

Jessica Wiebe's E-Portfolio

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For: Dr. Andrew Kitchenham

Education 431_SY

E-Portfolio Justification

Following is my justification for my e-portfolio. It is organized under headings, and follows the logical steps according to my own personal beliefs.

Colors

My "Index" page uses one of each of the colors from each of the major headings of the pages. The three colors (purple, blue, and pink) complement each other well. I used the dark purple for the background because it loads quickly, and the dark blue lines on the pink for highlights because the web page loads in layers and the darker or lighter the color, the quicker it loads. The pink is very easy on the eyes as well, which is why I chose it for the base color. According to the PARC principles, there needs to be contrast in the page, but the designer of the page needs to know why there is contrast on the page (Williams 1994). The reason that I decided to use all the colors from the other pages is so there would be some congruency. Each of the colors is a base color for the other pages, and therefore, they can be tied back to the index page subconsciously.

For "Capacity to Teach," I chose the pink color scheme because it is a calm and suggestive color. I opted not to use the color wheel, but rather used different shades of the same color. Aesthetically speaking, I think that it is easier on the viewers' eyes to have different shades of one color than to adjust to a variety of colors. It is also important that the viewer can look at the screen for an extended period of time, because if they cannot view the screen for any period of time, they will not be able to view all of the artifacts, and will not finish viewing my portfolio, and therefore diminishing my chances of gaining employment. I opted to keep the same color scheme going for "Standard 5" so that there would be consistency. If one changes the color scheme, there is a loss of congruency. Since "Standard 5" belongs under the "Capacity to Teach" heading, it is fitting that they have the same color. The dark pink in the background loads quickly because it is a very dark hue, while the pale pink chosen for the

boxes also loads quickly because it is quite a light shade. Speed is of the utmost importance for the viewer because nobody wants to sit and wait for a webpage to load. The longer it takes, the more frustrating it becomes, and the viewers are more likely to quit viewing the page, or become frustrated with the maker of the page. I chose purple for this particular page because it insinuates that during planning, instructing, assessing, evaluating, and reporting, that I can maintain a sense of calm and control about myself. Plus, if the viewer doesn't "get" the underlying implications, it looks pretty anyway.

The "Background Knowledge" color scheme is purple. For the "background knowledge" heading, and its corresponding standards, the idea is to demonstrate that I am perfectly capable of teaching and that I have enough knowledge for people to trust me with their children. Since knowledge and higher education are hot commodities, the color concept behind this page is that purple is a color of royalty and high quality. Once again, I opted for the same color in different hues because I think it compliments well. Many of the color schemes provided through the color wheel on the various websites were ok, but I found them hard on the eyes or I thought they clashed. Therefore, I opted to go simple: prove through my artifacts that I am able to teach and have the knowledge to teach without overcompensating through "fancy" web design. I opted throughout this whole portfolio to go with the KISS acronym and keep it simple. Although it is not an known acronym associated with web design, I feel as though it is important since there are many websites out there that are frustrating to use because they have too much going on. For somebody who is often under a lot of stress, which teachers and administrators are, it is beneficial to look at a portfolio that is simple, straightforward, and effective. That is the aim I am going for with the choice of my color schemes.

The "Professional Qualities" page is done in blue. Professionals are often thought to be cold, and blue is a traditionally cold color. The "Professional Qualities" heading encompasses the importance of being inclusive but remaining professional at all times. The "Professional Qualities" page is justifiable by the same reason as the other pages: loading speed, congruency,

and approachability. Furthermore, blue, pink, and purple are all colors that go together well, are easy on the eyes, and appeal to many peoples' sense of color enjoyment. Please note that although I have justified what I have intentionally done with the colors, some fo the colors look different on different computers. (For instance, on my home computer, the colors look different than on the school computers). Therefore, people may be viewing my portfolio differently than expected or intended, but even if things are changed slightly, it should not detract from my intent or view-ability of my webpage.

Placement

On the index page, the three columns are in close proximity (another PARC principle according to Williams) but are all organized in a very neat fashion that allows for the viewer to scan the page easily. Ultimately, the words on the page are the least important because people will look at pictures first and often do not even read the words. Therefore, it is important that the links are placed on the left hand side, since people in English speaking countries naturally scan from left to right, and that the picture of me is on the other side. This draws the eyes to the outsides of the page, but for those who want to read the text, the text is in the center of the page. I also chose to place the text beside the picture and hyperlink buttons because it is important that the text does not appear daunting (Dodge 1999). If the lines of the paragraphs are too long, the viewer loses interest, especially since there are more appealing things to view on the page. The viewer may also suffer from sore eyes or not desire to read the text if it automatically appears that the text is long. Fewer words are better.

For the three main heading pages, "Professional Qualities," "Capacity to Teach," and "Background Knowledge," I used the same format to create consistency. The changes in colors were more important to me than a change in format. The formatting of the page and placement of objects on the page were selected because they provide a coherent path of readability for the viewer. There is also repetition of text on the three pages because the viewer can look at the

three headings in any order they please. Therefore, it is important that the website creator provides consistency of layout as well as text. The choice of text allows for the viewer to read it if they choose, and to assume they understand why the standards are grouped in that particular way if they have either read it once already or if they can deduce reason from the headlines. It is “nice” to look at a page and have very little change except for content. The placement and format on the three pages, then, provide a consistency where merely the text changes and it is not as though the viewer is looking at a completely different webpage. This concept stays with my goal of keeping it simple because it shows that consistency is important to me in my webpage design, and will translate into my teaching practice.

For the standards pages, I made them all uniform as well. I used a table to place the artifact and rationale headings with an empty column in between them because it looks more uniform if the table does not have lines with empty space. It is also important that the standards pages have the hyperlinks at the top of the page so that the viewer can easily navigate the page from standard to standard. I also chose to put the artifact on the right because not all artifacts require a formal rationale. It is a good idea to provide a rationale, regardless, but it is simpler for somebody to merely click on the artifact link and view the artifact than to look over the rationale first and then view the artifact. I also chose not to outline the padding around the cells because I think it looks crisper and cleaner if the artifacts are corresponded across the table with the rationale. As stated before, many people do not even read the text part of the webpage, especially with wordy rationale. Plus, when they are going to be reading text in the artifact, they are even less likely to want to read the text in the rationale. The space in between also allows for the paragraphs and line length to be shorter, which is more accessible than longer lines and paragraphs (Dodge 1999). Dodge recommends that the designer leave cell padding around pictures, but it is also important that you leave padding around texts so one text box doesn't run into another text box.

Buttons

I chose the rounded buttons because they are esthetically pleasing. The gray color fits in nicely with my color scheme for the rest of the portfolio, but still stands out enough that the buttons are noticeable. I also elected to blend the background of the button into the background color of the cell. This is important because the button should stand out because it looks nice and make the viewer want to click the button to see where it takes them, rather than standing out because there is a funny white or black box around it that doesn't seem to "fit" or "belong" there. On the index page, the buttons act as a map of where the viewer could go next. On the subsequent pages, the buttons act as a guide for the viewer and as optional headings for the viewer to find out more information. When I was searching through the button options, I felt that the round ended buttons fit into the portfolio well, and looked as though they complimented my personality. I also thought that they sent the subliminal message that I am a well-rounded and organized person. With the number of button choices, I thought that the oval buttons best fit my personality. As with the rest of my portfolio, I thought it important that my e-portfolio be kept clean and crisp. The rounded buttons do this. I tried some square buttons, but it looked too sharp and unapproachable, and I want my viewers to assume that I am an approachable and well-rounded person.

I could have chosen to only use hyperlinks, but buttons add to the page, and set apart the overarching headings from the individual standards. Since I chose to use hyperlinks for the standards, I thought it important to use buttons for the overarching headings. This sets them apart, and shows that although the standards fit under the headings, that the headings are also of individual and utmost importance. It gets tiresome to be looking at the same thing repeatedly, but with option of viewing through the buttons and then the other hyperlinks, it seems as though the viewer is having a different experience instead of merely travelling through a maze of hyperlinks that never seem to end. I chose to not use buttons for the standards, however, because I felt that it was important that the headings were separated from the standards, while

still remaining linked to one another. Sometimes people do not look at all of the standards, especially since it is not possible for new teachers to prove, for instance, that they engage in “career long learning” since new teachers’ careers are just starting (BCCT Standards). There are some standards that are more important, such as the ability to plan, instruct, and assess, as seen in standard five under “capacity to teach.” It is important that each of the standards are addressed, but it is helpful to have the buttons on the side so that the viewer can easily navigate the site and see that the teacher is capable. The buttons, ultimately, allow for ease of navigation to the more or less important parts of the portfolio.

Hyperlink System

I decided to leave all of my hyperlinks with the blue/purple color scheme because that is what people are traditionally used to viewing. This way, they know which ones they have looked at already, and which ones need to be looked at still. Because of the way that I have set up the I chose to have a “return to index” button on the bottom of each major heading because people get frustrated when they cannot return to the page that they initially saw. Ultimately, once the viewer has left the index page, he or she should not have to return to that index page. However, with a photo on the index page, one may want to return to the index page to compare that photo with the image of me in the video, for instance. Also, as I like to look at people’s “proof” before reading their self-description, in order to get a more objective point of view, I tend to think that sometimes people want to view some things that only appear on the index page multiple times. Therefore, I feel like it is handy to have the option of returning to the index page without pressing the “back” button on the browser multiple times.

I opted not to include a “back to the top” button on each of the pages. Although this is useful for particularly long web pages, the pages in my e-portfolio are not particularly long. It is important that the viewer does not become exhausted with scrolling and “give up” on viewing the web page. However, with this particular web page, it is not necessary to put “back to top”

buttons. As the webpage gets longer, I acquire more evidence for the portfolio and standards, and I maintain the portfolio, it may be necessary to add in “back to top” buttons, but as is, it is not essential. Also, the viewer should not need to return to the top of the page when they can return to one of the major headings. The navigation will get the viewer to the same place, and it is not necessary that there be “back to top” buttons anywhere on the page. I opted for a look that is not cluttered, and the interruptions on the page with the “back to the top” buttons would have distracted the viewer from the content of the page, which is much more important in this case.

For the pictures on each of the standards pages, I put the hyperlink for the original site under each of the pictures in extra small writing in order to keep website citation etiquette, while keeping the integrity of the page. I was tempted to merely make the picture the hyperlink, but opted not to because many people would not realize that the picture is the actually hyperlink citation. Also, I opted not to do so because sometimes people accidentally click on things, which would take them to cite and distract them from my website. Most people do not want to check out the citations, but it is important that the website is properly cited in order to maintain etiquette and not plagiarize other people’s work.

Font

I chose to use the Arial/Helvetica package of fonts because it is a sans-serif font. Bernie Dodge, on his website on webpage design, states that on paper, serif fonts are easier to read, but on the screen, “small text without serifs is easier to read.” Because of this, I chose to use the sans-serif font. I also chose to use the same font in this defense of my e-portfolio because you will be reading it on the screen, which makes sense since this is a technology course, not a “how to press print on a computer” course. I opted to use different sizes of the same font instead of using various fonts. I used the extra large font for my headings at the top of the page, and large for the subsequent subheadings. Furthermore, I chose the medium texts for each of the

rationales and hyperlinks to artifacts because they each belong under specific subtitles and do not need to be as large as the headings. However, to remain with the keeping it simple theme, I thought it best to remain congruent with font size and choice. Therefore, each of the pages have the same concept of size. However, I bolded the explanations on the main topic pages in order to draw some attention to the text since there are other more eye-catching elements on each of those pages, such as the buttons on the left side. Furthermore, I chose to leave the color of my font in black because I chose the other background colors to be pale enough that a black text color would show up the best. There are some people that have a difficult time reading black text on white, or white text on any color (a syndrome called Irlen Syndrome). Therefore, even those with this particular difficulty will be able to read the text on my webpage because of the background color. Any other font color seemed to distract from the webpage and made the text more difficult to read, and thus black was the best choice.

Types of Documents: Pictures

I opted to use a picture for standard one to represent my interaction with students. This file was originally a jpeg file, but I imported it into word and saved it as a PDF. This allowed me to add a title, include the file name as a tab name when viewed in internet explorer or Firefox, and it allows the viewer to be able to view the picture even if they do not have the appropriate add-ons downloaded. I used the "Paint" program to block the eyes out in the picture in order to semi-protect the students' identities. I merely used a white eraser application to erase the eyes on the students in order to keep the student's identity private. I also used pictures on each of my standards pages. It shortens the text line of the standard number and requirements. Using the Dodge principles, one is supposed to place images alongside the text because the pictures rarely take up the whole width of the website. I wanted the titles to be centered, and not to have a blank box in the corner, so I decided to put the same picture on each of the corners. Therefore, the viewer can view the picture from whichever side he or she chooses to and still

have the same consistency. I also chose the pictures based on the themes presented by the standards. I opted to size all of the images the same approximate size in order to keep consistency throughout the pages.

Types of Documents: Video

I chose to do the video in the particular format for several reasons. The video started off at nine minutes and six seconds. I decided to use the page turn effect to represent a changing of topic. Each of the page turns are used before the introduction of a new topic, for instance, in between the video portion of “assessing prior knowledge” and the introduction of the new topic of “hook/introduction.” I used the fade-out effect to transition from text screen to change from a text screen to a video screen. I limited myself to the two effects because it is best to limit the number of effects on one movie. As stated in class, the reason for this is to un-complicate the video editing process. It is distracting to have too many different transitions in the movie and it is important that the viewer is focusing on the content of the video and not necessarily on the editing of the video. However, if a video is not edited properly, that is also distracting. Therefore, I opted to limit the transitions to two, and to the particular transitions that I chose for the reasons that I provided above. Furthermore, I used iMovie to edit my video. I found it easier and more accessible than Windows Live Movie Maker. It was a very user-friendly program because it was easy to click and drag to edit clips, the audio stayed with the visual, but one could edit the sound individually once the video clip was cut. It was very easy to access the clips and to edit text screens, as well. When editing the sound on the video, I found that the transitions cut out one to two seconds of the audio. Therefore, I made both the audio and video one to two seconds longer, and then removed the audio where I wanted the audio to stop, but left the transition time with the visual aspects of the movie to ensure that the content was kept intact. The text screens on my video highlight the different aspects of planning and instruction. I chose to use a different font in order to set it apart. The font at the beginning and end were the same in order to create

bookends for the video. The font for the body of the text elements is colored yellow to highlight the text, and put in cursive writing in order to make it look professional and personalized.

Types of Documents: PDF Text Files

All of the artifacts are saved as PDF files. This was done because it was recommended that all files be saved as PDF files. I chose to follow this recommendation because it prevents people from editing my artifacts. I chose the various text documents, including semester, unit, and lesson plans. I chose these text files in order to demonstrate my ability to be versatile. I opted to not use the same type of document more than twice because there needs to be I left the PDF files in the same font as originally, which is a serif font, because I wanted to keep the original integrity of the artifacts. Please note, one of my text files also has a misspelling of my name. I chose to leave that anyway, even though I easily could have edited that with Paint or another editing program, but I opted to keep the integrity of the files and artifacts so they are an honest and ethical representation of who I am and what I have accomplished.

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Conclusion

Overall, I stuck with the KISS principle throughout this whole portfolio. Although I followed most of the recommendations from Bernie Dodge website and the PARC principles, as well as the recommendations made in class as per website creation, I also simplified it even more by removing most distracters and keeping my portfolio very simple, professional, and clean.