

CETL Certificate Program Capstone Project 2004-05
Wayne E. Allen, Ph.D.
Department of Ethnic Studies

My Capstone Project is an electronic portfolio project on Mavdisk. It is intended to introduce students to the concept and practice of “portfolioing” all of their academic work. My entire course (minus lectures and films) is available in a section folder in my Public Files on my Mavdisk account. While the students’ electronic portfolio is simply a Word file and does not include hotlinks, streaming videos, etc., it is intended to introduce students to the practice of thinking critically about their education as well as how to organize their majors and minors by assessing themselves and the curriculum they are engaged in.

The portfolio project has been a work in progress since its inception and is constantly evolving. As such, it has been a wonderful assessment tool for me in my androgogical practice. It has forced me to constantly reassess what works and does not work in my classrooms. I am now in a state of constant self-examination and refinement concerning my curriculum. I can readily identify strengths and weaknesses and then incorporate improvements each semester. It has also brought into focus diverse techniques for making my intro class curriculum more engaging for the students.

Students have to get their syllabus online, as well as most other assignments. I will also soon be moving to conducting all of my exams online. All of this saves the dept and the college money, and in the end improves course efficiency.

I am working on differing techniques for managing interaction and feedback between my students and myself but because of sheer numbers – 250+ students each semester – regular feedback is one of the wrinkles I am still working on improving.

The portfolio is an organized attempt to promote student input and inclusion within an academic system of meritocracy. Academic rigor and self-assessment is a balancing act that requires tolerance and respect, but at the same time realistic fair learning objectives that include all students and afford them the opportunity to achieve their respective learning goals in academic life. By implementing self-assessment that promotes balance between meritocracy and democracy, we come to see that some of the things we thought were merit-based were in fact the product of faculty privilege.

How does the portfolio balance democracy and meritocracy in the classroom?

- Makes it easier for students to assess and be proud of their accomplishments.
- Helps faculty recognize that members of student populations have their own learning styles, experiences and points of view.
- Exposes the values and norms of the academy as population specific, not neutral or universal.
- The curriculum and learning outcomes become expressions of a balance between faculty expectations and each student’s own academic agenda.
- Students are both edified and empowered through the positive value of their own learning styles and educational experiences.

- And, student engagement and ownership in the curriculum makes it more difficult for students to point to either faculty or the learning process within the academy as oppressive or burdensome.

My portfolio project attempts to address these issues as well as to offer some teaching solutions that can promote greater inclusion and engagement in both the classroom and the campus community at large.

Ethnic Studies 101 – Introduction to Ethnic Studies Student Electronic Portfolio Outline

Instructions: Your student portfolio is a means for you to accumulate, keep and assess your learning outcomes for the course. It is a tangible record of your achievements and the knowledge you acquire throughout the semester. It is also an outline format that will assist you in organizing information such as terms, topics, projects and assignments. Please go to the Academic Computing Center (ACC) (or any other computer on campus) on the first floor of Wissink Hall and access your Mavdisk account. Then go to my Mavdisk account following the protocol reviewed in class, enter my Public Files and enter the folder for your course and section. Then, create a single Word file for storing and organizing accumulated assignments and other documents following the portfolio outline, which you will copy and download from my Public Files folder for this course. Copy and paste all Word files from your section file in my Public Files to your Word document following the Portfolio Outline. It is your portfolio so it is a reflection you and your scholarship, as well as a means to self-reflect and assess learning outcomes. How well you organize the portfolio and the effort you put into it ultimately reflects your grasp, accumulation and retention of the subject matter for the course. Below are the items you need to include in your portfolio. Once complete, you need to upload an electronic copy in the 13th week into my Mavdisk Drop Box as per in-class instructions.

1. The portfolio outline (this is your cover page)
2. The course syllabus
3. Log
 - a. A log of cultural/ethnic diversity events or activities attended throughout the semester
 - b. Copies of typed papers written for cultural diversity events or activities attended
4. Course textbook titles
 - a. List book titles
 - b. List chapter headings under titles
 - c. List relevant topics from within each chapter under headings

5. Course lecture notes (these, and your review study notes, are the only portion of your portfolio that can be hand written)
 - a. Include all notes for the entire course
6. Exams
 - a. Review sheets for the exams
 - i. Include study notes
 - b. Exam question sheets with your recorded answers and scores
7. Quizzes
 - a. Question sheets
 - b. Your graded answers
8. Synopsis papers: You will work in small groups and divide up and discuss the following topics. You are required to write a one-page synopsis paper on one topic from each of the following 4 areas. Please include a listing of the names of the other members of your group and their topics. You may exchange synopsis papers within your group but are not required to. You may use the following sources: the Internet, journals, books, newspapers, magazines, etc.
 - a. Major topics:
 - i. Theories in the Social Sciences**
 1. 19th Century unilineal cultural evolution
 2. Historical materialism (political economy)
 3. Historical particularism
 4. Functionalism
 5. Structural-functionalism
 6. Cultural evolution (i.e., Leslie White)
 7. Cultural ecology
 8. Componential analysis
 9. Cultural materialism
 10. Sociobiology
 11. Postmodern critical theory
 12. Evolutionary psychology
 13. Dependency theory
 14. World systems theory
 - ii. Methods in the Social Sciences**
 1. Ethnography
 2. Ethnology
 3. Participant observation
 4. Direct observation
 5. Indirect observation
 6. Experimentation
 7. Surveys and questionnaires
 8. Content analysis
 - iii. Human Social Organization**
 1. Settlement pattern
 - a. Nomadic
 - b. Sedentary

2. Subsistence strategy
 - a. Foraging
 - b. Horticulture
 - c. Pastoralism
 - d. Agriculture
 - e. Industrial (or mechanized) agriculture
3. Social organization
 - a. Social groups
 - b. Social networks
 - c. Social categories
 - d. Marriage (primary social group)
 - i. Monogamy
 - ii. Polygyny
 - iii. Polyandry
 - e. Family (primary social group)
 - i. Nuclear
 - ii. Extended
 - f. Kinship (primary social group and/or category)
 - i. Bilateral kindred
 - ii. Lineage
 - iii. Clan
 - g. Voluntary of common interest associations
(secondary social group and/or category)
 - i. Corporate groups
 - ii. Ethnic “groups”
 - iii. Political parties
 - iv. Religious sects
 - v. Business corporations
 - h. Bands
 - i. Tribes
 - j. Chiefdoms
 - k. States
4. Economic Organization
 - a. Production
 - i. Means of production
 - ii. Mode of production
 - iii. Relations of production
 1. division of labor
 - iv. Surpluses and wealth
 - b. Distribution or exchange
 - i. Reciprocity
 1. generalized
 2. balanced
 3. negative
 - ii. Redistribution
 1. tribute

- 2. corvee labor
 - 3. taxation
 - iii. Market economy
 - 1. trade networks
 - 2. currency
 - c. Consumption
 - i. Units of consumption
- 5. Political Organization
 - a. Egalitarian
 - i. Ascribed roles and statuses
 - ii. Political authority and persuasion
 - b. Ranked
 - i. Ascribed roles and statuses
 - ii. Political power and coercion
 - c. Stratified
 - i. Achieved roles and statuses
 - ii. Political power and coercion
- iv. **Colonialism**
 - 1. The Age of Exploration
 - 2. Colonialism
 - 3. Imperialism
 - 4. Manifest destiny
 - 5. Annexation
 - 6. Assimilation
 - 7. “Melting pot”
 - 8. Acculturation
 - 9. Genocide
 - 10. Ethnocide
 - 11. Internal colonialism
 - 12. Amalgamation
 - 13. Miscegenation
 - 14. Secession
 - 15. Separatism