

Eportfolio Peer Review

Background

Per Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater (2012), a research portfolio – regardless of medium – is “a place for a fieldworker to gather work, review it, and present the process of research to herself, her fellow researchers, and her instructor” (p.xix). To prompt student to engage in these activities with their peers, students completed this structured peer review activity twice: once halfway through their research and then a week before the eportfolio deadline.

To insure students felt like they are sharing research with a fellow researcher, I grouped students together based on their topics. For example, three students researched FSU’s music school, FSU’s film school, and The FSU Flying High Circus, and those students were grouped together under the heading of performance arts.

After assembling students in groups of three, I provided the following directions. The directions I gave to students are informed by Richard Lanham’s (1995) theory of attention and textuality: that reading a digital text requires readers to shift between “looking AT symbols and looking THROUGH them” (p. 24). Meaning that because digital media are both visual and interactive, readers first look at the text to understand the text’s navigational scheme and the significance of visual metaphors (among other things). Then, readers look through the text – that is, to the meaning communicated by the text – to interpret the text.

Peer Review Directions

First, navigate around your peer's research eportfolios, taking note of the following things:

- ❖ Arrangement: How is the eportfolio structured? How are the eportfolio’s contents arranged?
- ❖ Navigation: How is the eportfolio’s navigation set up?
- ❖ Design: What kinds of visual elements are included in the eportfolio? What kinds of images, fonts, colors, or other media are you seeing?

Now, read your peer’s eportfolios. Try to understand what the eportfolio communicates as a collection of documents, reflections, and artifacts.

- ❖ Themes: Reading across the documents included in the eportfolio, what themes or key ideas do you see emerging?
- ❖ Arrangement: Are those themes and key ideas supported through the portfolio’s arrangement? If so, how?
- ❖ Navigation: Does the eportfolio’s navigational scheme connect those key ideas? If so, how?
- ❖ Design: Does the portfolio’s design – its visual features – help communicate the eportfolio’s themes and key ideas? If so, how?

Finally, conference with your peers about their research eportfolio.

- ❖ Talk to them about the themes and key ideas you saw when reading across their portfolio. Make sure you have understood their research correctly. Have you left something out? Did you see something they had not seen?
- ❖ Talk to them about their arrangement, navigation, and design. What are their goals for those decisions? Do you think they are meeting those goals? Be specific.