

## Assignment #25

### Portfolios

At our final class meeting I'll collect your work in a portfolio, including preliminary and final drafts of each major writing assignment, and homework writing. Your portfolio will also include a cover letter.

### What, How and Why

#### What

- You MUST include preliminary and final drafts of all major writing assignments\*:
  - Life/Science
  - News Story
  - Profile or Archival article
  - Investigative Essay or Feature Article
- You MUST include a re-revised draft of your Investigative Essay/Feature Article in your portfolio.
- You MUST also include a revised draft of your Life/Science Essay.
- You MUST include a Portfolio Cover Letter (see below).

*\* Do NOT print out clean drafts of essays—I want the ones that are marked up. You don't need to include all the drafts with classmates' comments—just the ones with my comments*

#### NOTE: Re-revision

- You may re-revise your Profile or Archival article if you like.
- A Cover Worksheet for Re-Revisions—the same for all assignments—is posted online.

#### How

In a **simple 2-pocket folder**, please arrange your drafts and cover sheets as follows:

- **In the left-hand pocket**, put your first letter to me, and workshop comments that you printed out for me, and put your Portfolio Cover Letter on top.
- **In the right-hand pocket**, put drafts of essays.
  - Include the version of each draft that was marked by me along with cover sheets. Put newest drafts on top.
  - If you still have it, include pre-writing such as your pitch for a news story, or proposals, with each assignment

### **Why: The Portfolio Cover Letter**

The purpose of the Portfolio is to give you and me an opportunity to reflect on your work this term. To aid in this reflection, please address the following questions in your cover letter, which should be 1 to 1-1/2 pages single-spaced (letter format):

- What has changed in your writing and/or your approach to writing this term? Has anything changed in your reading practice?
- Which essay assignment stretched you the most? Explain.
- Which of your essays do you like best? Explain
- Anything else you want to comment on regarding your writing? (You'll have an opportunity to comment on the course itself elsewhere.)

### **When and Where**

Portfolios are due at our last class meeting.

I'll respond to your letters, and will leave Portfolios with letters to be picked up outside my office. I'll e-mail you when they're ready to be picked up.

### **Revising the Life/Science Essay (900-1,000 words)**

*Due with Portfolio*

Return to your Life/Science essay and re-see it—re-see its strengths, its weaknesses, and its possibilities.

- Make sure that the essay isn't just a speedy summary of various things: give it a clear focus, and take time with one or more scenes or stories so that you bring your ideas to life.
- Also take time to look carefully for patterns with punctuation or usage that have been noted on your other drafts, particularly:
  - confused singles & plurals,
  - missing commas and/or comma splices
  - vague "this," and
  - dangling modifiers.

Note: Your new draft will receive a letter grade. Do not assume that a "5" on the not-quite-revision that you did for our earlier assignment will automatically translate to an A.

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21W.035 Science Writing and New Media: Elements of Science Writing for the Public  
Spring 2013

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.