

Frequently Asked Questions

Am I required to submit a Writing Portfolio?

If you started your post-secondary coursework at a WSU-accredited institution during Fall semester 1991 or later, then the Writing Portfolio is a graduation requirement. This applies to all undergraduate students, including transfer, Honors, and branch campus students.

When do I have to submit a Writing Portfolio?

According to the WSU catalog, after you pass English 101, or its equivalent, and no later than the first semester after you earn 60 credit hours. Within those time limits, you should submit the course writing in your Writing Portfolio that reflects your best work.

What kinds of writing can I put in my Writing Portfolio?

You can submit any piece written for a college course if the instructor who gave the assignment signs off on it as, in his/her judgment, "Acceptable" or "Outstanding" writing. This includes lab reports, essays, case studies, group projects, in-class writing, creative writing, technical writing, and so on. Although there is no minimum length requirement, it would be to your advantage to turn in something more substantial in length or in thought. Transfer students may submit writing from courses taken at another institution.

Do I have to retype these papers if instructors have written comments on them?

No. Do not type or print clean copies. Submit the original paper whenever you can.

What if I have to submit a copy since I do not have the original?

If the copy is clean, without comments by the instructor, then you must have the instructor initial some pages of the copy to verify that it was submitted by you for the course.

What if the instructor is not available to sign the cover sheet?

Whenever you can, have your instructor sign off on your paper while the course is in progress. If the instructor is unavailable to sign the cover sheet (i.e. an instructor from another school), an acceptable alternative would be to submit an email from the instructor. The email should include verification that the paper is your work and a rating of "Acceptable" or "Outstanding." Only in select cases will the Writing Assessment Office approve a submission with no instructor signature or email.

What if I don't have enough papers?

You can ask instructors to assign a paper for extra credit, or to re-write a short piece into something suitable for Writing Portfolio submission. Avoid this problem by saving all the writing you do for all your courses.

Which part of the Writing Portfolio do I have to complete first?

You may complete the Packet and the Timed Writing in the order you choose.

What if I have a physical or learning disability?

Contact the Disability Resource Center on your campus, and they will arrange accommodations for the Timed Writing session.

What happens to my Writing Portfolio after it is submitted?

Experienced faculty raters from a variety of departments will evaluate your writing as "Pass," "Pass with Distinction," or "Needs Work." If your Writing Portfolio is evaluated as "Pass" or "Pass with Distinction," the Registrar will record that your Writing Portfolio requirement for graduation has been satisfied. If your Writing Portfolio is evaluated as "Pass with Distinction," that honor will be recorded on your permanent transcript for prospective employers and post-graduate institutions of learning to see.

What happens if my Writing Portfolio earns "Needs Work"?

You will have to take additional coursework, in the form of a one-credit writing tutorial taken in conjunction with one of your required Writing in the Major courses (M-courses), or a three-credit writing course. You will need to pass this required course work to satisfy your Writing Portfolio requirement.

Why do I have to do this?

The Writing Portfolio identifies students who demonstrate a need for structured writing support with upper-division writing requirements. In addition, the evaluation recognizes those students whose writing is proficient or excellent for upper-division undergraduate work. The Writing Portfolio is a junior-level university requirement because writing skills can make the difference between success and failure in the professional world. WSU wants to prepare graduates for success.

Additional questions?

Contact the Writing Assessment Office in CUE 305 or call us at (509) 335-7959; or visit our website at <http://writingportfolio.wsu.edu>