



November 7, 2009

Dear Graduating Senior:

It's time to start preparing one of your last requirements for graduation: the senior portfolio. Every graduating senior in English and Mass Communications must prepare a folder of their best work. We don't grade your portfolio, but instead, we use it to measure our success in teaching you the skills that every graduate from our department needs. We review it to find *our* strengths and weaknesses, not yours.

Here's a list of what you need to include:

1. **A cover letter** of about 500 words in which you express the progress you've made as a writer, critical thinker, and communicator of ideas and information. You will find an example cover letter at the English Dept. website:
<http://www.adams.edu/academics/english/seniorport/seniorport.php>
2. **A curriculum vita or a resume.** (You might have created one in Advanced Composition, but need to update it. If you need help, you'll find it at the Career and Counseling Center in Richardson Hall, or better yet, please see me.)
3. A photocopy of your **most recent transcripts**
4. The **Graduating Senior Questionnaire**, available at our website:
<<http://www.adams.edu/academics/english/img/swp%20%20graduating%20senior%20questionnaire.pdf>> Please print it off and type up or write in your responses. Your responses will be anonymous. (See below.)
5. A total of **five papers from courses taken in our dept.**
 - a. One must be a 400-level source-based paper that you choose
 - b. If you've taken or are taking a capstone course, you must add that paper as one of the five (and it may satisfy the 400-level source-based paper). Be aware that you will need to add that paper to your portfolio *after* you've turned the rest of the portfolio in!

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- c. Strongly preferred: If you are an English Liberal Arts or Creative Writing major, please include your paper from ENG 480, Contemporary Literary Criticism; if you are an English Secondary Education major, please include your paper from ENG 357, Intro. to Linguistics; if you are a Mass Communications major, please include your paper from JOUR 350, Media Theory and Criticism.
- d. In place of one of those five papers, we have specific requirements for you depending on your emphasis. Creative writing students must include one sample of work done in ENG 326, 426, or 427. Communications students must include three samples specifically demonstrating their skills in journalism. (Video and audio recordings are welcome.) Secondary education students must include one sample of work done in ENG 314. *Please see your adviser as you consider what to include from these areas.*

Please package your portfolio neatly and feel free to be creative in its design. After your cover letter, we hope you will include a one-page index which lists the included works.

Please bear in mind that we will keep the works you include, so be sure to keep your own copies.

If you intend to graduate in December, you need to get to work on this immediately and hand it in *before finals week*. If you intend to graduate this spring, please hand the portfolio in to our departmental administrative assistant *no later than January 29th*.

The administrative assistant will hold your portfolio until the department is ready to review it, usually soon after you graduate. He or she will remove the responses to the questionnaire so that your responses remain anonymous—please don't put your name on the responses.

It is your responsibility to get the portfolio assembled and handed in on time. Just a reminder: that also means, in some cases, handing the portfolio in by the due date and then later handing in a copy of your capstone course paper.

Again, the portfolio is a graduation requirement; you cannot graduate until you have satisfied this requirement. Please contact me or your adviser if you have any questions or concerns.

If you are a junior and have read this, please start planning ahead.

We wish you the best of luck as you finish your studies here. We hope you'll stay in touch with us and consider yourselves a part of our department "family" wherever your future career and studies take you!

Best wishes,

Dr. Mac

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