STUDENT E-PORTFOLIO GUIDE

Created by Dr. Nicole Buzzetto-More for, and in collaboration with, the UMES Center for Instructional Technology as part of the Department of Business, Management, and Accounting Electronic Portfolio Project.

This manual was prepared to assist students in the understanding, orientation, and usage of the Blackboard Portfolio system. If you have any questions regarding portfolio content, please contact your instructor. If you have any technical problems please contact the UMES Center for Instructional Technology.
Welcome!

The Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore assists faculty and students in e-learning. If you need assistance with the use of Blackboard CE 6 or the Blackboard Portfolio feel free to stop by 1106 Wilson Hall during normal business hours. An online request form is available to help us best satisfy your needs. The request form can be completed by visiting [http://www.umes.edu/webct/requesthelp.cfm](http://www.umes.edu/webct/requesthelp.cfm). The CIT can also be reached by phone at X7574.

What is an e-portfolio?

Electronic portfolios are quickly becoming the primary means in academia for students to demonstrate and reflect on learning (Lorenzo and Ittelson, 2005). Electronic Portfolios represent a meaningful collection of work assembled by a student that demonstrates progress and/or mastery that is connected to learning outcomes and involves students engaging in self-reflection (Paulson, Paulson and Meyer, 1991). Electronic portfolios provide opportunities for students to become active learners as they set objectives for learning, engage in self-reflections, review objectives, and assume responsibility for their own learning (Popper, 2005; Barett, 2004; ePort, 2003; AAHE, 2001; Martell and Calderon, 2005). Academic leaders are excited by electronic portfolios because they offer a new environment to demonstrate and assess student learning in accordance with established objectives (Jafari, 2004; Buzzetto-More and Sweat-Guy, 2007).

Portfolios begin with the establishment of learning objectives by an institution, an academic program, or an instructor and involves students collecting a variety of items known as artifacts that are used to demonstrate mastery of these objectives. To further articulation, and in order to demonstrate relevance, students author meaningful reflections where they explain how artifacts were selected, their relevance to specific learning objectives, as well as their understanding and interpretation of a goal.

There are a number of reasons an institution or an instructor may elect to adopt an electronic portfolio system.

- An electronic portfolio can be used by students for professional promotion when looking for internships and/or permanent employment.
An electronic portfolio can serve as a comprehensive and summative assessment measure that is established by either a program or an institution to serve as a means of determining the completion of an academic degree. These types of portfolios are guided by pre-determined learning objectives and outcomes and serve as a formal assessment measure.

Introducing the Blackboard Portfolio

The Blackboard Portfolio allows students to present a collection of items that represent their accomplishments towards the satisfaction of goals and objectives. Either instructors or students establish these objectives and it is the responsibility of students to bring in artifacts that demonstrate mastery. The types of artifacts that may be chosen by students can be predefined by the instructor or the instructor can give students the freedom to make such a determination. Virtually every type of file is supported. Students make reflective entries where they explain how the artifact(s) that they have chosen demonstrate mastery of a learning outcome.

The Blackboard portfolio product is designed to complement the Blackboard CE and Vista Virtual Course Environments. The user interface has a similar layout and employs similar tools. Graded materials from Blackboard courses can be imported directly into portfolios and presented to guests. Materials can also be created and presented using Blackboard Portfolio tools. Students serve as portfolio owners who have control over the material, design, and membership in their portfolio. Students can use the portfolio to track learning experiences and reflect on their progress towards learning objectives. They can also use their portfolio to share results and attributes with others and solicit meaningful feedback.

The students have control over the material, design, and membership in their portfolio. The system supports a variety of file types and allows for multiple artifacts and includes an internal HTML creator. Students can alter their portfolios for different viewers, invite and dis-invite assessors and guests, and allow people to give feedback. Students can also author both public and private reflections, discussions, and blogs.

For students, the experience with the portfolio system is quite different from their previous interactions with the Blackboard learning management system. The reason for this difference is the change in role and control. When experiencing a course delivered through one of the learning management system the student takes a subjunctive role and is not part of the course design process. With the portfolio system, students act as designers who build and manage their own portfolios, much in the same way that instructors using the learning management
system act as course designers who build an online learning experience. Because the building of portfolios is largely done by students, instructors using this system will find that their role is primarily administrative in nature.

**Figure 1: My Blackboard Portfolio User Homepage**

![My Blackboard Portfolio User Homepage](image)

**ARRANGEMENT**

You will arrange your portfolio in such a way that a visitor first views the home page which must be professional and customized. The homepage must contain a series of folders that contain links to the learning goals; the goal written in the description area; the reflections created using the reflection tool; and links to the uploaded artifacts.

**REFLECTIONS**

You will be creating reflections using either the blog or discussion tool as part of your portfolio building experience. The authoring of reflections is crucial to the portfolio process. Reflections provide crucial insight into your understanding and mastery of learning goals.

**SUBMISSION AND GRADING**

Once portfolios have been completed students will invite your instructor to view your portfolio. Assessment will be conducted using a rubric.
DIRECTIONS FOR PORTFOLIO OWNERS (STUDENTS)

Students creating and sharing portfolios are referred to in Blackboard as Portfolio Owners. Two actions in the form of tabs are available: Build Portfolio and View Portfolio. The Build Portfolio is for creating the portfolio while the View Portfolio tab is for previewing.

It is crucial that from time to time you view your portfolio in the View mode. This lets you see exactly what a visitor will see when visiting your portfolio and lets you know if anything is amiss.

In Build mode there are three menus: Portfolio Menu, Owner Tools, Options. When you click the tools in these menus the adjacent frame updates to show the content and controls for the tool.

LOGGING INTO THE UMES PORTFOLIO SYSTEM

Before You Get Started

If you are working off campus or using a non-UMES computer:
Disable Pop-Up Blocker
Enable Cookies
Enable Javascript
Browser Check

Not all browsers are supported for use with Blackboard and some browser setting may need to be further enhanced and or changed.

To Check Your Browser’s Configuration

1). Go to your Blackboard Login Page
2). Before and after logging in, look for a Check Browser link which should be in the top right corner of the browser window.
3). Click Check Browser


Logging in to Blackboard

Blackboard is accessed from the UMES homepage at http://www.umes.edu click on My
UMES then select the blue box that says Blackboard Learning System. Clicking on the icon takes you to the Blackboard help page. In the text boxes provided enter your UMES user name and password.

**My Blackboard**

After a successful login you will see the My Blackboard page. This is the main entry page for designers, instructors and students. Towards the top there are 3 tabs labeled My Blackboard (default entry), Content Manager, and Portfolios see Figure 1. You will click on Portfolios which will immediately take you to the portfolio homepage:

**Blackboard Login Page**

You will see a list of the portfolios that you own. If a portfolio has not been assigned to you please notify your instructor as well as Mr. Kaye Pinhey of the Center for Instructional Technology at kdpinhey@umes.edu. Students have been assigned portfolios based on enrollment in the course at a set time.

Click on the link to the portfolio you own to enter the portfolio.
**Portfolio Menu Tools**

**Home Page:** The Home Page is the means of entry and navigation where links are added and portfolios created. Customability allows for the creation of headers and footers as well as the setting of background colors and layout.

**Calendar:** This is useful for viewing and creating dated reminders that can be viewed by day, week, or month. Information can be made either public or private.

**Learning Objectives:** This feature is similar to the learning objectives (goals) feature included in the learning management system. It allows users to record and track learning objectives that are set either by the owner, an instructor, or an institution. Artifacts included within the portfolio should be associated with one or more learning objectives.

**Message Center:** This is used for communicating with guests.

**Owner Tools**

**Files:** Similar to the Manage Files feature of the learning management system, it allows students to upload, organize and manage the files and artifacts stored and used within a particular portfolio.

**Reflections:** This feature is for the creation of blogs and threaded topics where Portfolio Reviewers can post and reply to messages, ask questions, generate discussions, and encourage feedback.

**Binders:** For organizing and delivering a portfolio as a structured bound item that includes a table of contents and a hierarchy. **We will not be using this feature.**

**Gallery:** For building a database of text, image, video, and audio entries that are organized into collections. **We will not be using this feature.**

**Resume:** Supports resume creation, importation, and distribution. **We will not be using this feature.**

**Web Links:** For the adding of URLs.

**Management Options**

**Guests:** allows you to manage existing guests and invite new guests to view or help design your portfolio.
Set Preferences: allows you to customize your portfolio by hiding or showing tools, adjusting the appearance of menus, selecting interface colors, changing default icons, and configuring functional settings.

WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU PREPARE YOUR PORTFOLIO APPLYING THE FOLLOWING STEPS

1) Create Learning Objectives
2) Upload All Files (into you’re my Files for storage)
3) Prepare Reflections
4) Create Folders on your Homepage
5) Link files to their Folders
6) Link Reflections to the Correct Folders
7) Customize the Look of your Homepage through the addition of headers and footers and through additional formatting
8) View the Portfolio in View Portfolios
9) Share Portfolio by Inviting Guests
STEP 1: CREATING LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Although Blackboard designed the Learning Objectives feature around the idea that all learning objectives will be student generated, this is not the case with the DBMA portfolio where you will be entering the course learning objectives.

Creating Learning Objectives

Step 1: Under Portfolio Menu, click Learning Objectives.
Step 2: Enter a title and description.
Step 3: If you want to add the learning objective to a category select the category or create a new category.

DO NOT ADD YOUR FILES DIRECTLY TO THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE AS THEY WILL NOT BE VISIBLE TO VISITORS!!!!

STEP 2: IMPORTING FILES

Importing Files from Outside Blackboard
If you do not have artifacts from previous or current Blackboard courses that you would like to use you may import artifacts directly into the system. This is most likely the most common approach. You can get files from your computer and copy them to the Files tool in your portfolio.

To Import Files

Step 1: Under Owner Tools, click Files.
Step 2: Navigate to the folder you want to import files into.
Step 3: Click **Get Files**. A browser screen pops up.

Step 4: If the files you want to import are on your computer:

- Click the **My Computer** icon.
- Locate and select the files.

If the **My Computer** option does not appear when you are in Get Files then there is a common problem occurring. You may want to simply try to use another computer; however, if the problem persists please contact Mr. Kaye Pinhey with the UMES Center for Instructional Technology in 1106 Wilson Hall by either going in person or by sending him an email at kdpinhey@umes.edu.

**STEP 3: CREATING REFLECTION TOPICS AND POSTING MESSAGES**

Reflections play an important role in portfolio design and presentation and there are different types of reflections that may be included. When you bring in and assign artifacts to your portfolio, you will author a reflection as either a blog or a threaded discussion topic. The Blackboard system considers reflections to be part of an interactive and ongoing process.
The Reflections tool allows you to create blogs and threaded topics where you and portfolio guests can post and reply to messages. You can ask questions, generate discussion, and encourage Portfolio Reviewers to share feedback and ideas. You can add reflection topics to the folders placed on the Home Page.

There are two types of reflection topics:

- **Blog**: Create a blog (Web log) topic where users post messages and contribute to an ongoing discussion where all messages are displayed on the same screen. Users can also comment on messages where comments appear on a separate screen.

- **Threaded**: Create a threaded topic for a more structured discussion. Users post and reply to messages. Replies associated with the same post are grouped together, creating message threads that can be expanded and collapsed.

To Create and Post Reflection Topic(s)

1. Under Owner Tools, click **Reflections**.
2. Click **Create Topic**.
3. Select the topic type and click **Next**.

*Reflection Topic Type*
Step 4: Enter a title and description.

Step 5: To add the topic to an existing category, select the category.

Step 6: To create a category and add the topic to it, select **Create New Category** and enter a name and description.
Step 7: Under **Peer Review**, select whether or not you want to allow peer review:

- If you don't want to allow peer review, select **Do not enable Peer Review in this topic**.
- If you want to allow peer review, select **Allow Portfolio Reviewers to review messages using a simple rating scale** and then click **Create Scale**.
  
  - Set up the rating scale:
    - Click **Save**.

Step 8: Under **Topic Behavior Options**, set Portfolio Reviewer Posting Rules for the topic:
If you want to allow Portfolio Reviewers to contribute to a topic:

- Select from the following:
  - Portfolio Reviewers can post messages and reply to messages.
  - Portfolio Reviewers can post messages but cannot reply to messages.
  - Portfolio Reviewers can reply to messages but cannot post messages.

To allow Portfolio Reviewers to edit their messages, select Portfolio Reviewers can edit their messages after posting them.

- If you want to allow Portfolio Reviewers to read messages but prevent them from contributing to a topic, select **Lock this topic**.

**Step 9:** Click **Save**.

**Step 10:** From the Reflections screen, click the name of the topic to which you want to post a message. All messages posted to the topic appear.

**Step 1:** Click **Create Message**.

**Step 2:** Enter the subject of your message.

**Step 3:** Enter the message.
Step 4: If you want to attach files to your message, click **Add Attachments**.

Step 5: If you want to preview your message, click **Preview**.

Step 6: If you are not ready to post the message but want to save it, click **Save as Draft**.

Step 7: To post the message, click **Post**.

**STEP 4: ADDING FOLDERS TO THE HOMEPAGE**

Step 1: Under **Portfolio Menu**, click **Home Page**.

Step 2: To add a folder to the Home Page:

Step 3: To create a folder in your current location on the Home Page click **Create Folder**.

Step 4: Click **Save**.

**STEP 5: LINKING FILES TO THEIR FOLDERS**

Step 1: Open your folder and Click **Add Files**.

**Step 2:** Click **Browse**.

Step 3: Select an item from the inventory and then click **Add Selected**.

**STEP 6: LINKING REFLECTIONS TO THEIR FOLDERS**

Step 1: Open your folder and Click **Link to Other Items**.

Step 2: Click the type of item you want to add (Reflection).

Step 3: Select an item from the inventory and then click **Add Selected**.
STEP 7: CUSTOMIZING THE HOMEPAGE

CUSTOMIZING THE APPEARANCE OF THE HOME PAGE

Step 1: From the Home Page:
  - Click Page Options.

Step 2: To change the default layout of items, add an image to the background, and change the background color:
  - Click Customize Page Display.
  - Under Layout Templates select one of the numbered layout options.
  - To create a custom layout:
    - Under Layout Templates, select Custom Layout.
    - Under Layout Preview, from the Columns drop-down list select the number of columns to display on page.
    - From the Icon/Text drop-down list, select the link appearance: show icons and text, text only, or icons only.
    - From the Icon Placement drop-down list, select the place of icons in relation to the link text: left, right, or above.
• From the **Alignment** drop-down list, select the alignment of the link text within the column: left, right, or centered.

• From the **Table Width** drop-down list, select the width of the table controlling the page layout: wide or narrow.

*Customize Page Display*

- To select an image file to display in the background:
  - Under **Background Image**, click **Browse** and select a file from your computer.
  - If you want the image to repeat over the entire page, select **Tile the image**.

- To select a color to display in the background:
  - Under **Background Color**, click **Select Color**.
  - Click a color.
Student E-Portfolio Guide

- Click Select.
  - If you want to extend your changes to the Home Page and all folders, select Change all existing folders to these settings.
  - If you want to set your changes as the default when folders are created, select Set default to these settings for all new folders.

TO ADD A HEADER OR FOOTER:

- Select Page Options
- From the drop down click Edit Header or Edit Footer.

- You can either type directly in the box for unformatted text or use the HTML Creator by Clicking Enable HTML Creator (recommended see directions below).
- Enter content for the header or footer.
- If you want the header or footer to appear on the Home Page and in all folders, select Use this as the default for the entire portfolio.

ADDING TEXT TO THE HOMEPAGE

The only way to add text to your homepage is by adding either a header or a footer. When you do this, please use the built in HTML editor for its formatting features. If the built in HTML editor is not available to you, this means that the computer you are currently using does not have an updated version of JAVA installed.
USING THE HTML CREATOR

The HTML Creator consists of the following:

- A toolbar that contains buttons for formatting content and inserting objects, such as tables, links, and images.
- An editing area where you enter content.
- Tabs that allow you to display content in either WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) view or Source View.

Click Enable HTML Creator.

In the HTML Creator editing area, enter your content. Use the HTML Creator toolbar to format your text and insert objects.

CUSTOMIZING PORTFOLIO MENUS, COLORS, AND ICONS

You can change the appearance of menus, set text and background colors, and select alternate icons for your portfolio.
Setting Text and Background Colors

Step 1: Under Options, click **Set Preferences**.

Step 2: Click **Colors**.

Step 3: To select a default color scheme, under **Color Set**, select one of the numbered color sets.

   - Click **Apply**.

To select a new icon set

Step 1: Click Select **New Content Icon Set**.

Step 2: Select an icon set and click **Select**.

Step 3: To select an image file to display as an icon:

   - Locate the icon that you want to customize and click its carrot drop down.

   - Click **Replace Image** and select a file.

Step 4: Click **Apply**.
CREATING WEB LINKS

You can use the Web Links tool to compile a list of Internet addresses. These Internet addresses can be added to the Home Page and folders to reference Web pages outside of your portfolio. You can also organize Web links into categories.

To Create Web Links

Step 1: Under **Owner Tools**, click **Web Links**.
Step 2: Click **Create Web Link**.
Step 3: Enter a title and description. The title appears as the link.
Step 4: In the URL text box, enter the Internet address for the Web link. You are not required to enter http://
Step 5: Under **Category**, select the category in which to save the Web link. If you do not select a category, Web links will appear in a default category called Uncategorized.
Step 6: Click **Save**.
EDITING AND REORGANIZING MATERIAL

Step 1: On the Home Page:

Step 2: To edit the properties of an item, such as its title or description:

- Next to the item's title, expand the drop down carrot
- Click Edit Properties.
- Edit and click Save.

Step 3: To customize the link settings for an item:

- Expand the dropdown carrot next to the item
- Select Customize Link.
  - Change the title, icon, have the item appear in a new browser window select, and/or replace icon with image file.
- Click Save.

Step 4: To move or reorder the item:
- Expand the carrot next to the item
- To move, click **Move to Folder** and select the new location

To reorder click the arrow pointing in the direction you want to move the item.

**STEP 8: VIEW YOUR FINISHED PORTFOLIO**

You have two tabs at the top of your screen Build Portfolio and View Portfolio. Switch to View Portfolio. This enables you to see your portfolio exactly how individuals visiting your portfolio will see the content displayed. Check that you are happy with what you see before you continue to Step 9. If you are wondering whether you will be able to continue to work on your portfolio after you have invited guests, the answer is YES.

**STEP 9: SHARING YOUR PORTFOLIO WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR AND OTHERS**

You can share your portfolio with other people. Your instructor will only be able to enter and grade your portfolio after you have invited them to join your portfolio as a guest.

The Blackboard Portfolio provides tools for inviting and managing guests as well as restricting material from individual guests. There are also tools to communicate with guests. As guests participate in your portfolio, you can run reports to track their activity. You are required to invite your instructor to visit your portfolio so that it can be assessed.

There are two types of guests: those who are members of the community and those who are not. Members of the community include people who are enrolled in Blackboard courses, such as Section Instructors, Students, and Teaching Assistants, as well as other people in an institution (e.g. administrative staff and other faculty members). If you are a member of a Blackboard community, you can give these people access to your portfolio by selecting them and assigning them a role. People who are not members of the Blackboard community include family, friends, and business colleagues. You can give these people access to your portfolio by creating guest accounts for them that contain their name, portfolio role, and access information. All guest accounts have an expiration date. By default, the expiration date is thirty days from the date that the guest account is created; however, you can change this when you set up the account. When an account expires, it is automatically removed from the system and the guest can no longer access your portfolio. These guest accounts are associated with your portfolio only; other Portfolio Owners cannot browse or select them to add to their portfolios.
Regardless of the type of guest, each guest is assigned a role, either the Portfolio Designer role or the Portfolio Reviewer role. Each role has its own set of permissions that control the type of access that the guest has to your portfolio. Portfolio Designers have permissions that allow them to help build the portfolio while Portfolio Reviewers can only view the portfolio and provide feedback.

To Add Guests

Step 1: Under Options, click **Guests**.

Step 2: Click **Add Guests**.

Step 3: Select **Create a Guest** and click **Next**.

Step 4: Enter the user’s first and last names.

Step 5: Enter a unique user name. Each time the user logs in to your portfolio, they will enter their user name and password.
Inviting Guests From Your Institution

Depending on administrator settings, one or both of the options described in this topic may not be available to you. For more information, contact your Portfolio Administrator.

You can give members of your institution access to your portfolio by adding them as guests and assigning them a portfolio role. Each guest will receive an e-mail invitation to view your portfolio. The invitation will contain your name, and a link to your portfolio. It will also contain the guest's institution user name, which they will use, along with their password, to log in to your portfolio.

To Add Guests

Step 1: Under Options, click **Guests**.

Step 2: Click **Add Guests**.

Step 3: If the user is a member of your institution and you know their user name:

- Select Enter a user name and click **Next**.
- In the User name text box, enter the person's user name.

Step 4: If the user is enrolled in one or more of your courses, but you don't know their user name:

- Select **Browse my courses** and click **Next**.
- Click **Browse**.
- Click the course title.
  - To add users based on their enrollment in the course, under Find by Course Role.
  - To add individual users, under Find by Name locate and select each user
- Click **Save**.

Step 5: Select a portfolio role for the guest to be enrolled as.
Step 6: Add text for the email.

Step 7: Click **Save**.

Step 8: Click **OK**.