

## Rules and Advice for Web Portfolios

### Rules to Avert Disaster and Extra Stress:

PLAN your portfolio's content before anything else. Your original proposal is a good place to start your portfolio: after all, it provides a kind of road-map to the work you have proposed to include in your major.

Your first page (the home page--or "index.htm") might include the entire proposal, or at least the formal description of your major with a prominent link to the rest of the proposal. Papers, lab reports, visual images, or other work from courses or internships should be included as separate pages; and you might start to organize your portfolio by creating links to each piece of work from the course-list section of your proposal. You may also include a section where you keep track of evolving ideas for your senior project, with a link from the senior project section of your proposal. Perhaps you will include a page with links to external sites you find useful.

ALWAYS save your web portfolios in your folder on the CIS shared web-space. There is no public access to these files, so feel free to experiment and do your work directly on this space. Go to <http://www.stolaf.edu/services/iit/documentation/netfolders/> for instruction on setting up shared space access on your personal computer.

- Your shared space folder has one folder named with your first initial and last name, and a folder named "Extra Files". Upload all content into the folder with your name. However, before you tell the CIS staff that your portfolio is done, please go through your main folder and put all files that are not necessary in a live version of your site in the "Extra Files" folder
- Internal portfolio links will only work if files are in the same folder
- Keep all photos in the images directory inside your main folder
- Keep a backup copy of your portfolio on your own computer, a flash drive, or a CD

ALWAYS name the homepage of your web portfolio index.html

NEVER use spaces in filenames that you will be using in your web portfolio

- Names for any type of file must only use letters, numbers, and underscores; no special characters, symbols, or spaces
- All papers linked directly from your portfolio should be in .html format unless they are lengthy. It's also wise to have a .PDF option for viewers to download. .Doc files are not copyright safe and users must download them to read
- Keep filenames short, simple, and to the point. NEVER use capital letters or punctuation; *reactionpaper1.html* or *mainimage.jpg* are good examples of smart naming

ALWAYS try to use a web-editor to do a lot of the hard work for you. Dreamweaver is the best option, and can be found on computers in Holland 606 and specific computers in Rolvaag Library. Contact the CIS web portfolio designer for more help. DO NOT use programs such as Microsoft Word to make websites for you.

## **Best Advice:**

PLAN your website before you dive into the design.

- Sketch a plan of your website on paper
- Organize your pages in a simple and coherent manner
- Be flexible and patient—your portfolio will probably change over the course of its design
- DO NOT procrastinate (well, try) on your portfolio because it takes more effort to accomplish than one may think

USE on-campus resources such as the MDC (Multimedia Development Center) in IIT, and the portfolio designer for CIS majors.

REALIZE that these portfolios, (once live), can be seen by all users of the Internet until they are taken off the CIS Web Community. Keep in mind the academic goals of your CIS Web Portfolio as well as the technical challenges (or overcoming them) of making a web portfolio.

DESIGN your portfolios with your eventual readers in mind.

- Choose font styles, font colors and background color combinations that are easy to read for all viewers—black text on a light-colored background is best (DO NOT choose white on black, green on orange, other high-contrast combinations)
- Provide navigation on all of your pages that is constant, easy to understand, and does not lead to dead-ends. Use the template feature of Dreamweaver to accomplish this. DO NOT lead viewers to pages without navigation or they will be “stuck” on that page
- BE CREATIVE in your design. This is the place where you will showcase your talent and interests. Even if you are not computer-literate, there are many free resources you can utilize to do creative things
- DO NOT have every space available page be full of content—a good portfolio has a nice balance of content to white/background space

KEEP IT SIMPLE. Focus on the important aspects of your portfolio. DO NOT add unnecessary images or links that may distract your viewers.

SAVE SMALL IMAGES so that they will load faster on people’s computers. .JPG files are the best and most compatible to all computers. RE-SIZE photos bigger than 30K in size.

DO browse through past portfolios to get a concrete idea of what is expected. The archived portfolios can be found at <http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/cis/archivewp.html>

DO NOT upload any material that may have copyrights attributed to them. Your portfolio should be your own work, and crediting necessary resources when warranted.

AVOID publishing your personal information (other than your email) on your portfolio. Information such as telephone number, addresses and grades could be misused by Internet users.

DO feel free to express your own opinions, as your content will not be censored nor edited. There is a general disclaimer on the CIS Web Community so no St. Olaf disclaimer statement is needed on your portfolio.

KNOW that your web portfolio will be kept on the main CIS Web Community through the summer after your graduation. In the fall, portfolios of the graduated class will be moved to the Portfolio Archives page for six months, after which most of them will be removed from the web site. A few portfolios may be kept publicly accessible as samples for up to two years after graduation.

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