

University of Maine Master of Arts in English -
Final Degree Portfolio Contents and Evaluation Criteria

Portfolio Contents. The Degree Portfolio will be both comprehensive and selective, illustrating a range of coursework while also highlighting the candidate's special research interests. Degree Portfolios accepted for review will be comprised of roughly 50 pages of the candidate's best work, introduced by a 10-12 page (double-spaced) critical-reflective letter. Specifically:

- 1) The **critical-reflective letter** will introduce the Degree Portfolio with:
 - a) an account of the candidate's goals at the start of the program, during the program, and at the present time;
 - b) an articulation of the selection process for the portfolio contents;
 - c) a contextualization of the included materials within the candidate's course of study and within the relevant professional, creative and/or academic field; and
 - d) a discussion of the candidate's aspirations and professional, vocational, and/or personal plans going forward.
- 2) A **transcript** of coursework contributing to the MA degree. Candidates may annotate one or more courses that proved especially significant or meaningful.
- 3) A substantially revised **critical-analytical essay** developed from graduate coursework presenting an insightful argument in the context of appropriate scholarly/theoretical/empirical research conversations. This essay will be accompanied by
 - a) the **original seminar draft**, and
 - b) a **revision memo** detailing the targeted areas for revision and the processes of rewriting them.
- 4) **Three professional artifacts**, selected in consultation with the faculty advisor, to represent both the breadth of the coursework taken and the range of the candidate's abilities. Artifacts might include (but are not limited to) genres like annotated bibliographies, technical documentation, excerpts from an original assignment sequence with explanation of the pedagogical goal, a conference paper with PPT deck, keyword essays, a showcase of editorial or tutorial work from NPF or the Writing Center, a research grant application, a web interface or curation of an online archive, etc.
- 5) An up-to-date *curriculum vitae*.

Portfolio Evaluation Criteria. Graduate faculty members of the graduate studies committee will review qualifying portfolios with these criteria in mind:

Critical-Reflective Letter:

- I. The account of goals at the start of the program, during the program, and at the present time is thorough and specific.
- II. The reasoning behind the selection of the critical-analytical essay and the three artifacts is explained thoroughly, providing helpful context for how each item exemplifies the development of the candidate's creative, intellectual and/or professional skills.
- III. The description of the candidate's plans going forward, however tentative, establishes useful connections between her or his aspirations and the intellectual skills on display in this portfolio.

Supporting Materials Evaluation Criteria:

- IV. The materials selected for inclusion provide substantial evidence for the claims of personal and intellectual development that the candidate articulates in the critical-reflective letter.
- V. The revision memo articulates the exigence for selecting the project for revision, the changes made and how these changes improved the quality of the scholarship and the direction of the argument (especially with respect to the evaluation criteria described in VI, below).
- VI. The critical-analytical essay demonstrates a nuanced awareness of relevant scholarly conversations concerning the object of inquiry, is closely and persuasively reasoned, attends ethically to all available evidence, and is measured and judicious in its conclusions.
- VII. Care has been taken with the presentation of the materials, and the order of items follows the logic outlined in the reflective essay.
- VIII. Stylistic and formatting decisions are consistent with the conventions of the artifacts included.