

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Introduction

Outside of school very little of what you'll do in life will have anything to do with memorizing facts and taking multiple choice tests. In the working world what you'll be graded on is what you actually produce. Virtual Workplace Experience II puts a strong emphasis on practicing creating work products, presentation and communication skills, and working in teams. More than anything those are the skills that will help you to succeed in the 21st century world of work.

In each unit of this course you'll have a final project that you'll create exploring that unit's career sector. Which project you complete will be something you will choose with consultation with your teacher. As you move through the course you will pick the project artifacts that you think best represent the quality of your work; these will go into your final project portfolio. This final portfolio will be one of the primary ways you'll be graded in this course.

WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO?

In art classes we often hear about creating a portfolio, usually showcases of your best work that demonstrates the growth and mastery of certain skills. The portfolio you are creating for this course will do the same thing, much as an art portfolio would include samples of your best work, the portfolio for this course will be the work that you think best exemplifies your growth over the school year. You get to take responsibility for your learning and shape a collection of entries that demonstrates your skills and creativity.

As you create the projects that will be part of this portfolio an important component will be self-reflection. Being able to analyze your work and identify areas of strength and areas for growth is an integral part of the development of your final portfolio.

Some of the entries in your portfolio will be required (e.g. graded rubrics) but you will have the freedom to select other coursework and to develop one or more new projects of your choosing to include as entries. The final portfolio will be a sample of your work in VWE II that represents your growth in mastering skills for the world of work, accomplishments, progress and thinking about your educational and career paths.

Your final portfolio should be thought of less as a final result of the course but as an integral part of the regular learning process. As such you'll begin to build this final portfolio after the first project completion and will be encouraged to add to or remove items from the final portfolio as the course progresses instead of at the very end.

HOW TO BUILD A GREAT PORTFOLIO

While this portfolio is likely to be a showcase of your best work, part of what you're trying to show is your growth over the course of the year. In order to do this effectively, good time management and deadline adherence will be key.

1. **Build your portfolio a little at a time.** Students who wait until the end of the course to try to put together a final portfolio miss out on being able to write meaningful reflections on the work as it progresses. Not to mention it's incredibly stressful to try to put something like this together at the last minute!
2. **Constantly evaluate.** Your final portfolio will consist of 5 sets of artifacts from projects you complete over the entire course. After each project is finished and graded, take the time to

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consider if you think it belongs in the portfolio. Edit and reflect as you go.

- 3. **Reflect.** One of the key components of your portfolio is your written reflection on your work as the course progresses. Taking the time to think about the work you've done as soon as you finish a project is key. It's really hard to try to remember exactly what you were thinking when you made certain choices in a project, or how you felt about your presentation or grade, when you wait 3 months to write it.
- 4. **Be Organized.** Ideally you will have class time to work on your portfolio after each unit is finished, but if not, it's up to you to make the time. If you keep your project artifacts organized in their own binder or in an online system, then when it comes time to turn in the final portfolio you'll only need to do a little polish and be done.

REQUIRED COMPONENTS

Included in the overview for each of the projects is a list of project components that should be included in the final portfolio. If you work with your teacher on creating a custom project, you may want to use these end sections as examples of what to include from your custom project.

For instance:

- Career Cluster Poster Project (03-03) Portfolio Artifacts:
 - Printed copy of presentation
 - Reflection
 - Completed project rubric
 - Photo of poster

Reflection

If you haven't taken a course centered around project-based learning this can feel like a big change. Hopefully you will enjoy the experience of being in charge of your own learning. There's a lot of work ahead.

What are some concerns you have about creating this final portfolio? What, if any, changes to your work habits do you think you might have to make to be successful in these projects?
