Piece #2 Justification and Submission (3 Points)**

*\*Note: Students enrolled for 1.00 credit hour may choose to skip both of these projects.*

*\*Note: Students enrolled for 2.00 credit hours may choose to skip ONE of these projects.*

As part of this course, you'll create two new pieces of work to include in your portfolio. The nature of these pieces will differ dependent on your professional goals, but their purpose will be the same: To showcase the skills you have developed over time (and throughout your college career) that will make you a valuable asset in your next role – be it graduate school, corporate work, creative work, or otherwise. For each of these submissions, you'll start with a justification: Explaining to me why you chose to create this piece (emphasizing a strength? Improving on a weakness? Filling a gap in your portfolio? Targeting a specific career path?) You'll also discuss how you think the piece will fit into the broader portfolio you're developing. Then you'll submit the actual piece.

To Meet the Standard for each: The justification should clearly frame the need for this piece in your portfolio, and the plan for making it a pillar of your work that will strengthen the overall portfolio. The work itself should be of professional-level quality, drawing upon skills you've developed in your academic career to show what you can do and impress prospective employers/graduate admissions committees/clients.

### **Personal Statement and Updated Resume (2 Points)**

With the central pieces of your portfolio in place, it's time to take a step back and think about how you want to address your portfolio audience. A portfolio should come with a personal statement, either as an introduction to the entire package or as an "about me" section on the web site. This personal statement should be well-written, creative, and emphasize the aspects of the portfolio that you want your audience to notice. It needn't be terribly long, but rather of sufficient length to impress and entice your audience, motivating them to review the rest of your work with a bit clearer idea who you are. At the same time, this is a critical time to make

sure your resume is both complete and updated, and at the same aesthetic quality as your portfolio itself. You will submit your updated resume alongside this personal statement.

To Meet the Standard: Your personal statement should be well-written and clearly targeted at the goals you set forth in your career planning statement. The statement should be an asset to the overall portfolio, helping your audience better understand you (and making them more likely to want to work with you.) The resume should be current, visually-appealing, and appropriate for a college graduate in your area of focus.

### **Complete Finished Portfolio (6 Points) (Cannot be Resubmitted)**

Your finished portfolio isn't simply a bulk-resubmission of the components listed above. Instead, it should be a complete, well-curated, collection of works that fit together to tell the story of you and your work. The portfolio should be delivered in an online format for maximum audience reach, taking the form of a personal web site that is well-designed, easy to use, and puts your work and capabilities front and center for your target audience. Online resources and tools will be made available to help you build your portfolio, but the act of assembling, perfecting, and releasing your portfolio online constitutes the main aspect of this course. Because of this, it's expected that you'll work on the portfolio *throughout the semester*, even as you complete other course assessments.

To Meet the Standard: Your portfolio must 1) Be available online, 2) Contain the elements outlined in your prior course submissions, 3) Be well-designed and easy to use for the average web user, 4) Contain relevant contact information for your audience to reach you, and 5) Communicate your professional/academic/creative goals to your target audience.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Assignments with due dates are in **bold**.

WEEK 1:	Introduction: What is a Digital Portfolio? Doing the planning work.
WEEK 2:	<b>Academic Reflection &amp; Career Planning</b>
WEEK 3:	<b>Existing Work Selection Statement</b>
WEEK 4:	Building your Portfolio: Creating New Original Works
WEEK 5:	—Portfolio Content Development Week—
WEEK 6:	<b>New Piece #1 Justification and Submission</b>
WEEK 7:	—Portfolio Content Development Week—
WEEK 8:	Designing your Portfolio: Look, Feel, and Platform
WEEK 9:	<b>New Piece #2 Justification and Submission</b>
WEEK 10:	Refining the Resume and Defining the Personal Statement
WEEK 11:	<b>Personal Statement &amp; Updated Resume</b>
WEEK 12:	Finishing, uploading, and testing your portfolio
WEEK 13:	<b>Complete Digital Portfolio</b>
WEEK 14:	—Portfolios Reviewed—
FINALS:	<i>No Final Exam in this course</i>

## **POLICIES:**

**Communication:** All emails should be sent from your Uconn.edu email address, be written professionally, and should make clear the question/concern/idea you are trying to share. Please allow 48 hours for a response, 72 if emailing on a Friday. I will do my best to help you succeed in this course, so I simply ask that you review this syllabus and the HuskyCT materials before you ask a question, as you might find the answer there and save yourself (and me) some time.

**Keeping up with this class:** It is your responsibility to remain engaged with the work of this course and submit your assignments on time. Material will be posted to HuskyCT to help you build your portfolio – it is your responsibility to use this content to aid your work. **Late work** will only be accepted up to 72 hours late and with the use of one token.

**Grades:** This course is graded S/U, and all assignments are graded as “Meets the Standard” or “Does not meet the Standard.” These grades are not disputable – no argument will change the standard, or whether or not a submission has reached it. Instead, use the provided tokens to resubmit work if necessary, and use feedback and discussions with me to learn how to improve your work. Our goal is to make you a stronger content creator who can present your work successfully to a target audience, so I encourage you to take all feedback constructively and use it to continue to improve.

**Emergencies/illnesses/etc:** If an emergency or sudden illness causes you to be unable to complete work by an assigned deadline, you must do the following:

1. Notify me as soon as humanly possible via email. This is the bare minimum that should be done. Contacting me weeks later about an event (in all but the most dire circumstances) is not acceptable.
2. Contact the Dean of Students’ office about your circumstance. They are there to support you when life gets in the way of your studies, and can help you by putting your problems on record officially without having to get into personal details with your instructors. You can find them at [dos@uconn.edu](mailto:dos@uconn.edu)
3. Complete your outstanding work ASAP: This is easier in some circumstances than others, obviously, but letting your work pile up is a recipe for disaster in a studio course like this.

### **UConn Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence**

The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community –

students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate amorous relationships can undermine the University's mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate amorous relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. Additionally, to protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report sexual assaults, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking involving a student that they witness or are told about to the Office of Institutional Equity. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help. More information is available at <http://equity.uconn.edu> and <http://titleix.uconn.edu>