**Developing Your Showcase ePortfolio as an English Major**

The purpose of the “showcase” component of your ePortfolio is to introduce “who you are” as an English major by highlighting, through self-selected pieces of work, the knowledge and abilities you’ve cultivated through your studies. In part, it’s your chance to respond to the question so often posed to English majors: “So what can you do with that?”

This component of your ePortfolio will showcase

·         the wide range of your practice(s) as a rhetorician

·         your awareness of cultural or historical influences

·         your ability to think analytically

·         your ability to argue ethically

·         your ability to conduct and document research

·         your creativity

·         your ability to reflect on your learning

·         your capstone signature work

The artifacts you select must illustrate each of these abilities. **They must also be drawn from ERH courses.** It may be the case, however, that you choose a single artifact to illustrate more than one ability. Therefore, the range of **number of artifacts should be between 4 and 10**.

Each artifact will be accompanied by **a 100-word descriptive tag** in which you

* Introduce the work (Is it an essay, a video, an image? When was it created, and why?
* Identify the ability or abilities that the piece you selected is intended to showcase, using the list above.
* Explain how those qualities are evident in the work. (Direct viewers’ attention. What do you want them to notice when they look at the piece? Be specific.)

**How to Recognize Your Best Work**

Think of **actual people** you’d like to see this showcase—parents, coach, high school teacher, prospective employer—and think what you would like them to see.

**Look for the gems:**

projects that stick out in your **memory**

projects you **re-read**

things you continue to be **proud** of

projects that drove you crazy at the time, but now, you see their **worth**. If it was hard to write, it might mean it was something worth writing

projects where you came up with really **interesting** ideas.

**Go for groundbreaking.**

Think about projects where you **went beyond** the requirements.

Look for projects that you feel **made a difference** in real-world settings.

Look for projects where you felt you had a breakthrough: you **reached** **a new level** in your thinking, your abilities, your confidence.

Think of projects where you **took risks** as a writer, a speaker, a reader, and a thinker—you didn’t take the easy road.

**Go wide.**

Projects don’t need to be traditional essays; you can showcase **any genre,** from paintings to speeches to videos.

Don’t forget to look across the **wide range of topics** you’ve investigated through your work. The projects you showcase don’t need to be thematically linked.

Don’t forget about work you did **early in your cadetship**. Undoubtedly, your skills have developed over your time here at VMI, but you may still find an early gem, such as a type of project you haven’t done since.

In short, you might want to **look beyond the grade.** Different professors grade differently, so grades don’t always tell the whole story of your work as you see it. You may be personally very pleased with the way a project turned out.