

Online Portfolios Guidelines for MSLIS Students

March 30, 2026

To be implemented from Fall 2026

PORTFOLIOS

Preamble and Rationale

A candidate for the MSLIS degree is expected to develop an online Portfolio as a culminating non-credit requirement for the degree completion. This step is essential to allow graduating students to take stock of their coursework through the program; draw connections between their academic accomplishments, knowledge and skills acquired through the program, professional competencies set by ALA, and expectations of the job market. Creating this Portfolio will also help students practice the development and presentation of professional online materials, which will prove useful in their job searching endeavors and transition into the professional career. Finally, it will allow them to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the field and improve their technology-related skills.

Timing of Portfolio Development

There is no one right way to build your Portfolio. Some students may wish to start building it from the first semester; other students may wait until the beginning of the last semester to do so. There are pros and cons to each approach. The latter does not give you much time for fine-tuning, editing, consulting with your advisor, etc. On the other hand, you have a better idea of the totality of your coursework and are in a better position to select the most representative artifacts. The former gives you a lot of time for polishing your project, but you may find yourself revising and replacing artifacts with more representative ones as you progress through the program. With this knowledge, you may want to find a golden medium and start your Portfolio at the beginning of your last year in the program.

Public or Private Access

Since Portfolio is an educational requirement, it is not required that it be in the public domain. Your advisor should have temporary access to it for evaluation purposes. However, many graduates choose to put it in the public domain if they would like this online Portfolio to function as their job searching dossier. The decision on whether to have this site in the public domain is that of the student.

Other Uses

Anonymized and/or aggregated material from student Portfolios may be used by the program for the purposes of ALA accreditation as part of the systematic review and self-study. For example, they can be used to highlight exemplary student work and provide

illustrations of how successfully students have developed the competency areas set by the program. The program may reference portfolios residing in the public domain in its reports.

Faculty Supervision and Evaluation

Portfolios will be evaluated by students' academic advisors. As such, students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisors in the process.

Technological Platform

You can use any online platform of your choice, including but not limited to Google Sites, Word Press, Wix, Canva, Drupal, Digation, etc. Students can also use such platforms as Padlet and Pearltrees to organize their material. Be mindful that you will want to have access to your portfolio after graduation if you intend to use it for employment and job searching purposes. Important: make an informed decision about which platform to use and inquire into the privacy, data mining practices of the provider, and its reputation, longevity, and sustainability.

Portfolio Content and Components

Please note that you may add other elements as needed and as warranted by the requirements of your job searching and projected interviewing if you intend to use it in job searching.

1. **Introduction.** Introduce yourself in a brief paragraph, by including professional and personal characteristics that you consider appropriate. This description should be written with the assumption that a potential employer might read it, in a non-specialist language, avoiding jargon and confusing terminology. Some individuals also choose to film a video introduction in lieu of or in addition to a written paragraph. It is quite common to have a photograph accompanying your professional sites. However, it is at your discretion and not mandatory.
2. **Statement of Educational and Professional Goals and Aspirations.** Think of a short list of the most important professional goals and aspirations. You can list the types of libraries and information and cultural heritage organizations in which you'd like to work; professional positions that you aspire to hold; personal achievements that you'd like to come to fruition in the near future; professional service roles that you'd like to assume, and so on. You can enter those in a separate section or embed them in your introductory paragraph. You can present them as a narrative or as a bulleted /numbered list. The choice is yours.
3. **Résumé.** Develop a professionally formatted résumé, suitable for easy and ongoing updates. Preparing your résumé, keep a few things in mind:
 - a. Résumés are relatively stable documents; you change nothing or little in your résumé submitted for different jobs (at most, you reshuffle the order

of sections); what will change with every application is a cover letter, not your résumé. Your cover letter will highlight specific sections in your résumé relevant to the job description and draw connections between the job requirements and the skills listed in your résumé. Invest in developing a carefully crafted and professionally looking résumé.

- b. Résumés for public libraries may be limited to one page although, if you have had a long career, they can be longer. Résumés for academic and research libraries do not have to be limited to one page. Résumés for corporate settings should be limited to one page for entry-level positions. Corporate postings rely less on cover letters and pay more attention to the specific skills in the résumé itself.
- c. Be safe online! If your résumé is in the public domain, do not list your personal address, email, and phone numbers. You can list those on résumés sent to specific known employers as part of the hiring process.
- d. Guidance in this section is suggestions only. There is more than one right and successful way to compose an effective résumé.
- e. Consider including the following sections in your résumé:
 - Highlights (Summary) of qualifications
 - Education (in reverse chronological order, starting with your MSLIS)
 - Employment Experience (or Volunteer Experience if you have no work experience)
 - Relevant coursework in your MSLIS (brief listing with links pointing to sections in your online Portfolio)
 - Skills: divide them into sections (e.g., General/Transferable; Technology; and LIS-specific)
 - Professional membership (very important; shows your commitment to ongoing professional development)
 - Publications and Presentations (if applicable)
 - Awards and Honors (if applicable)
 - Knowledge of World Languages (if applicable)
 - Do not list References on the résumé residing in the public domain; if you're sending your résumé to a specific known employer, it is ok to add references to your résumé.

4. Representative Artifacts of Your Work

- a. **How many assignments should you include in your Portfolio?**
 - You're required to share one assignment from each core course (LSC551, 553, 555, and 557). You may share more if you'd like.
 - You should share assignments or projects from five of your elective courses (one per course).
 - Try to provide a good number of artifacts for your advisor (and potential employer) to have an impression of your accomplishments and skills, without overwhelming your

- reviewer with too much information. Sometimes, less is more.
- You should have nine (9) entries in your Portfolio: four for core courses and five for electives. These will be evaluated by your advisor.
 - You may include more artifacts to make your Portfolio complete for job-seeking purposes. See section 5 below.
- b. **How should you choose artifacts to include?**
Include assignments and projects that you think allow you to put your best foot forward and showcase your work in the best light; choose projects highlight your unique skills, demonstrate your professional growth, stand as proof of your creativity, demonstrate your technical skills, etc. Do not share assignments or projects that you do not feel comfortable sharing; be careful with sharing too personal reflections and other personal information that could have been part of your assignments. If your assignment did not score a particularly high grade, consider revising it before including it in your Portfolio. Do not share your grades or instructor's comments on your projects. Share polished, edited, presentable artifacts.
- c. **What about group projects and your author's rights?**
Sharing textual documents (e.g., papers, lesson plans, program plans, and so on), consider sharing them as pdf files. Consider adding the copyright symbol with your name and date, as well as a clear disclaimer that allows for your intellectual property protection and specifies restrictions on use). As an alternative to copyright, you may allow for more open sharing of your work by applying a Creative Commons license to it. While sharing group projects that include images or videos of other group members, ask them for written consent (e.g., via email). For written documents (e.g., papers), which result from group projects and have multiple authors, ask your co-authors about sharing as a courtesy gesture.
- d. **How should you format your entries?**
- Provide the course title (you may omit the number because it does not mean much to the outside reviewers)
 - Indicate if it's core or elective
 - Add a one-sentence description of the assignment/project.
 - Mention two-three most important things that you learned in the process
 - Mention specific skills that you've acquired in addition to lessons learned
 - In one sentence, link this assignment explicitly to one or more [professional competencies](#) prioritized by the program. Describe how your work aligns with the competencies. You do not have to link each artifact to all competencies. Choose whatever is

- relevant.
- Upload or link to the actual artifacts.

5. **Additional Optional Sections**

You may have additional sections in your Portfolio. These could be other assignments not included under 4-a. You do not have to artificially separate these assignments from those listed under 4-a because it may ruin the layout and structure of your website. However, if you have both mandatory and optional assignments, please mark your mandatory assignments with an asterisk (*). In this way, your advisor will not evaluate those. These may be projects that you did as part of your Graduate Research Assistantship work (get approval from your supervisor as some are confidential and protected by IRBs). These may also be projects completed as part of your practicum, internship, or professional work (consult with your work supervisors on whether this sharing is appropriate and, if yes, what rules should be followed while sharing). You may consider sharing some hobbies and creative endeavors. Optional sections may be commented on but will not be formally evaluated.

Procedure

1. Students may begin building their portfolio at any point during their program but no later than the second last semester in the program. Students should have the chance to take stock of the assignments completed in the program and choose the best and most suitable for showcasing in portfolios. We advise that students not start the process of portfolio development last minute, i.e., in their very last semester in the program.
2. Portfolios are not about getting it right or wrong; it is about producing the best version of your professional online presence. As such, it is an iterative process and entails back and forth communication between the student and their advisor.
3. Students are expected to complete a portfolio preparation workshop. The workshop will include a prerecorded part and a follow-up Zoom session wherein faculty members will answer student questions. Faculty may invite recent alumni to share their experience with portfolios, subject to alumni availability. Students may take this workshop at any time during their program but no later than the second last semester in the program. This should be done before submitting a letter of intent(see #4).
4. Students should submit a letter of intent (through the Google Form [link]) to complete their graduation portfolio no later than week four in the second last semester before graduation.
5. The first draft of the portfolio should be submitted to the student's academic advisor no later than week 4 of their last semester in the program. The advisor will send their feedback back to the student within the two weeks from the submission date.

6. The student is expected to implement suggested revisions promptly and send the final version of the portfolio to their advisor no later than week 7. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of advisors. Students are kindly asked to consider that their advisors may have more than one portfolio to evaluate and, if possible, to turn in their first draft sooner than required.
7. Advisors will take up to two weeks to evaluate portfolios and produce a summary report. Most students will therefore receive the “pass” grade by week 9 of their last semester in the program. The remaining weeks in the program will be reserved for resolving cases that did not go to plan.

EVALUATION

Num	Criterion	Points
1	Introduction and Statement of Professional Goals	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
2	Résumé	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
3	Artifact 1 (551)	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
4	Artifact 2 (553)	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
5	Artifact 3 (555)	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
6	Artifact 4 (557)	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
7	Artifact 5 Elective	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
8	Artifact 6 Elective	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
9	Artifact 7 Elective	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
10	Artifact 8 Elective	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
11	Artifact 9 Elective	Pass/Not Yet/Fail
12	A short reflective paragraph on how your coursework contributed to the goals of your professional development (no more than 250 words)	Pass/Not Yet/Fail

Each criterion will be evaluated based on the following guidelines

Present	Yes/No/Partially
Addresses all requirements for this section, e.g., complete	Yes/No/Partially
Well-written (free of grammatical errors and typos)	Yes/No/Partially
Shows user-friendly formatting (easy to read, access, navigate, open)	Yes/No/Partially
Shows an understanding of connections between the acquired LIS education, professional competencies emphasized by the program, and the requirements of the job market. Evaluating your artifacts, please make sure that you operate with the terminology of competencies chosen by the program, i.e., professional identity, management, information resources, information services, information organization, and technology.	Yes/No/Partially

All Yes	Pass
70% Yes and 30% Partial	Pass
All other scenarios on the first attempts are graded as “Not Yet” following the principle of cultivating the “growth mindset”; if Portfolios are revised and resubmitted without meeting the “Pass” criteria above, they can be graded as “Fail.”	Return for revision and resubmission with comments and allow seven calendar day to remedy the situation