THE SECOND-YEAR WOC PORTFOLIO: Q&AS

Q. What is the Second-Year WOC Portfolio?

The Second-Year WOC Portfolio is part of Mount Union's General Education Program—*The Integrative Core (IC)*. It's kind of a "mid-career checkpoint" regarding your development as a writer and speaker. The portfolio will be electronic and will consist of materials that you will select from the many assignments you've completed in the IC up to that point: the First Year Seminar and Foundational Knowledge courses (A, N, H, & S).

Q. Who has to complete the WOC Portfolio?

Everyone. Well, almost everyone. Because the WOC Portfolio is what Mount Union students complete instead of a "College Writing" and "Public Speaking" requirement that most universities use, all new Mount Union students must complete the WOC Portfolio. So, here's who *HAS* to complete it:

- **New students** who matriculated (became a new student) in Fall 2012 or later as traditional college students (even if you came with some credits that transferred in).
- **Transfer students** who were new to Mount Union in Fall 2013 or later. All transfer students should contact the WOC Director for an individual WOC Portfolio submission plan.
- **Honors students** who matriculated in Fall 2012 or later. Honors students may submit work from Honors FYS and Foundations AND from non-honors Foundations courses.
- **International Students** who are degree-seeking students. Those international students who are at Mount Union for only one year, as exchange students, do NOT have to complete the WOC Portfolio.

Q. When is my WOC Portfolio due?

Most students will submit a WOC Portfolio in the fourth semester at Mount Union. **All WOC Portfolios are due by 4pm on the last day of finals for that semester.** So, for most students:

If you start(ed) in:	It's due (by the last day of finals) in:
Fall 2012	May 2014
Spring 2013	Dec. 2014
Fall 2013	May 2015
Spring 2014	Dec. 2015
Fall 2014	May 2016
Spring 2015	Dec. 2016
Fall 2015	May 2017
Spring 2016	Dec. 2017

If you start(ed) in:	It's due (by the last day of finals) in:
Fall 2016	May 2018
Spring 2017	Dec. 2018
Fall 2017	May 2019
Spring 2018	Dec. 2019
Fall 2018	May 2020
Spring 2019	Dec. 2020
Fall 2019	May 2021
Spring 2020	Dec. 2021

If you're a **transfer student**, you're welcome to submit as soon as you have completed your required UMU Foundations classes. It is strongly suggested that transfer students **contact the WOC Director to set up an individualized plan for submitting the WOC Portfolio**. Any student can choose to submit earlier than their scheduled "Due By" time.

Q. How do I create and submit my WOC Portfolio?

You will create and submit your WOC Portfolio using Mount Union's Learning Management System (LMS), *Brightspace* by Desire2Learn. You can access *Brightspace* through iRaider (**Quicklinks -> *Brightspace***) or from the main Mount Union webpage.

There are **instructions** for every part of the process—from accessing Brightspace and ePortfolio, to choosing what pieces to include, to completing and submitting the final WOC Portfolio—on the Second-Year WOC Portfolio webpage (http://www.mountunion.edu/second-year-written-and-oral-communication-woc-portfolio) and in the WOC Portfolio "Due by" Course on *Brightspace*.

Q. What happens if I miss the 4pm cut-off?
No late submissions will be accepted; a non-submission counts as a failed portfolio. While this might seem a bit harsh, rules are rules.

Q. What all is needed in the WOC Portfolio?
There are seven (7) items that you need to include for your WOC Portfolio to be complete:

1. A Cover Letter (tells your reader what you're including, where it's from, and discusses how the assignments show you meet the minimum proficiency for passing)
2. One Written Assignment that shows research and effectively integrates sources
3. One Written Assignment that may/may not show research or integrate sources
4. One Video of an Oral Assignment that shows research and effectively integrates sources
5. One Video of an Oral Assignment that may/may not show research or integrate sources
6. A Statement of Authenticity (assures the readers that the work is yours and that all research is properly cited)
7. An Informed Consent Form (gives or declines permission to the WOC Board to use your materials for teaching purposes)

Q. Are there limitations to where the writing and oral presentations can come from?
Yes. Content items in the portfolio *must* come from the following types of classes only:

- First Year Seminar (FYS)
- Arts Foundations (A)
- Humanities Foundations (H)
- Natural Science Foundations (N)
- Social Science Foundations (S)

Sometimes there are circumstances that might make this more challenging. In that case, it's always a good idea to contact the WOC Director about possible exceptions.

Q. Can I take all my content pieces from the same class?
No. The idea of the WOC Portfolio is to demonstrate proficiency in a variety of writing and speaking contexts. Thus, you'll need to keep in mind the following guidelines and restrictions:

- Your WOC Portfolio must include work from at least 3 of the 5 types of classes (FYS, A, H, N, S);
- If you're submitting 2 pieces from same class or same Foundational area, one must be writing and one must be a video of a speaking assignment;
- Transfer students must include work from at least 2 Foundations taken at UMU. Transfer students likely will submit writing and speaking assignments from just two classes (in two different Foundational areas).

Here's an example of an acceptable assortment of assignments:

Writing: BIO 141**N**—does not incorporate sources
JPN 235**H**--incorporates sources

Oral: PSY 110**S**—does not incorporate sources
JPN 235H—incorporates sources

Again, sometimes there are circumstances that might make this more challenging. Contact the WOC Director about possible exceptions.

Q. What types of assignments work best?

You should use **significant** writing and oral assignments in your FYS and Foundations classes--that means assignments that have gone through a process of creation and development, revision and editing as a result of careful feedback from the instructor and your peers.

You should use **written assignments** that have a point and develop it well, organize items logically for the reader, acknowledge and cite others' ideas and words, and use standard American English grammatical guidelines for ease of reading.

You should use **oral assignments** that have a point and develop it well, organize items logically for the audience to see and hear, acknowledge and cite others' ideas and words orally (as the presenter provides information) and in written citations and References slides when appropriate, using standard American English grammatical guidelines for speech so the audience can follow along easily; in addition, the speaker needs to engage the audience by being excited about the subject and showing enthusiasm while presenting.

Q. What kinds of assignments should be avoided?

For **Writing** assignments, avoid:

- Very short (1-2 page) written documents
- Short lab reports without much paragraphing/narrative writing
- Lab reports that have short answers to questions
- Creative writing such as poetry, short fiction and one-act plays
- Writing that does not engage the reader
- Writing in which the student does not help the reader understand the importance of his or her subject
- Writing that isn't organized clearly and easily for the reader to follow along
- Writing in which the student does not carefully edit and proofread
- Writing that contains an end-of-paragraph citation to "cover" any material in that paragraph
- Annotated bibliographies that do not include in-text citations and those that have no analysis by the student
- Reports that do not provide the student's own analysis or interpretation

For **Oral** assignments, avoid:

- Presentations in which the speaker only introduces or concludes the group's talk
- Theatrical scenes acted out by students
- Short group presentations in which each speaker talks for 1-2 minutes only
- Scientific experiments with no context or real-world applications and discussion
- The reading of a play, a piece of fiction or poetry, or other creative art
- Presentations that use images without citing them adequately
- Presentations in which the student merely reads from a written document
- Presentations in which the student "presents" primarily by reading text on his or her slides
- Presentations in which the audience can't tell why they should care about the student's subject
- Presentations in which the student does not engage the audience
- Presentations in which the student does not seem to care about his or her subject; appears bored
- Presentations that simply "report" and do not provide the student's own analysis or interpretation

Q. Can I revise my written and oral assignments before submitting them?

Yes. It's very common for students to revise their work after it's been turned in and graded in class. In fact, the best writers and speakers know that their work is never finished or perfect. If you feel that your written or oral assignment needs to be revised, but you're no longer in the course where it was assigned, you can go to the Center for Writing and Oral Communication (CWOC). Peer consultants will help you revise. And you can even re-record your oral presentations. But, there are some rules, so make sure you mention ahead of time that you're revising and/or re-recording your assignments for your WOC Portfolio.

Q. What do you mean by "research", "incorporating research", and "citing sources"?

One skill that's being demonstrated in your WOC Portfolio is your understanding that all knowledge is built upon the knowledge of others. And part of what you do when you learn something new is conduct research. While the specific guidelines for documenting your research process might differ from discipline to discipline, the expectation that you document your research is universal. And for the WOC Portfolio, when you've used research, you are expected to do the following:

- Make it clear in the text or speech when you are using someone else's words or ideas (e.g., incorporate "in-text" citations: "According to *New York Times* reporter Joe Smith…");
- Make it clear where the ideas or words are coming from (e.g., parenthetical citations or notes in the essay or on the slides);
- Include all your references (in a works cited or references page/slide);
- Use course- and discipline-appropriate sources.

If you have any questions about using or citing research, talk to your teacher or go to the CWOC.

Q. Where do I find copies of the cover letter and the forms?

Students, faculty and staff can find templates for the Cover Letter, the Statement of Authenticity and the Informed Consent form on the Second-Year WOC Portfolio website (http://www.mountunion.edu/second-year-written-and-oral-communication-woc-portfolio). Copies are also in the *Brightspace* WOC Portfolio "Due by" Course you'll enroll in to submit your WOC Portfolio.

Q. How can I learn more about the requirements?

- Attend an *INFO Session* or a *Help-a-thon*. These events are offered each semester for students.
- Read the "catalog description," under *Integrative Core*.
- Refer to the Second-Year WOC Portfolio website (http://www.mountunion.edu/second-year-written-and-oral-communication-woc-portfolio) for more information about the WOC Portfolio.
- Refer to The Integrative Core website (http://www.mountunion.edu/integrative-core), which has tips and links to necessary forms if you click on the link to the Second-Year WOC Portfolio.

Q. How will I know my WOC Portfolio has been submitted properly?

When you submit your WOC Portfolio to the Dropbox in your *Brightspace* WOC Portfolio "Due by" Course, you will receive an email confirmation that you have submitted.

Q. Where can I get help on writing or speaking assignments?

If you want support for developing your writing and/or speaking abilities, make an appointment with a consultant at the Center for Writing and Oral Communication (CWOC)—http://www.mountunion.edu/center-for-writing-and-oral-communication—which is in KHIC. While consultants will not revise or edit for you, they can help you identify areas of weakness or specific problems to address before completing a piece for the portfolio. The consultants understand the expectations for the Second-Year WOC Portfolio, and they can help you become better communicators; however, they are undergraduate students and are not in a position to tell students if a piece will pass or not. You can make an appointment online.

Q. Who's going to read my WOC Portfolio?

A team of faculty members from many academic departments across campus will evaluate the portfolios. Each faculty member who participates will be familiar with the expectations for written and oral communication at this level, and they will use the WOC Rubrics to assess your portfolio. The expectation is that all students should be able to achieve a score of 2, the minimum proficiency expected at the end of the sophomore year. Each portfolio will receive scores from two readers. Those scores will be combined to form the score for that part of the portfolio. If there is a major discrepancy between the two scores, a third reader will evaluate the portfolio.

Q. What does it take to pass?

Scoring will be based on the WOC Rubrics. Level 2 is the "passing" score. Students will be given a score for their written work and for their oral work. Both must be a passing score in order for the portfolio requirement to be complete. Students can earn a high pass, a pass, or a failing score on the portfolio. A combined score of 7-8 is needed for a high pass, 4-6 is needed for a pass, and anything under 4 will result in a failing score.

Because the scoring is done based on the WOC Rubrics, a good grade from the instructor in the class doesn't necessarily mean a pass here. Not all written and oral assignments meet every criterion on the WOC Rubric. Also, sometimes course grades take into consideration other factors (like participation, a completed draft, extra credit, etc.). Finally, make sure the cover letter is complete, well-written and helps readers understand the assignments. And make sure you complete and include copies of the 2 forms; incomplete submissions are considered "failing."

Q. How will I get my results?

Typically, portfolios will be read in mid-May of each year, and students will get an emailed letter with their results by June. Be sure to clean out your email before leaving for the summer so you can receive mail. If you are a student who needs to submit your portfolio during the fall semester because you will not be on campus during the spring semester, you will get your results after the spring semester commences; those results will be emailed by February.

Q. What if I don't pass?

You have two options if you don't pass the portfolio. If you think you can submit a better portfolio without any extra support, you may prepare a new portfolio and submit it before the last day of finals during the next semester. If you think you could use some extra support, you should enroll in one or both of the 2-credit classes on revising--one will be to revise written work for the portfolio; the other will be to revise oral presentations for the portfolio. These classes will only be open to students who have submitted and failed a portfolio. Students need to complete the portfolio requirement, which means passing it, prior to enrolling in the Integrative Core Capstone, so if you decide to take one or both of the revising classes, do so during the next semester so you can continue to make progress toward your degree. Details will be given to you in the email with your portfolio results.

Q. What if I don't submit my portfolio correctly?

An incomplete or improperly submitted WOC Portfolio is considered a "**failing" portfolio**. For instance, if you don't submit the forms, your portfolio fails. If you submit assignments that are not from acceptable courses (FYS, A, H, N, & S), your portfolio (or that part of it) fails. If you don't create the ePortfolio presentation correctly, your portfolio fails. If you don't submit it to the correct Dropbox location, your portfolio fails. If you miss the deadline, your portfolio fails. If you don't submit at all, your portfolio fails. The best way to make sure that you don't fail because of a technicality is to ask questions, follow instructions, take the requirement seriously, and DON'T wait until the last second to build and submit your portfolio.

Q. Who can answer my questions?

Many questions you might have can be answered at one of the many support events scheduled throughout the semester—**INFO Sessions, the Help-a-thon**—as well as through the support materials provided on the Second-Year WOC Portfolio website (http://www.mountunion.edu/second-year-written-and-oral-communication-woc-portfolio). In addition, there are a number of people you can turn to for assistance:

- For technical help with and questions about *Brightspace*, *ePortfolio* or general technology issues, contact the IT HelpDesk (330-823-4357);
- For help with and questions about building and submitting your WOC Portfolio, contact the WOC tutors in Academic Support Services (330-823-8685);
- For help with creating and revising your written and oral assignments, contact the CWOC (http://www.mountunion.edu/center-for-writing-and-oral-communication);
- For help with and questions about WOC Portfolio guidelines, submissions, results or general questions, contact the WOC Director (wocdirector@mountunion.edu).