

# Overview of the Junior Writing Portfolio



## What is it?

Pepperdine University's Junior Writing Portfolio (JWP) is a General Education requirement designed to promote the development of written communication skills. **All** Seaver College students are responsible for creating and maintaining a portfolio of formal writing assignments generated in their first two years of university study. (Students who were admitted to Pepperdine prior to the fall of 2003 are not required to submit a portfolio.) In their junior year, students will submit these portfolios to the JWP Committee for evaluation.

## Portfolio Requirements:

1. All first-year students will receive an email about the JWP in their first semester at Pepperdine University. Students should then download and print the JWP information booklet from the Junior Writing Portfolio website at: <http://seaver.pepperdine.edu/ge/jwp/>
2. When students have acquired 60 units of credit, they will be automatically enrolled in JWP 301P. This is not a class—but to get credit each student must submit a portfolio for evaluation by the JWP Committee (composed of faculty members from across the disciplines).

Each portfolio must include:

- a. **A cover letter** (2 pages, double-spaced), that explains the choice of papers included in the portfolio (with a brief explanation of what each paper required) and describes the student's writing experiences during first two years at Pepperdine. Explain in your cover letter any modifications you have had to make to your portfolio in order to complete it (for example, if you have not yet written a paper in your major, you can explain this in your cover letter and describe the paper that you included in its place).
- b. **4 papers** written while a college student. (Do not include papers written while in high school, even if you received college credit for them). At least 2 papers *should* be from classes taken at Pepperdine University. You may make substitutions if necessary—especially if you are a transfer student. **Original papers with your professors' grade and comments are NOT required.**
- c. **Student Record of Portfolio Contents** form. This is included on the last page of the JWP informational booklet available for download at: <http://seaver.pepperdine.edu/ge/jwp/>. This form will summarize the details of all the papers included in your portfolio by asking you to list the title of each paper, professor and university for which the papers were written, and dates submitted. If we need to verify the authenticity of any of your papers, we will contact your professors using the information you provide on this form.

3. Specific Requirements for the 4 papers to be included:
  - a. Papers should be from at least 3 different courses. (Note: Each course in Great Books or SAAJ counts as a separate course.)
  - b. At least one should be in the student's major. (If you have not yet written a paper in your major, please provide a paper from a related discipline or another appropriate substitution and explain this in your cover letter.)
  - c. At least one should be research-based (meaning that you consulted and cited secondary sources).
  - d. One paper (but no more than one) must be from ENG 101 or equivalent (such as Great Books or Social Action and Justice Colloquium). If you do not have anything like this, try to submit a paper written during your freshman year so that you can demonstrate your growth as a writer.
  - e. The entire portfolio should include approximately 20 pages of writing.

**If students cannot meet these exact requirements, they should submit what they have and provide an explanation for any necessary modifications in their cover letter.**

4. Students should use the **MY CONTENT** feature of **BlackBoard** to store their papers until the time comes for them to submit their portfolios. Instructions are available at: <https://seaver.pepperdine.edu/ge/jwp/storingpapers.htm>

## Assessment of Junior Writing Portfolios

To evaluate portfolios, a committee of professors from each division will:

1. Read each portfolio.
2. Evaluate each portfolio according to the JWP rubric\*
3. Assign one of the following grades:
  - **PASS**
  - **PASS WITH DISTINCTION** – Students whose portfolios receive this rating will have this distinction recorded as a note on their academic transcript).
  - **FAIL** – Students who do not pass the JWP will be required to take an additional writing course, JWP 301, Junior Writing Portfolio Workshop, in order to pass the JWP requirement.

### **\*Note:**

It is the students' responsibility to choose papers that will demonstrate competency in the various categories being assessed. Therefore, it is important to recognize that papers which may have received a high grade in the courses in which they were submitted, may or may not receive high scores according to the grading criteria in the JWP Scoring Rubric. When choosing papers, students should keep in mind the grading rubric that will be used for the assessment of portfolios. Choose these papers wisely!

## Junior Writing Portfolio Scoring Rubric

Category	5	4	3	2	1
<b>1. Clarity/Style</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing engages reader and enhances his/her understanding of the topic.</li> <li>• Vocabulary &amp; sentence structure are sophisticated and appropriate for the topic, discipline, and intended audience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing enables reader to understand ideas with little or no re-reading.</li> <li>• Vocabulary and sentence structure are adequate, especially for discipline, but may lack sophistication.</li> <li>• Writer avoids redundancy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing requires reader to frequently re-read in order to understand ideas or writing is so confusing that reader fails completely to understand ideas.</li> <li>• Simplistic word choice limits description and/or expression.</li> <li>• Redundancies distract and confuse reader.</li> </ul>		
<b>2. Organization/ Fluidity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing clearly demonstrates an effective pattern of organization that facilitates the reader's understanding.</li> <li>• Papers have an effective beginning, sophisticated development, and thoughtful conclusion.</li> <li>• Writer employs clear and appropriate transitions.</li> <li>• Paragraphs reflect appropriate and mature levels of thought and development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing follows an appropriate pattern of organization.</li> <li>• Overall unity and coherence are adequate.</li> <li>• Some connections and transitions may be unclear.</li> <li>• Paragraphs reflect adequate levels of thought and development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing's overall structure lacks coherence.</li> <li>• Organization of ideas may be confusing.</li> <li>• Transitions are awkward or absent.</li> <li>• Insufficient development of paragraphs. Poorly developed.</li> </ul>		
<b>3. Explanation/ Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main points clearly stated and well advanced.</li> <li>• Statements substantially supported with compelling evidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main points adequately stated.</li> <li>• Statements sufficiently supported with relevant evidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main points not clearly stated.</li> <li>• Statements insufficiently supported or supported with irrelevant evidence.</li> </ul>		
<b>4. Critical Thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insightful, well-articulated analysis, synthesis, and critique of the subject.</li> <li>• Sustains a well-focused analysis, connecting ideas in a sophisticated and logical manner.</li> <li>• Thoughtfully considers multiple viewpoints/positions where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cogent, clear analysis, synthesis, and critique of the subject.</li> <li>• Connects ideas logically.</li> <li>• Identifies multiple viewpoints where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superficial and/or poorly articulated analysis of subject.</li> <li>• Fails to connect ideas logically.</li> <li>• Ignores or superficially evaluates multiple viewpoints.</li> </ul>		
<b>5. Research Techniques</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adeptly uses appropriate materials from a variety of resources to support ideas.</li> <li>• Consistently employs a standard documentation style.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequately uses appropriate materials from a variety of resources to support ideas.</li> <li>• Employs a standard documentation style with few errors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fails to select and synthesize appropriate resources.</li> <li>• Makes significant errors in documentation style.</li> </ul>		
<b>6. Mechanics /Usage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sophisticated use of grammatical conventions.</li> <li>• Writing is virtually free from the kinds of errors that distract from meaning and readability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammatical structures are generally appropriate, although not necessarily perfect.</li> <li>• Occasional errors may distract from meaning and readability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammatical errors are so obtrusive that readers are seriously distracted by them.</li> </ul>		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

### Student Record of Portfolio Contents

Please complete this form and submit with your portfolio. Attach copies of the assignments, if available.

	Title of Paper	Course Title/Number	Professor/University	Date Completed	Research-Based? Yes/No
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					

#### **For Office Use Only**

*Please circle Yes or No:*

- Yes/No      Papers are from at least 3 different courses
- Yes/No      At least one is in the student's major
- Yes/No      At least one is research based
- Yes/No      One paper (but no more than one) is from ENG 101 or equivalent (such as Great Books or Social Action and Justice Colloquium)