

## Guiding Questions for the Use of Portfolios – Student Version

### *Consideration*    *Guiding Questions*

#### *Purpose*            *What is the purpose of the portfolio?*

- ◆ The purpose will influence the organizing framework for the portfolio, its contents, and the nature of the reflections.
- ◆ The context in which the portfolios are constructed will also influence how students approach the task, and this context should mirror and support the stated purposes.

#### *Expectations*    *Have clear expectations for the organization and implementation of the portfolio been established?*

- ◆ Well-articulated standards and clear design guidelines will elevate the portfolio from the “great paper chase” to a powerful exercise in self-analysis and renewal.

#### *Reflection*        *Has reflection been built into the preparation of portfolios?*

- ◆ For portfolios to represent a student and his or her work, there must be clearly defined reasons and explanations for the inclusion of materials.
- ◆ It is the reflective process of construction that differentiates a portfolio from a scrapbook.
- ◆ The use of both captions for individual artifacts, and longer reflective commentary on subsections or the entire portfolio, are critical in maximizing the value of portfolios.

#### *Training*            *Has training been provided for all parties involved in the use of portfolios?*

- ◆ The responsibility for portfolio development falls on the student and is highly dependent on his or her individual capacity to make sense or meaning of his or her work.
- ◆ Teachers and students will need training in the processes of collection, selection, and reflection for portfolio preparation.
- ◆ The professional development associated with portfolios is not only a product of the process, but also must be part of the process.

#### *Collaboration*    *Is collaboration encouraged in the development and analysis of the portfolio?*

- ◆ Construction of a portfolio is a creative process and is enhanced by feedback from others on its contents and the story it tells.
- ◆ Dialogue with peers and mentors helps the student to clarify the original intent or purpose of including certain objects, what they reveal about strengths and weaknesses, and directions for further development.
- ◆ Students must be well supported in this personal growth effort.