

Electronic Writing Portfolio Readings Report Fall 2006 Executive Summary¹

Number of Portfolios: 204 (10% of completed portfolios)

Number of Papers: 657

Skill	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Poor²
Focus/Purpose	28%	53%	18%	1%
Organization	20%	58%	21%	1%
Development	21%	47%	30%	3%
Style	20%	57%	21%	1%
Audience	24%	59%	17%	0
Mechanics	29%	49%	22%	1%
Sources	25%	55%	11%	8%
Overall	28%	55%	17%	

- The majority of portfolios were deemed adequate by readers with few portfolios being impressive.
- Papers submitted from English 1001G and 1002G were often the best papers in the portfolios. Readers did not notice as strong a discrepancy in senior seminar submissions as was noted last year.
- Readers agreed that few portfolios displayed a passion or enthusiasm for the subject matter.
- Focus was found to be generally adequate across the portfolios. Readers noted that many students could stay on task although they also indicated that in many portfolio entries students seemed to be writing for a faculty member who knew what the assignment was, so little mention was made of the purpose of the writing.
- Organization proved to be troubling across the portfolios. Readers indicated issues with making appropriate transitions and using headings and subheadings to the writer's advantage.
- Readers felt that issues with development appeared linked to poor critical thinking skills. Readers suggested incorporating critical thinking assessment into the portfolio process. Development was one of the most troubling elements.
- Mechanical issues tended to continue across submissions for each portfolio (so students displayed the same errors in several papers), but very few portfolios could not be understood because of these errors.
- Very few portfolios contained research papers, so gauging student abilities on using sources was difficult. Several readers indicated that they would like to see more research papers included in the portfolios.
- A lack of sophisticated, or academic, style was noted across portfolios. This issue of style was discussed as problematic at the 2005 readings as well.
- Readers also indicated that portfolios with only two submissions were difficult to assess.

¹ The full readings report is available at www.eiu.edu/~assess.

² This category was added to the assessment instrument in Fall 2006 at the suggestion of readers and CASL members.