



Reusing & Reorganizing Portfolio Content

An online portfolio is a fluid digital representation of personal achievement, self reflection, analysis and legacy. Portfolios can be used for continuous professional development, organizing and displaying achievement, and tracking milestones for personal growth and understanding. Designing, building, and assessing online portfolios can take a considerable upfront investment of time and effort from both instructors and students. Preserving the content generated over the length of a class, a semester, or longer in order to reuse and improve it is important for many reasons.

Both instructors and students use portfolios for assessment on a granular level for individual assignments or courses and on a more holistic level for program, curriculum and professional development. Many times content created for one portfolio is relevant to a different course or program. Therefore it makes sense to be able to reformat and reorganize content so that it is reusable. The new Personal Portfolio tool allows instructors and students to create one or many portfolios that can be styled differently, but contain some of or all of the same content.

ISSUES AND ANSWERS

Issue: Why would I want to move my existing portfolio content into Portfolio Artifacts?

Answer: Existing Portfolio content that is moved into Artifacts can then be reused in other Portfolios, saving time and effort. Being able to reuse and reorganize content allows users to repurpose work without having to recreate it from scratch.

Issue: Can I still use my current Portfolios?

Answer: Yes. However, you will not be able to take advantage of the new formatting and Artifact features. Being allowed to create new Basic Portfolios is controlled by the system administrator and may not be available.

Issue: What happened to Portfolio Templates?

Answer: Portfolio templates for Personal Portfolios are now used to define the entire portfolio including layout, page structure and the style of the pages.

Issue: What layout type do I select if I want my new portfolio to resemble my old one?

Answer: Select Layout Type 1 to have the look of your new Portfolio most closely match your old Portfolio.

ARTIFACTS

These different Artifacts (items) can be sorted and organized in different ways depending on the purpose of the Portfolio and who is reviewing it. New Artifacts can be added, old Artifacts can be removed, and existing Artifacts can be updated and rearranged numerous times. Creating Artifacts separates the individual pieces of content from the presentation of that content just as the pages in a binder can be separated from the binder itself. Unlike pages in a binder however, one of the most powerful features of using Artifacts in Portfolios is that when a single Artifact is changed, any Portfolio that uses the Artifact will reflect the changes.

For example, a student has a Portfolio for an English course and collects writing assignments all semester in the format of Artifacts. This same student also has a Portfolio for a Chemistry course and collects lab reports and research papers in the format of Artifacts. At the end of the year, this student can select the Artifacts that represent the best examples of writing from both Portfolios and combine them into a new Portfolio that represents a different time span and different goals. All this is possible because each individual piece of content is created as an Artifact first.

Content for Artifacts can be created in many ways. The most direct way of authoring new content is by using the Visual Text Box Editor (VTBE) included in the Artifact interface. Users can add text, links and images directly, or copy then paste text or HTML code from another source into the VTBE. The most accurate way to transfer existing Basic Portfolio content into a new Artifact is to open the VTBE and select the HTML view. Copy the code, and paste it into the VTBE HTML view of a new Artifact. This will ensure that links will be copied accurately and images will transfer. Other methods of creating content for Artifacts include linking to an item in the Content Collection and entering a link to external content into the VTBE. Since Artifacts are re-usable, this transfer of content from Basic Portfolios only happens once; this offers an opportunity for the user to re-organize existing content into more cohesive and meaningful collections.

PERSONAL PORTFOLIOS

To extend the analogy above, a Personal Portfolio is like a three ring binder. At any given time, students and instructors can have multiple binders (Portfolios). The look and style of each Portfolio can be different. The formatting and layout of the pages such as the appearance of the background, the style of the text, and the overall positioning of content is defined by the Portfolio Style Settings. Portfolio Style Templates can be defined at a system level and distributed to standardize the look and feel across multiple users. By separating the presentation of content from the creation of content, the same Artifacts can be styled differently based on the Portfolio they are included in.





Outcomes Portfolios are an invaluable tool in academic and professional development, providing a powerful medium for users to efficiently collect and organize samples of work completed over time. Portfolios offer a means to demonstrate progress and achievement more holistically, empowering users with tools to effectively present their information in a cohesive, personalized format in conjunction with a seamless integration between the user and associated evaluators and peer reviewers. Portfolios are increasingly becoming an integral component not only in measuring individual achievement but also in strategic planning, accreditation and program assessment.

ISSUES AND ANSWERS

Issue: How are Outcomes Portfolios and Outcomes Artifacts different from Personal Portfolios and Personal Artifacts?

Answer: Outcomes Artifacts and Outcomes Portfolios can have a Rubric attached to them for objective evaluation and they can also have Outcomes System goals associated with them for institutional analysis.

Issue: Can I use Personal Artifacts in an Outcomes Portfolio?

Answer: Yes. Personal Artifacts can be created and/or collected into an Outcomes Portfolio to support custom content by the author.

Issue: How do my students receive an Outcomes Artifact or Outcomes Portfolio template?

Answer: These are managed from the Outcomes System. Students receive these in the Content System inside the new Portfolio Workspace.

Issue: Can I still download Portfolios? What about Artifacts?

Answer: Yes. Artifacts are also collected and exported with a Portfolio.

Issue: I created a Personal Portfolio and some of the style settings are not available. Where are they?

Answer: Portfolio settings that can be modified by the author are determined by the template. Restricted settings will not be available to the author, but they still show in the interface.

OUTCOMES ARTIFACTS

The analogy of a Portfolio and the Artifacts it contains being like a traditional three ring binder can be extended to include Outcomes Portfolios and Outcomes Artifacts as well. Additional features are added to Outcomes Artifacts and Outcomes Portfolios allowing them to be used for institutional assessment projects such as accreditation, program and course review.

Outcomes Artifacts represent individual pieces of work that are submitted for review using a template that is distributed to students and other constituents. The Outcomes Artifacts template is designed by an instructor or other Outcomes System user. The Outcomes Artifacts template contains instructions, availability settings, settings that control what types of content can be added to the Artifact and more. Part of the Outcomes Artifact template is the ability to associate goals and rubrics to it, giving the reviewer an objective means to evaluate it and connect it to larger goals already entered into the Outcomes System.

After the Artifact template has been designed, it is then distributed to students. The same template can be deployed to different sets of students so that data can be collected from different groups and analyzed. Reports can then be run depicting how the Rubric scores or associated Goals aggregate for all submissions of the Artifact.

OUTCOMES PORTFOLIOS

Just as with Personal Portfolios, Outcomes Portfolios set the style of the presentation of the Artifacts it contains. The workflow for Outcomes Portfolios and Artifacts begins in the Blackboard Outcomes System with the design of the instrument template. A Distribution List is created and used to deploy a template to recipients by notifying them by email, by system announcement or by course or organization announcement.

Recipients of templates for Outcomes Portfolios must have a user account in the Blackboard Academic Suite. Once recipients receive notification that a template has been sent to them, they can find a copy of the template in their Content System user account. Users can then interact with the template and submit it back to the sender for review.

Submitted Outcomes Portfolios and Outcomes Artifacts are received in Blackboard Outcomes by the owner of the template. They can be evaluated and used in reports. Reviewers have the option of publishing their comments back to the owner of the Outcomes Portfolio or Outcomes Artifact. Once published, comments cannot be changed.

