ePortfolio Capstone Project Manual

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ePortfolio Capstone Project Manual

The Henley-Putnam School of Strategic Security (H-PSSS) Electronic Portfolio (ePortfolio) is an important milestone in your graduate education Capstone Project. As you progress through your last two required courses, you will complete sections of the ePortfolio Capstone Project—the final assignment in which you demonstrate the skills you have acquired during your academic career at H-PSSS related to your discipline—intelligence management, terrorism, and counterterrorism, or strategic security and protection management. This manual covers the items that you will need to understand to complete your ePortfolio Capstone Project successfully. The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the requirements for your ePortfolio Capstone Project, including the expected timeline for completion, a description of project milestones, guidance on how to achieve the milestones, and an explanation of the possible approaches you may choose for your ePortfolio.

**Electronic Portfolio**

As defined in the H-PSSS section of the NAU catalog, the ePortfolio is a culminating project, which offers a practical solution focused on demonstrating mastery of the program learning outcomes (PLOs). Program learning outcomes describe the key concepts, skills, and core competencies that identify the types of knowledge and skills (outcomes) students should have acquired having successfully completed the courses required for their degree program. Students will demonstrate mastery by

- reflecting on self-growth,
- collecting, analyzing, and improving upon previous course materials as evidence of that growth,
- drawing conclusions, and
• presenting the results both orally and through a well-written ePortfolio.

**ePortfolio Project Milestones**

You may begin working on your ePortfolio upon enrollment in your first required course. Each of the required courses in your program includes the completion of specific assignments that relate to specific learning outcomes. Every course connects to each of the PLOs in some way. You can find the PLOs for your program (IM, TCT, or SSPM) in the PDF with the title “Learning Outcomes Alignment” under Course Information in the D2L courses. If you keep notes on your learning in each course and save your coursework along with any feedback from your instructors, you will likely be ahead when you reach the end of the program. As you work through RESP 695 Research-Portfolio and FRPP 697 Writing for Publication-Portfolio, you will complete all of the milestones of the culminating project, your ePortfolio.

**Criteria for ePortfolio**

The ePortfolio is a self-expression platform for demonstrating competencies. To give the portfolio audience a comprehensive look at your learning in the master's program, you can be creative in the style and presentation; however, the final ePortfolio must include

• an introduction to you and your portfolio,

• five (5) reflective analysis essays (five paragraphs each) - one per Program Learning Outcome (PLO) - that identify the core competency of each PLO (Information Literacy, Conceptual Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Civic Learning, and Communication) and discuss how you have mastered each PLO

• at least three (3) artifacts (papers, final projects, independent studies, etc.), to pair with three of the five reflections, used to demonstrate evidence of your mastery of the particular skills of the core competency for the PLO, discipline knowledge or core
competency skill set.

- a concluding statement.

Please note you must build a portfolio that is electronically sharable with your instructor and the H-PSSS associate deans. The final version must be published in a sharable electronic format and contain the mandatory well-written publication-ready sections listed within this document. You do not have to publish on the open internet. Rather, the term publish is related to the ePortfolio technology tool you choose. You are required to publish the link to your associate dean and your instructor. Publishing a link varies by too, but in the end, you provide a URL link to your ePortfolio in the FRPP class, in the M04.1 and M05.1 assignments. You are also required to continue using the APA citation methodology by following the guidelines outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and National American University’s Writing Center.

In addition to the required criteria of the ePortfolio, students can include additional self-expression and demonstrate excellence by including additional sections such as

- additional artifacts demonstrating the remaining PLOs,
- a statement of professional goals,
- a plan for future learning,
- professional documents (artifacts from your work if unclassified, resume, professional references, etc.),
- a reflection on the H-PSSS Institutional Learning Outcomes,
- a reflection on the student and learner services that helped in your learning process (i.e. advisors, library, career center, tutoring, and groups and organizations),
- achievements and awards, and
Reflective Analysis Essays

Your ePortfolio will include five (5) reflective analysis essays in which you critically examine your experience in the master’s program and connect it to each of the learning objectives of the program in which you will graduate. You will research concepts and write the reflective essays in RESP 695 Research-Portfolio. You will think critically about your experience in the program by describing the key concepts, skills, and core competencies of each PLO in your own words. You must interpret and analyze the text of the PLO, rather than merely summarizing it.

The reflective analysis essay is about you and your learning experience. The goal is a well-written and organized essay in which you use the first-person voice using a self-reflective tone. In the essay, you should describe skills you learned for the core competency. The words core competency describes the red text on the Learning Outcomes Matrix, in the Institutional Learning Outcomes column. You research those words to learn about the skills that comprise the core competency. Then, in the reflective essay format, you describe the skills you learned, when you learned each skill, and how you know that you learned those skills. You should explain why learning the key concepts, skills, and core competencies matters to the mastery of the PLO and how the PLO matters to your education and career professionalization. You should provide specific examples based on your learning experiences such as the courses, instructors, assignments, and an “ah ha” moment that highlights your mastery of a particular program learning outcome. You may also mention what your next step in the learning evolution of those key concepts, skills, or core competencies might be. When writing this type of essay, you are evaluating your own learning and assessing how you learned various elements of the PLO. The
reflective essay must inform the reader how and why you know you have mastered the key concepts and skills of your discipline and the core competency described by the PLO. There is an NAU APA Template in the classroom to use for completing the reflective essay assignments.

Artifacts

Artifacts are the digital evidence of your successful demonstration of the PLOs. In every course, you had academic activities for parts of every PLO and in most courses, you produced evidence of learning in the form of coursework such as papers, presentations, and analysis products. An artifact is an academic term for your previous coursework. You will collect, select, connect, and edit to improve a minimum of three artifacts to publication-ready status. There is information in the course about editing – what it is and is not and the editing we expect you to perform on your artifacts to bring the artifact to publication-ready status following APA organizational layout, in-text and parenthetical citations, and reference list citations. You will include the final, edited artifact in your ePortfolio in Word format following the NAU APA Template. The publication-ready artifacts are the examples of your work during your master’s journey that best exemplify your success in the program.

Creating Your ePortfolio

You can create your portfolio in the electronic format that is available to you; best fits the self-expression requirement and allows you to present your culminating capstone project both orally and as a well-written product. Please keep in mind you must build a portfolio that is electronically sharable with your instructor and the H-PSSS associate deans. The ePortfolio presentation is a graded aspect of the project. Many technology tools are available to help you create a shareable product and the choice is yours to make. We do not recommend one tool over any others because it depends on what you want to do with your ePortfolio, how creative
you want to be, what you may already have available, and how savvy you are with technology.

However, some examples that you might want to investigate include

- Edublogs
- Edusite
- Evernote
- GoogleSites
- Kidblog
- LiveText
- OneNote
- Pathbrite
- PebblePad
- Weebly
- Wikispaces for Education
- Wix
- WordPress

Again, NAU’s HP-SSS does not recommend one technology over another and there are many more tools available than those listed above. You should conduct a search on the words “ePortfolio tools” to see the options available. Then, pick a few tools to evaluate against the requirements for the ePortfolio elements listed in this Manual, ease of use, your technology skill set, and other criteria. The choice is yours to make, keeping in mind that neither your instructor, dean, nor NAU provides technical support for the tool you choose. You do not have to pay for many of these tools because many vendors offer free versions of their tools with lesser functions than their paid versions. You may choose to pay for a version of software if
you need more support than the free version provides, but that is your choice. It is not a requirement for tool selection.

The most important aspect is to keep focused on proving your mastery of the key concepts, skills, and core competencies of the PLOs, achieve the course outcomes of research and writing for publication, and produce an ePortfolio that contains the minimum required elements in a way that you can share it with your instructor and the associate deans of H-PSSS.

**Electronic Portfolio Format**

Presented below are the 10 minimum required sections for your ePortfolio. The required, minimum sections to include in your ePortfolio are an introduction, five essays, three artifacts, and a conclusion. In addition to the required sections, feel free to add sections of your own choosing, but your ePortfolio must contain at least the 10 required minimum sections. Please remember it is better for you to produce 10 high quality elements than to produce low quality elements with additional sections. The additional sections will not overcome low quality work on required elements. You should review the rubrics posted in the course to understand the minimum satisfactory criteria by which your instructor will be grading the ePortfolio.

**Introduction**

In this section, create the welcome page and introduction for your ePortfolio. Include an image and a brief personal biography appropriate for your specific professional context and intention for your ePortfolio. You may also include a video or audio clip if you would like to connect with your audience that way. Be creative, yet professional and make sure your name and program of study are listed somewhere on the first page of your ePortfolio. This opportunity is your chance to welcome the potential viewers of your ePortfolio. Be sure you comply with copyright laws for the creative elements you include with your ePortfolio.
In this section, you may choose to share more detail about yourself. You may choose to include some of these ideas:

- general info about family,
- geography (where you grew up, where you have lived),
- significant interests/hobbies, and
- unique experiences/adventures/travel.

In addition, your introduction should contain a paragraph about the structure of your ePortfolio, an explanation of the Core Competencies for the PLOs, an explanation about the artifacts. Think of the preface and introduction to standard books. Your introduction is akin to the introduction to a published textbook.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

In this section(s), you should include your materials for each PLO. You should have one section for each PLO, which clearly states your PLO as appropriate to your program (IM, TCT, or SSPM). You will also include your reflective analysis essay about that PLO in each PLO section. You may choose to cut and paste the text and references to the page or pages in your ePortfolio or you can upload a Word document. If you upload a Word document, it must be in publication-ready organizational format following the NAU APA Template. The choice of uploading text and the references or the Word document for the Reflection Essays is yours.

**Artifacts**

Somewhere within the ePortfolio, you will attach or copy the three (3) edited, revised, publication-ready artifacts that you have chosen to represent your demonstrated learning of three PLOs. You must upload a Word or PowerPoint document to your ePortfolio. You cannot cut and paste your artifact to your ePortfolio pages. Remember, these are publication-ready
documents that follow the NAU APA Template. You attach the artifacts as evidence, within the PLO sections as appropriate, to connect the artifact to the PLO Reflection essay. However you present the combination of PLO Reflection essays and the artifact as evidence, the reader should clearly understand which PLO the artifact represents.

**Concluding Statement**

The concluding statement includes a summary of your portfolio and ties all the sections of the ePortfolio and the work completed in the master's program together. Consider the following questions as you write your concluding statement in essay format:

- How can you summarize your portfolio?
- What story does your portfolio tell?
- What surprised you?
- Where do you, as a professional, want to go from here?
- What is the concluding thought you wish to leave with your readers/viewers? It should be a powerful statement, not just a “thank you for viewing my portfolio” statement.
- You should offer to receive feedback or questions and provide a means for a reader to reach you.

**Other Educational-Related Template Items**

You can include other items that help solidify your commitment to education and self-improvement. Your instructor reviews and grades the optional sections as part of the draft and final ePortfolio. You will not have separate assignments in the class for optional sections, however, there are assignments in Turnitin for you to use to edit and refine these sections and additional artifacts (beyond the required three). Optional sections contribute to you demonstrating other aspects of your master’s journey and are in addition to the required sections.
Again, please remember that adding optional sections does not negate the use of the 10 required elements. Ten well-written elements are always better than a greater number of elements that fail to meet minimum publication-ready standards per the assignment instructions and the grading rubric criteria.

**Personal Learning Statement (Optional)**

In this section, provide a personal learning statement appropriate for professional contexts and for your intention for your ePortfolio. If you choose to include this section in your ePortfolio, you may wish to include the following:

- identify your degree program and explain why you have chosen to pursue it,
- summarize your personal learning goals for the program, and
- explain what you ultimately intend to do with your degree or what kind of job outcome you hope for, if any.

Again, be creative by adding a relevant image, video, or audio clip, complying with copyright laws.

**Plan for Future Learning (Optional)**

If you choose to, write a personalized plan for future learning. By the time you are finishing your ePortfolio, you will have done a great deal of reflecting on your learning. Therefore, in this section you can discuss what is next for you. You may be ready to jump into another advanced degree program, learn in a less formal setting, or relax for a while. Your portfolio is a good start in reflecting on where you are now and what areas for professional growth may remain. If you include a plan for future learning consider addressing what you need or want to learn to fill in gaps in your understanding of strategic security, what you are excited
about learning now that you have finished your degree, and/or how you can continue to grow both personally and professionally.

**Statement of Professional Goals (Optional)**

If you choose to include a statement of professional goals, you should consider including your professional goals for the future. Just like many strategic security goals, your professional goals should be SMART as in: Specific (clear and unambiguous), Measurable (quantifiable), Attainable (reachable and reasonable), Relevant: (relate to your program and your professional work), and Time-specific (specified date for achievement). You might also consider including the strategic plan by connecting each goal to a specific plan for achievement.

**Henley-Putnam School of Strategic Security 's Institutional Learning Outcomes (Optional)**

If you choose to include this section, you should state the H-PSSS Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). You can find the ILOs in the PDF titled “Learning Outcomes Alignment” under Course Information in the D2L courses. H-PSSS believes students must demonstrate these attributes during their degree programs. We are interested in your thoughts and reflections on the ILOs. For each ILO, please explain how you feel you achieved the ILO. Just as the reflection on the PLOs, you should be specific about which course(s), professors, assignments, or experiences helped you fulfill the ILO. If you feel you did not achieve the ILO, explain why. Your responses here illustrate your ability to reflect on your learning experiences, and they provide insight for your potential ePortfolio audience.

**Professional Documents (Optional)**

Students often use an ePortfolio to show others that you can perform the tasks of your PLOs, which can be helpful for career advancement or employment. If you are considering using your portfolio in this manner, you may want to include other items in professional
documents sections. If you include a professional documents section, consider creating or inserting your resume. You might also attach professional documents that serve as artifacts of your learning if permitted.

**Professional Memberships (Optional)**

You can add a section listing any professional memberships and/or affiliations you might have here. If you do not have any, you can omit this section.

**Achievements (Optional)**

In this section, highlight your personal achievements outside of H-PSSS. The list below gives you some ideas for what you might include in this section:

- Certificates of training,
- Completed workshops or professional development,
- Publications or conference papers,
- Military experience,
- Other education/coursework,
- Licenses or certifications,
- Successful business ventures,
- Awards, honors, scholarships,
- Community recognitions, or
- Lifelong learning (any type of learning or job-related skill you have engaged in for much of your life).

**Community Service (Optional)**

Identify and explain any community service in which you engage. Be specific about what kind of work you do and how it benefits your community. If you desire, add photos,
images, or video/audio that illustrates your work, ensuring you comply with copyright laws.
References