

## Writing for Your Portfolio (20 pts)

There are many different approaches to developing the written content for your portfolio. The approach you select will depend on the underlying concept of who 'you' are, as well as the portfolio goals and content specifics.

It's very important that you maintain a consistent voice throughout the portfolio and related materials. Decide what you want the 'voice' to be—straightforward & concise, personable & chatty or something in-between? First person present (with "I") or third person neutral? Make sure that the style of writing matches your desired conceptual approach (those three words from your brief).

### WHAT TO WRITE

Your writing will communicate the following aspects of your approach and work:

- Introduce you in some way: briefly describing your sensibilities and experience
- Explain your ideas/process for each project (client, medium, goals and objectives, approach, etc.)
- Identify project specifics (titles, labels, captions, etc.)

Depending on the format of the portfolio (e.g. custom site vs Behance), there may be limitations on the amount of written content you can include. This could create differences in the written content for the online and sequenced portfolio—in general, you'll include more information in the sequenced portfolio, to prompt a discussion about your conceptual and creative skills.

### DESCRIBING YOUR WORK

For some portfolios, a straightforward framework will successfully describe your project involvement. Some designers frame the conceptual discussion of the project as a challenge/solution, allowing for a discussion of the strategic thinking and a unique conceptual approach. Regardless of the approach be careful not to describe what a viewer can see in the work (the what)—rather discuss the creative thinking and reasoning behind the work (the why).

More complex, process-based design solutions benefit from a case study approach. This way of presenting a project is often found in blog-style portfolios.

To get started with your writing, create a framework (outline) for the content, and then develop the written narrative for each piece. Possible categories include:

- Client name/industry/project title
- Project description/conceptual approach
- Your role in the project, such as designer or art director and other collaborators/credits
- Skills and abilities demonstrated
- Any awards, publications or recognition related to the project

There are samples of previous student work uploaded to the Content Resources Folder of the yahoo group. Regardless of your approach, you want to be perceived as professional, so have someone review your writing, and be sure to *spell check and proof* your work.

A draft **Content Framework** (20 pts) is due next week. This should be the **outline** for your content, along with a complete written description for **one project**.

### LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION

Whitney Gisvold: personal bio statement

<http://whitneygisvold.com/about/>

Anthony Zinni: clear discussion of work (includes inspiration) and bio/resumé

<http://www.zinnidesign.com/>

Sandstrom—modified case study approach for a range of design projects

<http://www.sandstrompartners.com/>

Slice of Lime—detailed case studies of interactive projects

<http://www.sliceoflime.com/projects/likefolio/>

Article on Case Study approach for design (with some good, some not-so-good examples)

<http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2009/09/20/showcase-of-case-studies-in-design-portfolios/>

Another strong framework for approaching a case study

<https://www.newfangled.com/rethinking-the-case-study/>

Recipe metaphor framework for a design case study

<http://changeorder.typepad.com/weblog/2010/07/a-recipe-for-great-design-case-studies.html>

# SAMPLE CONTENT FRAMEWORK



**SUSAN BALTHAZOR**  
GRPH 149 - Portfolio Prep  
Due: 4.1.13

**PORTFOLIO  
WRITTEN CONTENT**  
Draft #1

**Framework**

LOGO – Include a small “swash” from the logo near the text  
PRIMARY CATEGORY/SECONDARY CATEGORY (Optional)  
TITLE  
DESCRIPTION/CONCEPT – If necessary/appropriate  
CLIENT – I may not use this listing because all work is either  
self-initiated or a student project  
ROLE – All work is illustration, some includes concept  
MEDIA – Both traditional and digital

**Writing Samples**

**FASHION ILLUSTRATION – Accessories**

Title: Imelda Marcos & Shoes

Description: Famous for her huge collection of footwear,  
Imelda's image is paired with an assortment of extravagant,  
bejeweled shoes.

Role: Concept, Illustration

Media: Ink drawing, fabric, leather, fur, Illustrator, Photoshop

**EDITORIAL ILLUSTRATION**

Title: San Franciscan Pizza

Description: San Francisco as a cheese-less vegetarian pizza,  
with various ingredients representing architectural and  
cultural landmarks, topography and weather conditions.

Role: Concept, Illustration

Media: Ink drawing, Photoshop

**PORTRAIT ILLUSTRATION**

Title: Georgia O'Keeffe & Poppy

Description: Based on an historic photo and O'Keeffe painting,  
the artist wears an iconic flower and skull.

Role: Concept, Illustration

Media: Photoshop painting using brush tools