

# Your General Education ePortfolio



## Electronic Portfolios Will Help You Step Ahead.



You are a busy student--taking this class and that, writing papers, making presentations, and solving problems. Have you ever wondered how it all fits together? Have you ever wondered why you are taking all these General Education courses? Salt Lake Community College's General Education ePortfolio initiative is a great way for you to answer those questions and make sense of your learning experiences.

In each General Education course you take, your instructor will require you to archive one or two important "signature assignment(s)" in your ePortfolio. More than just a catalog of learning artifacts, your ePortfolio is a living document. When you put an essay, a report, or a photo of your artwork in your portfolio, there is space for you to write about how those assignments affected you, how they related to each other, or how they helped you meet the College's learning outcomes. SLCC's learning outcomes are spelled out on the last page of this manual.

Eportfolios are a great way for SLCC to know how well its students are meeting learning outcomes essential to career and personal success. Because you can share your ePortfolio with whomever you choose, it is also an exciting

way for you to "show off" to the rest of the world--whether it's to your sister in Boston, a local scholarship committee, or to a potential employer in Denver. And you'll be able to take your ePortfolio with you when you transfer to a different school.

Your ePortfolio will help you step ahead with your education by providing a venue to reflect upon and share your best work. Good luck!

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# Building Your Gen Ed ePortfolio

## **Q: Is the ePortfolio required?**

**A:** Yes, it is a course-level requirement in all General Education courses, but it is not a graduation requirement. Think of it as a common Gen Ed assignment. Build the ePortfolio outline once, and use it for all of your Gen Ed courses.

## **Q: What do I use to construct my Gen Ed ePortfolio? (See also page 8)**

**A:** You can build your ePortfolio with many different software platforms, as long as you end up with a web-based site that can be shared with SLCC faculty and staff. Most students will want to use **Yola, Wordpress, or Weebly**, because SLCC will provide assistance to you. Note that SLCC does not endorse these particular sites, nor is the College responsible if you have a bad experience with one of them. **Please do not use Myspace, Facebook, Blogger,** or similar social networking sites to create your ePortfolio.

## **Q: What's it like to use these sites?**

**A:** These are free platforms that allow millions of users around the world to build sharp-looking websites and blogs. You'll be using them to create your General Education ePortfolio. They use simple drag and drop operations to let you add headings, text blocks, assignment files, photos, audio, and video. Since they are web-based, you can open your ePortfolio and edit it from any computer with an updated browser and good internet connection.

## **Q: Will my instructor teach me how to build an ePortfolio?**

**A:** No. Instructors are busy teaching you complicated subjects in one semester, so they cannot dedicate class time to help you build your ePortfolio. Besides, since students have a choice of ePortfolio platforms to use, faculty cannot be expected to be knowledgeable enough in all of them to help you. The ePortfolio platform you choose should provide Help, and if you choose one of the platforms mentioned above, help is available to you outside of class in the places described on page nine of this manual. Don't worry, these sites are pretty easy to use.

## **Q: Does this result in more work for students?**

**A:** The truth is that SLCC's General Education ePortfolio initiative results in a little more work for students. Students will need to build the ePortfolio outline once, and then use it in all their Gen Ed courses. Students will complete the very same assignments in Gen Ed courses that they have to right now. However, they will have to put one or two assignments from each class into their ePortfolio along with a couple of paragraphs of reflective writing.

## **Q: I notice that two of the free platforms mentioned above have "pro" versions that cost money. Do I have to purchase those pro features?**

**A:** You can build an excellent Gen Ed ePortfolio using the free platforms without upgrading to the "pro" version. The pro versions are reasonably priced, and get you increased capabilities and features. The decision whether to upgrade your account to the pro version is entirely up to you.

## **Q: Can I put assignments or other material in the ePortfolio that are not mine?**

**A:** Absolutely not. Plagiarism is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will be taken very seriously. You should know that the College subscribes to anti-plagiarism software that faculty use to compare current digital artifacts with those appearing anywhere else on the Web.

## **Q: Should I share my ePortfolio with everyone?**

**A:** No. Just with your instructors, friends, family, and the occasional fellow student. You might also share it with potential employers and scholarship committees.

# How to Structure Your Gen Ed ePortfolio

Salt Lake Community College requires that you follow a basic outline for your ePortfolio. Beyond that, we encourage you to use your imagination and creativity to make your ePortfolio uniquely yours. Structure your Gen Ed ePortfolio according to this chart. Note that the headings in the gold boxes and the black bolded sub-headings are required:

Welcome	My Goals	General Education*	Learning Outside the Classroom	Resume
<p><b>Welcome</b> Welcome people to your ePortfolio and tell them about what they'll find there.</p> <p><b>About Me</b> Introduce yourself: your background and interests, and other information of your choosing.</p>	<p>What do you want to get out of your experience at SLCC? What skills or knowledge do you want to acquire? How do you want to grow as a person? As a learner? What kind of career are you looking for?</p> <p><b>Short-Term Goals</b></p> <p><b>Long-Term Goals</b></p> <p><b>SLCC's Learning Outcomes</b> Link to the learning outcomes and tell how they'll help you reach your goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<b>Composition (EN)</b></li> <li>•<b>Quantitative Lit (QL)</b></li> <li>•<b>Am Institutions (AI)</b></li> <li>•<b>Life-long Wellness (LW)</b></li> <li>•<b>Student Choice</b></li> <li>•<b>Computer Lit (CL)</b></li> <li>•<b>Biological Sciences (BS)</b></li> <li>•<b>Fine Arts (FA)</b></li> <li>•<b>Humanities (HU)</b></li> <li>•<b>Physical Sciences (PS)</b></li> <li>•<b>Social Sciences (SS)</b></li> <li>•<b>Interdisciplinary (ID)</b></li> <li>•<b>Diversity (DV)</b></li> <li>•<b>Foreign Language (LN--for AA Degree only)</b></li> <li>•<b>Elective Courses</b></li> </ul> <p><i>*Note that students pursuing an AAS degree will have a shorter set of Gen Ed courses. Otherwise, the outline is the same.</i></p>	<p>How are you active at SLCC outside of the classroom? How is your participation in out-of-class activities helping you grow as a learner and a person? Suggested possibilities here include clubs, intramural sports, varsity sports, campus organizations, student leadership, student media, study abroad, service-learning, internships, cooperative learning, honor societies, tutoring, and so forth. Also, you might write about how your work, church, or other off-campus experiences connect with your learning at SLCC.</p>	<p>Resume</p>

## Q: Why is it important to structure the Gen Ed ePortfolio this way?

A: SLCC allows students the freedom to choose which software platform they want to use to build their ePortfolio, but it is very important for faculty looking at ePortfolios that they all follow a common organizational scheme. This makes it easier for them to quickly understand how to navigate the ePortfolios of all their students.

## Q: Can my major navigation headings like Welcome, My Goals, General Education, and so forth be arranged vertically instead of horizontally as displayed above.

A: Yes, that's fine. Many of the templates in the free ePortfolio platforms allow you to arrange those main headings either horizontally across the top of the website or vertically along the left or right-hand sides.

## Q: How much personal information should I put in my ePortfolio?

A: Only as much as you feel comfortable sharing. This is suppose to be a public representation of your learning, but you certainly don't have to put your photo, full name, address, email address, or other information in the portfolio if you don't want to. You'll have to decide how best to balance your privacy concerns with the desire to use the ePortfolio to showcase your educational aspirations and accomplishments.

# A Typical Page Within Your ePortfolio

In the absence of specific directions from your instructor, here's an effective way to structure a page in your ePortfolio. Let's say you're taking a Political Science course, and your instructor has asked you to put a ten-page essay into your ePortfolio. You are using your Political Science course to fulfill the American Institutions Gen Ed requirement. Follow this structure and you'll have an effective entry.

*(The Gen Ed Area being addressed)*

## American Institutions

*(Course Title)*

### POLS 1100--US National Government and Politics

*(A brief description of the assignment and what you did for it.)*

In this class we were asked to write a 10-page paper about....and so forth. I chose to write about Impeachment in American History, because....and so forth. Here's my essay:

*(Insert your file next.)*

### Impeachment.doc

*(Your reflective writing here, italicized to set it apart.)*

### Reflection

*In writing this paper, I learned quite a bit more about effective written communication. I really concentrated on writing a clear thesis and supporting that thesis with solid evidence and logic....etc.*

**Note:** When appropriate to the assignment, you could put in a photograph either in the assignment description or in the reflective writing sections. Make sure that you are legally able to use the photograph (meaning you took it, you have permission from the photographer, the photo is in the public domain, or falls under fair educational use) and also make sure that any student who is recognizable in the photo has agreed to allow you to put it in your ePortfolio.

# Five Important Eportfolio Steps:

## Step One

### Get Informed.

- ☐ Look at the “Info for Students” on the ePortfolio page on SLCC’s website.
- ☐ Read carefully through the Student ePortfolio Handbook located there, which will answer many of your questions.
- ☐ Here’s the ePortfolio page: [www.slcc.edu/gened/eportfolio](http://www.slcc.edu/gened/eportfolio).

## Step Two

### Pick a Platform.

- ☐ A platform is a free, online tool with which to build your ePortfolio.
- ☐ The Student ePortfolio Handbook will help you choose from three supported platforms: Yola, Wordpress, and Weebly. They are all easy to use.

## Step Three

### Watch the Video Tutorials or Attend a Free Workshop.

- ☐ Video tutorials for Yola: [www.slccportfolio.yolasite.com](http://www.slccportfolio.yolasite.com).
- ☐ Video tutorials for Wordpress: [www.slccportfolio.wordpress.com](http://www.slccportfolio.wordpress.com).
- ☐ Video tutorials for Weebly: [www.slccportfolio.weebly.com](http://www.slccportfolio.weebly.com).
- ☐ Free Workshops: <http://libweb.slcc.edu/index/eportfolio-form>

## Step Four

### Build Your ePortfolio.

- ☐ After you’ve watched the video tutorials all the way through, use them to build your ePortfolio as instructed. If you attend a free workshop, you’ll build the essential elements of your ePortfolio there. Put your own style into it by picking a theme and using your creativity, but remember to follow the standard ePortfolio outline described on page 3 of the Student ePortfolio Handbook and the tutorials.

## Step Five

### Enter the Address of Your ePortfolio into MyPage.

- ☐ Copy the URL (address) of your ePortfolio’s Welcome page, log into MyPage, click on the student tab, paste the URL for the ePortfolio’s Welcome page into the ePortfolio channel, and click “save.”

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: What kinds of things can I put in my ePortfolio?**

**A:** We use the term “artifact” for the items you put in your ePortfolio. You can put many different kinds of digital artifacts in your ePortfolio, including text files, images, audio, video, and links to webpages. Your instructors in Gen Ed courses will tell you which signature assignments will result in artifacts that you can put in your ePortfolio. In some courses, the instructor will identify one assignment s/he wants you to put in the Gen Ed ePortfolio. In others, the instructor will have you choose from several assignments, so choose the one that best illustrates your effort and learning.

## **Q: What the heck is reflection?**

**A:** Reflective writing is very important to your learning, for it allows you to place the assignment in an academic or personal context. For each artifact you put in your ePortfolio, your instructor may ask you to respond to questions like these:

- How does your performance on this assignment demonstrate achievement of--or progress toward--SLCC’s college-wide learning outcomes?
- How does this assignment (or the whole course) connect with what you learned in another Gen Ed course?
- What impact did the assignment have on you or your understanding of the world? Did it challenge any of your assumptions?
- What process did you go through to complete the assignment?
- What challenges did you face in completing the assignment? How did you address them?
- Why did you pick this assignment to put in your ePortfolio? What does it demonstrate about your learning? [Assumes that instructor has given students a choice of assignments to include in the ePortfolio]
- How did participation in this service-learning partnership (internship, group project, etc.) help you better understand how the main concepts in this course apply to your life or community?
- How do(es) the assignment(s) illustrate the growth/change/progression you have had in this class?

Reflective writing is a way for you to think about your thinking--the fancy word for that is *metacognition*--and think about your learning process. Reflective writing helps you “own” your learning, so take this part of the ePortfolio process seriously. You can expect each instructor to assign two-three paragraphs of reflective writing to accompany the artifact(s) you put into your ePortfolio.

Please keep in mind that reflection in your ePortfolio is not a place to evaluate your courses or your instructors. The College conducts regular student evaluations of all instructors and courses, and those surveys are a much better venue to express your positive or negative impressions of your teachers and courses. If you have a specific problem with an instructor that needs to be addressed immediately, you should contact his or her supervisor.

## **Q: Do I have to use a specific kind of computer? What if I don’t have one?**

**A:** No. You can use a Windows or Mac computer. No special software is required, but you should use the latest versions of browsers such as Internet Explorer, Safari, Chrome and Firefox. You can use any lab computer on campus to create and upload your artifacts, assuming you have them on a jump drive. You can also use a friend’s computer.

## **Q: Should I save a digital copy of what I turn in to my instructors?**

**A:** Yes! And if it’s a physical thing like a sculpture or a poster presentation, take photos! Invest in a jump drive.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: Who owns the ePortfolio when I'm finished at SLCC?**

**A:** Each student owns his or her ePortfolio and can continue to use it after leaving SLCC. If you transfer to a four-year college or university, our advice to you is to keep using it to document your learning--regardless of whether your new professors know anything about it. Create a new tab in the ePortfolio navigation specifically for your major at the four-year college or university. That way, you'll be able to chart your progress through Gen Ed at SLCC all the way to achieving your Bachelor's degree.

## **Q: What if one of these sites loses my data?**

**A:** SLCC cannot be responsible for the performance of these third-party sites. The situation is analogous to your instructor requiring you to create a spreadsheet on your computer. If your spreadsheet program eats your data, the manufacturer of the software is responsible rather than the College. For this reason *we highly recommend that you keep a digital copy of the work you put in your ePortfolio as well as a copy of other work you do at SLCC.* Invest in a thumb or jump drive to store your coursework.

## **Q: What should I put on the Welcome page?**

**A:** Your Welcome page needs two basic sub-headings--Welcome and About Me--each with a paragraph or two of text. In the Welcome section you should (obviously) welcome people to your ePortfolio, but you should also tell them that it contains your work at Salt Lake Community College, your goals, your extracurricular activities and your resume. You should also tell them how to navigate the ePortfolio. In the About Me section, you should introduce yourself, revealing only those details that you would feel comfortable telling fellow students in class. Somewhere on this first page of your ePortfolio you should put a photograph. It could be of yourself or, if you're concerned about privacy, it could be some other photo you've taken.

## **Q: What should I put on the My Goals page?**

**A:** Well, they're your goals, so you should decide, but we recommend that you divide them into short-term and long-term goals. And feel free to update your goals as you progress through your coursework at SLCC. Another important part of the My Goals page is your reflections on the fit between your personal goals and SLCC's College-wide Learning Outcomes for all students (see page 10). Are SLCC's College-wide Learning Outcomes likely to help you get a job or be successful at a four-year college or university? What is your conception of Effective Communication, Quantitative Literacy, Critical Thinking, Civic Engagement, and Professional Collaboration? How will you approach your coursework in order to maximize your performance on these learning outcomes?

## **Q: What if I'm concerned about my privacy and whether unwanted others can see my work?**

**A:** You own your ePortfolio, so you determine the visibility of your ePortfolio. Some tips:

- Share your ePortfolio's URL only with SLCC faculty and staff when needed, as well as family, trusted friends, scholarship committees, and potential employers. Otherwise, keep the address to yourself.
- When you sign up for your ePortfolio, don't use your name in the domain name, so don't have an address like [www.katyburklic.weebly.com](http://www.katyburklic.weebly.com).
- Similarly, don't title the ePortfolio heading with "Katy Burklic's SLCC ePortfolio," as that will make it easier to find on a web search.
- For Weebly and Yola, don't add any information to the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) settings, as that will make it easier to find your ePortfolio on a web search. In Wordpress, you can customize who can have access.
- Finally, all of these platforms allow you to password protect the whole ePortfolio or pages within it, although you need the pro version of Weebly to do this. If you choose to password protect a page within your ePortfolio, we suggest you do it **after** each semester, otherwise you'll have to share that password with each individual

# Choosing Your ePortfolio Platform

## Q: Which platforms does SLCC support?

**A:** SLCC does not endorse particular ePortfolio platforms. However, if you choose to create your ePortfolio using one of the three following platforms, SLCC can provide support in the locations noted on page 9.

Platform	Considerations
<b>Weebly</b> <a href="http://www.weebly.com">www.weebly.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to use.</li> <li>• Unlimited storage for two free sites.</li> <li>• File upload limit of 5 MB*</li> <li>• Many templates to choose from.</li> <li>• No ads on your site.</li> <li>• Free version does not allow you to password protect site. The inexpensive Pro version adds passwords and other neat features.</li> <li>• Widgets for Flickr, Youtube, others.</li> <li>• Add a blog page.</li> </ul>
<b>Wordpress</b> <a href="http://www.wordpress.com">www.wordpress.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairly easy to use.</li> <li>• Very generous 3 GB of total storage.</li> <li>• Many templates, but you have a little less control over page layout compared to Weebly or Yola.</li> <li>• Widgets for Flickr, Youtube, others.</li> <li>• Integrated blog</li> <li>• Small ads may be placed on your site.</li> </ul>
<b>Yola</b> <a href="http://www.yola.com">www.yola.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to use.</li> <li>• Generous 1GB of total storage per site, and you get five free sites.</li> <li>• File upload limit of 15 MB*</li> <li>• Many templates to choose from.</li> <li>• Widgets for Flickr, Youtube, others.</li> <li>• No ads on your site.</li> <li>• Add a blog page.</li> </ul>

\* To put this in perspective, a 160-page Microsoft Word document is about 1 MB, so you'll have no problem uploading any paper you write. This manual in its original application (Apple's Pages) is a whopping 18.5 MB, but is only 612 KB when saved as a pdf. For all of these platforms, really large projects like videos and photo galleries are best housed at other locations like Flickr and Youtube, and then linked from the ePortfolio. That way, you won't be using up storage space on the ePortfolio and won't have to worry about file upload limits. Check the specific platform for details about this.

## Q: Can I create my ePortfolio using another platform?

**A:** Yes. One possibility is to build your ePortfolio using Google Sites. Another is to use Jimdo.com. Mac users with a MobileMe or DotMac account can make their ePortfolios using Apple's iWeb software if they want. **Please do not use Myspace, Facebook, Blogger,** or similar social networking sites to create your ePortfolio.



# Getting Help with Your Gen Ed ePortfolio

## Overview of the Gen Ed ePortfolio

See the website at [www.slcc.edu/gened/eportfolio](http://www.slcc.edu/gened/eportfolio)

## Free Workshops

SLCC's Libraries offer free, one-hour workshops in which you'll start your ePortfolio in a computer lab with an instructor. For a schedule and more information, go to <http://libweb.slcc.edu/index/eportfolio-form>

## Online Assistance

SLCC has a help site for each ePortfolio platform the College supports. Each help site has step-by-step video tutorials to get you started, plus other advice and tips.

- [www.slcceportfolio.weebly.com](http://www.slcceportfolio.weebly.com)
- [www.slcceportfolio.wordpress.com](http://www.slcceportfolio.wordpress.com)
- [www.slcceportfolio.yola.com](http://www.slcceportfolio.yola.com)

## In-Person Questions

Tutors in Learning Centers are conversant with each platform, so you can ask them a question. Learning Centers are located on the Taylorsville Redwood Campus (TB 213), South City Campus (N 308), and the Jordan Campus (HTC 102).

## Help with Reflective Writing

You should visit the tutors at the Writing Centers, located on the Taylorsville Redwood Campus (AD 218), the South City Campus (N308), and Jordan HTC (B105).

## For-Credit Courses

By taking any of the following courses, which are optional, you will automatically get started on your Gen Ed ePortfolio:

- CIS 1020 Computer Essentials (3 credits)
- CIS 1013 ePortfolios and Operating Systems (1 credit)
- LE 1000 ePortfolios for Success (1 credit)

# Salt Lake Community College's Learning Outcomes

After completing any program at SLCC, students will be able to:

**1. Acquire substantive knowledge in the discipline of their choice sufficient for further study, and/or demonstrate competencies required by employers to be hired and succeed in the workplace.**

**2. Communicate effectively.**

- A. Develop critical literacies—reading, writing, speaking, listening—that they can apply in various contexts.
- B. Organize and present ideas and information orally and in writing according to standard usage.
- C. Understand and use the elements of effective communication in interpersonal, small group, and mass settings.
- D. Gather and analyze information and communicate effectively using technology, library resources, and other media.

**3. Develop quantitative literacies necessary for their chosen field of study.**

- A. Approach practical problems by choosing and applying appropriate mathematical techniques.
- B. Use and interpret information represented as data, graphs, tables, and schematics in a variety of disciplines.
- C. Apply mathematical theory, concepts and methods of inquiry appropriate to program-specific problems.

**4. Think Critically.**

- A. Reason effectively using available evidence, and are aware that knowledge is dynamic and builds on new evidence and alternative perspectives.
- B. Demonstrate effective problem solving.
- C. Engage in creative thinking, expression, and application.
- D. Engage in reflective thinking and expression.
- E. Demonstrate higher-order skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- F. Make connections across disciplines.
- G. Apply scientific methods to the inquiry process.

**5. Develop the knowledge and skills to be civically engaged, and/or to work with others in a professional and constructive manner.**

- A. Understand the natural, political, historical, social and economic underpinnings of the local, national, and global communities to which they belong.
- B. Develop the awareness of both civil rights and civil responsibilities for individual and collective action in a democracy.
- C. Engage in service-learning for community building and an enhanced academic experience.
- D. Develop the awareness and skills to take leadership roles in classrooms, the broader college, and the community.
- E. Engage in principled and vigorous dialogue.
- F. Interact competently across cultures.
- G. Understand and appreciate human differences.
- H. Understand and act on standards of professionalism and civility, including the requirements of the SLCC Student Code.