

SYLLABUS
CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO COURSE
MAED (ED870) & MAET (CEP807)
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INSTRUCTORS (and their portfolios)



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EXPECTATIONS

We do not know of any better way to explain the course expectations than to say that our total focus in this class is to help you each end the course with a web portfolio that shows in a rich, thoughtful way the work you have done in your masters program, and which is written for your **authentic audience**, not just for us or for meeting the requirements of capstone course. We want you to *look good* in the eyes of your peers, your students, your (potential) employers, and your significant others. So please be thinking of this as your portfolio, not your instructors'. And your portfolio to be shared with others into the future, not one that is put away in some dusty file cabinet when this course is over.

Because we are focused on you and your audiences, we encourage you to feel free to be creative and diverse in the portfolios you create. This makes our job harder (and our expectations perhaps a bit ambiguous at times) but we really do want you to complete your capstone with a portfolio you are proud of, a deeper understanding of the power of the portfolio

concept, and an expanded set of web publishing skills combined with some deep reflection about the power of web publishing in the lives of others you teach. That is not to say, however, that there are not some common requirements and guidelines that will help structure the great diversity, creativity, and originality that will span the range of portfolios that are possible. We'll say more about that later as we go along.

There are a couple of things we'd like you to keep in mind.

- First, each of you come to the course with differing levels of technical expertise for web publishing. Several members of the class have never published web pages, but not to worry...many students during in previous semesters also began without this expertise. Other members of the class are experts in web publishing, and one has taught web design courses at a community college. We will be asking you to help each other, especially asking those who are experienced in web publishing. (More on this later)
- Second, we am sure some of you would like to work quickly and complete your portfolio and be done. And in fact this course is strongly **product oriented**...our goal is for each of you to complete the course with a superb portfolio on the Web that showcases your work in the masters. We really want you to look good on the Web... and you will. But equally important in this course is for you to discuss your ideas with others in the class and to give lots of feedback and encouragement to your study buddies. And that won't work if we don't work through the assignments module by module.

You know this dilemma we face as teachers. Students naturally would like to know what is expected in the course, but as teachers we recognize the value in unveiling or rolling out assignments week by week, or in this case, module by module. So when this week we give you the opportunity to see the scope of requirements and the kinds of work the previous class did, you will have a detailed look at what the semester has in store....and you can begin thinking about and gathering the information you need to complete your portfolio, and even work ahead if you want to. But realize, there are times when you might have to "work back" to the rest of your classmates to complete group-oriented mini-assignments. Not everyone may be as far ahead as you.

- One other conceptual idea we would like you to keep in mind is that **the power of web-based portfolios that comes from the sharing of good work via the Web over time with a community of learners**. You will learn a lot this week because the students before you left there work up on the web for you to see. And related to this idea our my obsession with your doing **authentic work for an authentic audience**. Your portfolio should not be designed for the masters requirement, but should be designed for your fellow teachers, parents, prospective employers, etc.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Good news! There are no books are any other materials you need to purchase. All readings are available online.

YOUR STUDY BUDDY AND VIRTUAL HOUSE

Early in the course, you are matched with a study-buddy. Every assignment will be reviewed and reviewed by your study-buddy. Because you're giving good feedback to your study-buddy, your study-buddy is giving good feedback to you. Also, you're placed in a 'virtual house' – Two pairs of study buddies make a house, so that you have a larger, yet still helpful, circle for review.

Each week you will post something in your house (we'll have specific things for you to post about each week). Each week, we want you to respond to at least two posts by your housemates. Because replies require your housemates to post, we expect your replies to come within 4 days of the due-date of the original posting. These weekly interactions are designed specifically to foster interaction with your housemates around the task of providing critical feedback for each other, for the purpose of improving your portfolios.

WHAT YOU WILL BE DOING

You don't just create a portfolio from scratch – Just as Rome wasn't built in a day. How do you build a portfolio in one semester then?

- **A figure it out period** – Built into the early weeks of the course is a period of time for you to evaluate different approaches to portfolios and different web-authoring tools. The early assignments in the course will take you through the decision process, so if you're feeling a little nervous about this, please relax. You'll get to choose the approach and tools that work for you, only after trying a few out.
- **A series of progressive assignments** – In this course, we use a series of smaller assignments to slowly build up the portfolio piece by piece. You start with just making a page. Then, you add a resume. By the time the course is over, you'll have something to be proud of.
- **Cycles of feedback** – At each step along the way, there are many types of feedback to help you build something to be proud of. You'll be getting feedback every week from your study buddy and from the other members of your virtual house. You also get reviews from the instructors, and from the final portfolio exhibition. Each round of feedback is meant to provide opportunities to revise your work, and make it better.
- **Reflecting on your experiences in your masters program** – Some of the assignments are going to ask you to think critically about your experiences to date in the masters program. This is, after all, a capstone course. It is designed to make you think, reflect, and synthesize across all of your course experiences. These will take the form of thoughtful essays, that will become part of your web portfolio.
- **Minimal reading, maximal doing** – The course is designed to have you do minimal outside reading. We will provide you some text to provide context, some suggestions, some food for thought. However, these pieces are very short, and designed to help you place the work you are doing in context, and to help you think about the bigger ideas embedded in the work. They may help you think about these ideas in your own teaching as well.

GRADING

There are four components to your grade.



Participation 15%

Being a good housemate and study-buddy by providing thoughtful and helpful feedback. Post every week on time, and reply to your housemates post with thoughtful replies, you'll receive maximum credit.



Assignments 15%

There are small assignments along the way to the final goal of building up your portfolio. For example, we'll ask you to put up a resume page on your portfolio by a certain date, and have it available from your 'homepage.' These are normally graded on a rather simple rubric, such as did you: a) post a resume on your site, b) make a link to it from your homepage. If you've done this by the deadline, you'll receive full credit. As long as it approximates somewhat a resume, you're okay for this assignment. The quality and professional appeal of that will be judged later in the course through the process of portfolio review. *The lesson here is that is better to get something posted for review on time, and improve upon it as we go, than wait for everything to be perfect. There is time to revise and improve later.*



Portfolio 70%

The largest component of your grade will be the quality of your final portfolio. All of the smaller assignments along the way are designed to scaffold your development of a portfolio that demonstrates your accomplishments and communicates to an authentic audience. Your portfolio will be evaluated based on completeness (e.g., major components such as coursework page, synthesis paper, etc. are complete and meet the requirements given in the assignments), quality of writing, and quality of web design. These elements will be graded at the end of the semester, giving you the freedom to post "work in progress" along the way and get helpful feedback from your classmates and from us. (This component will be 70% of your final grade. This means that doing a great portfolio alone is not enough to pass

the course. Responsible and timely participation in this community of learners is also a requirement.)

LATE WORK: We've worked hard to design the course as a series of mini assignments along a timeline that works towards getting most people a complete portfolio on time. We hope you stick to the deadline, as we believe it is best for you in the long run (remember: its better to get 'something' up for most assignments, you can improve upon it later, and you'll still get full credit for the 'assignment' portion of your grade). We realize, however, that there are circumstances that arise from time to time such that you may need extra time for an assignment. *That is okay, so long as you notify us via email before the due date, to make a suitable alternate schedule that fits the circumstances.* It's also a good idea to let your study buddy know about such situations.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards."

In addition, the College of Education adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the <http://www.allmsu.com> web site to complete any course work in (insert course number here). Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including--but not limited to--a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work.

Deliberate alteration or deletion of official course documents on this website, or other misuse of editorial privileges are also considered to be a violation of the academic honesty and integrity policy with consequences for your grade, up to and include a failing grade on an assignment or the course.

See also <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>

OFFICE HOURS



M Koehler

I do not maintain regular office hours, because it has been my experience that it never really works out to be a good meeting time for both parties. However those of you who know me, know that I am always around (afternoons are the best bet). You can drop by my office (509 Erickson Hall) if you want to talk about anything. Alternatively, I'm always willing to arrange a meeting time that works. My phone number at the office is 517.353.9287. I AM TERRIBLE at checking my voice messages on a regular basis, so I do not advise that method as a way to get a timely response. The best way of getting in touch with me is by email. My email address is mkoehler@msu.edu, please put "**CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO**" in the subject line of your email.



Penny Thompson

I have neither office nor office phone, but I am tethered to my computer 16 hours a day, so feel free to send me an email, either at thomp850@msu.edu or through the email feature of this ANGEL site, and I will get back to you within 24 hours, and usually much more quickly than that. And please put **CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO** in the subject line of the email, as it will help me to find your question more quickly.



Chris Shaltry

My office hours are also by appointment only. If you need help or have questions please email me at shaltryc@msu.edu or through the email feature of this ANGEL site. We will also be able to respond to your email faster if you put **CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO** in the subject line of your email.



Denise Leach

My office hours are also by appointment. Feel free to email me at leachden@msu.edu or through the email feature of this ANGEL site. We will also be able to respond to your email faster if you put **CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO** in the subject line of your email.

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Thanks to Patrick Dickson for his thoughtful design and execution of ED870. Much of structure, as well as text, were used in this course are his original work. We have also taken inspiration, and assignments from Dr. Robin Dickson's version of this course, CEP807. We, of course, have made some changes to suit my own style, preferences, and perspectives. But this course could not have been offered without the hard work of either of the Dr. Dicksons.