

Guide to Creating a Digital Professional Portfolio

Creating and compiling materials for a professional portfolio is something you can start doing from your very first Second Language Studies classes. When you take the capstone course (SLS 480P: Professionalism in SLS), you'll be creating an e-portfolio that has key items that you want to show potential employers or grad schools. To prepare for this, you can create a working repository for all the papers, presentations, materials, and more that you build up during the course of your BA in SLS.

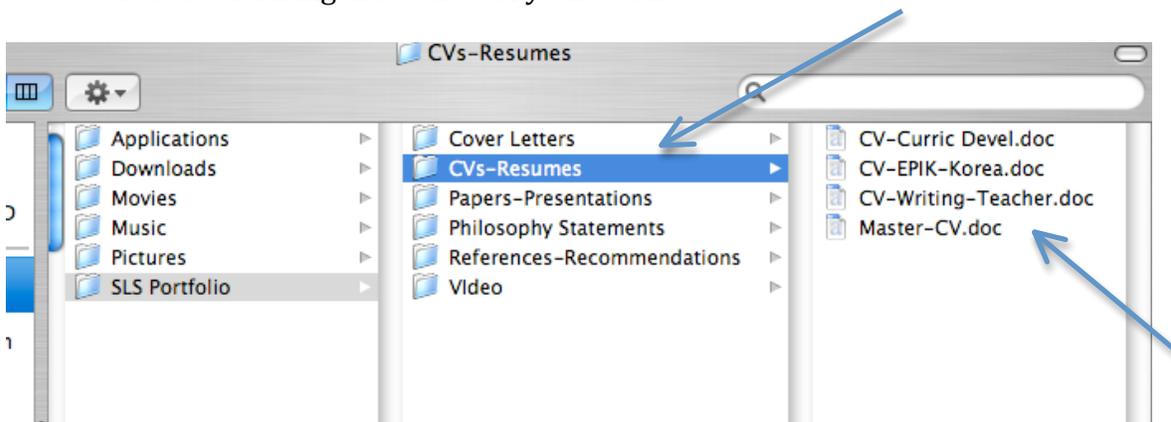
Step 1. Setting up your digital portfolio

- The first thing to do is create a space on your hard drive, external storage, or other cloud-based storage program ([Dropbox](#), [iCloud](#), etc.) for your portfolio.



Step 2. Layout

- Within your portfolio directory, create a subset of folders for each of the different components of your portfolio, as well as for exploration of future jobs or careers.
- Each folder can be used to store specific documents, projects, etc. developed or located during the course of your studies.



- ❖ **Cover Letters:** Store copies of cover letters you create in SLS classes or when you apply for jobs.

- ❖ **CVs – Resumes:** Here you can store a master copy of your CV and resume, as well as any tailored versions developed in SLS classes or when you apply for actual jobs. Whenever you need to make updates, first update your Master CV and then decide if any of the tailored CVs might also need to be updated.
- ❖ **Future Jobs:** Whenever you have a break where you are not doing coursework, SLS recommends utilizing this time by browsing job listings for positions you might be interested in for the future. Keeping track of these listings in your professional portfolio will help you:
 - Be aware of what kinds of jobs are available
 - Know the requirements for different kinds of jobs, and help you identify gaps or areas where progress is needed
 - Prepare you to talk with advisors about your future
- ❖ **Papers – Presentations:** Store previous coursework, including papers and presentations, from your SLS classes. You may select some of these items later to include in your e-portfolio, as samples of how you as a developing professional.
- ❖ **Philosophy Statements:** An essential part of any professional portfolio is a philosophy statement. Depending on your interests and career plans, this could be a Philosophy of Teaching, a Philosophy of Program Administration, a Statement of Purpose (for graduate school applications), a Statement of your Research Agenda, etc.
- ❖ **Recommendations:** Make a folder to store recommendations from past employers or teachers for use in future job searches, or to keep a file of potential references and their contact information.
- ❖ **Video:** An excellent way to display your skills is through media. If you do any kind of tutoring or teaching, record yourself working with students or giving a sample lesson. *Make sure to get **consent** from students/participants for any video or other media you want to include!* (**Hint:** having a friend do the videotaping ensures that the camera focuses in on what's relevant at every moment of the lesson.)

Step 3. Backup your data

- Regardless of where you decide to create your digital portfolio, make sure you keep a second copy somewhere separate in case something should happen to your original files. Also, be sure to do regular backups.

Other recommendations:

1. Labeling your files in an easily recognizable way is just as important as labeling your folders. The more organization you put into your portfolio at the beginning, the more useful it will become.
2. Other possible categories to include in your portfolio include: Teaching Materials, Student Evaluations, Research Interests, Sample Lessons or Syllabi, Feedback, and more.
3. Update your portfolio regularly. Your portfolio will be ever-changing as you continue to study and work in the field of SLS, and the more often you update and add to it, the more it will accurately reflect who you are as a professional.
4. Since you'll be developing an e-portfolio in the capstone course, you might want to start early with learning how to use web development software or free blogging websites such as [Wordpress](#) or [Weebly](#).