Department of Special Education
Ball State University

Developing Your Digital Portfolio Website

The following steps will guide you through the process of developing your personal digital portfolio if you are using a Macintosh in TC 709. Slight variations may be necessary if you are using Macintosh computers elsewhere or using Windows computers.

Step 1: Beginning
Introductory sessions for beginning your digital portfolio will be held in TC 709.

Step 2: Download the Digital Portfolio Template
This step downloads the Special Education digital portfolio template documents to your computer desktop.

- Open a web browser—*Netscape* or *Explorer*.
- Go to **http://www.bsu.edu/spced**
- Along the left side, click on the link **Student Information**
- Browse the information available to you about our department. Locate—under **Digital Portfolio Template**—the link: <u>download the **portfolio.sit**</u>
- Clicking on that link will automatically download the portfolio.sit document to the desktop of the computer where you are working—either directly onto the desktop or into a **Download** folder on the desktop.
- A window **may** appear asking what Netscape should do with this file. If so, make sure that *Open Using Stuffit Expander* is selected, then click OK.
- Quit (from the File or application menu) the browser software.
- The computer has a program that automatically expands the compressed (.sit) portfolio.
- Locate both **portfolio.sit** and the **portfolio** folder in the **Download** folder or on the computer's desktop.

   portfolio.sit is a compressed image of the portfolio folder and all of its contents. Its only purpose is to compress the documents into a single image for web distribution. You will be working with the documents in the expanded **portfolio** folder.

Step 3: Save the Portfolio Documents
If you have your own iBook, you will probably be saving documents on that computer. Students working on a lab computer will work on the document on the computer desktop and then will move the entire folder to their iWeb space for storage. There is no need for any sort of data disk—zip disk or thumb drive.

Step 4: Explore the Portfolio Documents

This step introduces you to the documents in your portfolio folder.

Views

- Open (double click) the **portfolio** folder from your Zip disk and look at all of the documents. If you are viewing the folder with an icon view, experiment with the view options, as illustrated, to see the contents of your portfolio folder a different way.
- Double click on the file named: **index.html** to open the first page and view the different parts of the template through a browser.
- Click the blue arrow near the bottom of the index page to move to the next page of your portfolio.

Notice that you now have a two-part page. There is a frame of navigation buttons on the left to lead the user to the different parts of your portfolio. There are different pages that load into the frame on the right as you access different buttons from the navigation frame.

- Click on the various buttons; notice that the navigation frame does not change as the individual information pages load into the right side of the screen. Try all of the buttons on the navigation frame on the left. You can return to the home page by clicking on the **Home** button in the navigation frame. The pages that load into the right side of the screen are the ones that you will be personalizing. The navigation frame will remain as it is now. It needs no editing.
- Quit the browser software—Choose **Quit** from the Netscape menu or the File menu.
- Look again at the list of documents in the portfolio folder. All of the documents have extenders at the ends of their names—3 or 4 letter abbreviations. The images have either **jpg** or **gif** after their names. These are graphic formats that are "web-friendly." All of the other documents have **html** extenders. These files are the instructions that make each page appear as it does.

As you begin to personalize your web page, you will be editing these **html** pages, changing text, adding links, adding images, etc. It is very important that all content you intend to use in your web site be placed in the same portfolio folder.

RULE #1: **Place all new or edited documents into your portfolio folder before you establish any links or publish any documents.**

Step 5: Explore the *Netscape Composer* Environment

This step helps you begin the process of personalizing your portfolio.

- Double click on the portfolio folder to open it. Save often, especially if you are working on a longer document.

- Double click on the file **index.html** to access the first page of your personal portfolio. The web browser window should now show the portfolio template page titled ***Professional Portfolio***. (You should be in *Netscape Communicator,* not *Internet Explorer*).

Note: If your index file opened in *Internet Explorer* instead of in *Netscape*, first, choose **Quit** from the File (Explorer) menu to stop *Explorer*. Then use the tip below to assure that your document will open with *Netscape*.
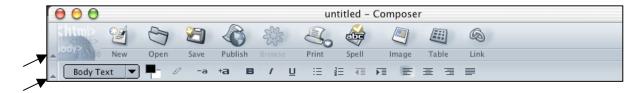
Tip: When using a Macintosh computer running OS X, there is a shortcut for opening a document in a preferred application. Do this: Locate the application's icon on the Dock. Drag the document's icon to the application icon on the Dock. When the application's name pops up, drop the document; it will automatically open.

You are looking at your *index.html* document in a browse mode. That is, all buttons and links work, and editing of the page is not possible. In order to make changes in the document you must be in the edit mode. Do this:

- Open the File menu and select **Edit Page....** A new window will open up which looks almost exactly like the page viewed in the browse mode except **Composer** is included in the page heading. An extra hint that you are in **Composer** is that you will see tool bars and/or formatting options at the top of the window.

A. Examine the Composer Tools

The Composer's environment offers basic tools directly in your view—on the toolbars. If you do not see these toolbars at the top of the Composer window, click on the tiny triangles along the top left edge of the window.

Now, move your cursor over each icon to discover its purpose.

B. Edit the Index Page

- Select the words **Your Name** by dragging across them. Type in your own name. Experiment with the toolbar buttons to modify the text color, size, or style. Then **Save** this edited page—from the File menu choose **SAVE**. It updates the original *index.html* file in your portfolio folder.

C. View Your Edited Page

- Click on the **Browse** tool on the toolbar to view your saved document in the browse mode.
- If you do not see your name on the page, click on the **Reload Page** button to view your saved changes.
- You now have two windows open for the same document—one for the browser and one for the composer. If you click on the yellow button at the top left of either window you will be minimizing that particular window. Minimizing shrinks the window, placing a tiny image of it near the right end of the Dock. You can easily switch between these windows by clicking the yellow button to "hide" a window and clicking the Dock image to display it again. Try this now!
- Each time you edit, save, and browse, use the minimize button to "park" unused windows on the Dock

Rule #2: **Edited web pages must be saved and reloaded in the browser in order to view the changes.**

D. Edit *home.html*
Now, you will continue editing by examining the page *home.html*.

- To continue, you should be on the *index.html* page in the **Browse** mode.
- Scroll down the *index.html* page and click the arrow to move to the second page of the template. This page is headed **Your Name** and includes a link to your e-mail and a Smiley Face picture. You will also see some guidelines you will use to write your own introduction later.
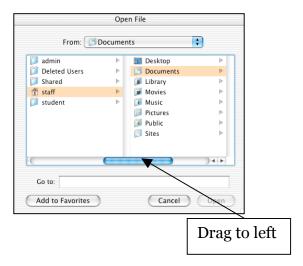
Do you remember when you previously browsed the portfolio and noticed that the right side of the page changed but the navigation frame on the left did not? Pages that have frames have a special property called a *frameset*. The frameset cannot be edited in the same way as you edited the index page. Even though you are loading pages into the right side of the frameset, the actual page that is open is the frameset page. So, when you are on a page with frames, like your page with buttons along the left edge, you cannot use **Edit page** like you did with the index page.

Different browsers, different versions of browsers, and other web authoring software offer various options for editing web pages that contain frames. Since you will only be editing pages that are html pages and not frame pages, you should be opening each html page that you wish to edit directly from your portfolio folder. In OS X there are two ways you can do this:

1. Choose **Open File** from the File menu and navigate to the portfolio folder on your disk. You may need to drag the blue scroll bar all the way to the left to locate your Zip disk on the desktop—see illustration. Open *home.html*.

        or

2. Drag the *home.html* document from your portfolio folder onto the *Netscape* icon on the Dock.

Drag to left

When the file opens notice that it opens in its own browser window without being part of the frame page. There is no navigation frame. Now, choose **Edit Page...** from the File menu to enter the Composer mode to customize this page. The red, dotted lines define a table format, which helps organize the page. The red lines do not appear when you browse the page—only when editing.

E. Edit *home.html*

• Highlight **Your Name** and replace it by typing in your name.
• Highlight the email address and replace it by typing in your e-mail address.

Use the following steps to activate your e-mail address:

• Highlight your e-mail address, and then click on the Link tool (the chain links) in the tool bar at the top of the window or choose **Link...** from the Insert menu.
• In the small window under Link Location, type: **mailto:*your e-mail address*** (no spaces)
• Click **OK**

• At this time, do not write the introduction of yourself. Later, you may want to write this introduction using your favorite word processing program, carefully edit it, and then copy and paste it into the web site—when prompted by your instructor. See instructions later for replacing the Smiley Face image with an image that you choose.
• **Save** this edited page. It will update the *home.html* file in your portfolio folder.
• Now, Browse the page to observe your changes. Note: Your e-mail link may not work on the lab computers because outgoing mail is not enabled in these browsers.

• Print this Smiley Face page so you have printed guidelines to write your introduction later.

Rule #3: **Always keep the latest version of each of your portfolio documents in your portfolio folder for easy access to editing.**

Step 6: What's Next?

You are free to modify your portfolio documents, personalizing them as you choose. However, the viewer should be able to easily access the following basic elements:

- A title page with your name, a picture, and an introduction to yourself.
- A page for your philosophy of education.
- Ten INTASC standards pages where you will place a) a dated reflection for each decision point, b) written rationales for each artifact, and c) links to all artifacts.
- Obvious navigation links so that the viewer can freely and easily move through your documents.

What other tools does *Netscape Composer* offer beyond the basics you have already seen? While in the Composer mode browse the menus for other features. For example, Page Color and Background enables you to "tile" an image or color the background of your pages. Learn about other features through the Help menu.

Step 7: Publishing Your Portfolio to the Web
Publishing places your portfolio to the web so others can view it. Publishing is, in effect, the process of "turning it in." Your instructor will evaluate the completed assignment by accessing it on the web. Since many of you are saving to your iWeb space, you will submit the address (URL) of your digital portfolio when it is time to turn it in. Those working on their own computers should be prepared to publish to their iWeb account. Until then, continue working on your portfolio documents, until you are instructed to submit your URL.

The group instruction ends here. The remaining instructions provide information for you as you work on your portfolio documents at a later time.

To view your published portfolio use the following address:
        http://*username*.iweb.bsu.edu/portfolio.index.html

Step 8: Your Digital Portfolio Revisited
The following sections will guide you in returning to add portfolio materials in the future.

A. Editing INTASC Standards Pages—Writing Reflections

Locate the specific html document—numbered by standard—from the portfolio folder on your Zip disk. Open it in *Netscape,* choose **Edit page...** from the File menu, write and date your reflection, and then **Save** the changes.

B. Editing INTASC Standards Pages—Adding Artifacts

In your initial experiences with editing your portfolio, you edited pages that were already in the portfolio folder—adding your introduction, your reflections on the INTASC standards, and maybe your philosophy of education. You will be returning to your portfolio to add text documents, scanned documents, digital images, *PowerPoint* presentations, or perhaps even sound files or digital video as artifacts that demonstrate your proficiency with each of the INTASC standards. It is beyond the scope of this document to teach you how to scan documents or photographs or how to take digital images. However, when you have prepared artifacts to include in your portfolio, use the following guidelines:

- Photographs or graphic images should be in a **gif** or **jpg** format for web viewing—use **jpg** for photographs and **gif** for all other images.
- Text documents (previously typed) should be saved as **pdf**, **html** or **web page**, or, preferably, can be copied and pasted directly into the appropriate standards page—much like you typed the text for your introduction or your reflections.
- Previously prepared documents can also be scanned, saved in a **gif** format, and included as part of your portfolio.
- All new portfolio documents should be named with all lower case letters with no spaces included in their filenames.
- Place new files into your portfolio folder and publish, as before.

C. Creating a PDF Document from any Artifact

The pdf format is "portable document format," a cross-platform document format that displays your documents **exactly** as you have created them, regardless of the software used to create them. *Adobe Acrobat Reader* (Mac or PC—free to download from the Internet) can open any pdf document.

The Mac OS X system has a built-in option to turn any document into the pdf format. To do this, first have the document open. Then initiate printing. When the Print dialog box appears notice the **Save As PDF…** box at the bottom as illustrated.

Click this button to open a save box where you can name the document and select the location to save. Be sure to use the ".pdf" extender on the pdf document name or users of other computers or systems may not be able to view it. Place the pdf document in your portfolio folder. Create a link on the appropriate page, save, and publish.

D. Editing INTASC Standards Pages—Making Links to the Artifacts

In order for you to view your new artifacts in the browser they need to be linked to the particular page from which you wish them to be accessed. For example, let's say that you have a document, named *lessonplan2.html* that you have placed in the portfolio folder on your computer. Perhaps it is an artifact for INTASC Standard 8. You will have to place a link on the Standard 8 html page in order for the viewer to be able to click on a link to see the lesson plan document. Review **Rule#1**!

1. Making a link to an html/pdf document on your disk

- First, open the INTASC html document in which you would like to place a link, from your portfolio folder.
- Choose **Edit page** from the File menu.
- You can designate specific text that you wish the user to click on to see your artifact. For example, "*You can examine a **lesson plan** on pond life that I prepared for a science class.*" The reader will notice that if they click on the words *lesson plan* they will be directed to the lesson plan document.
- Add the text that you would like to use to link to your new artifact. Typically, the text will be a part of the rationale you write to justify the artifact's placement on that particular INTASC page. Highlight only those exact words that you would like to serve as a link. (There is already text placed on the INTASC pages for linking to an artifact. You may use this text or replace it with your own.)
- Choose the Link Tool from the tool bar or choose **Link...** from the Insert menu.
- The **Link Location** will be the actual file name you have given the document in your portfolio folder. **TYPE IT CAREFULLY!** Alternately, you could click on **Choose file...** and navigate to the document previously placed in tyour portfolio folder.
- Note: Be careful that the link contains **only** the document's actual name and not any additional text—no path name to that document.
- Save the edited html document.

Rule #4: **Publish the artifact document AND the edited html document—when you are ready to publish.**

Remember **Rule #1**, **Rule #2**, and **Rule #3**!

2. Making a link to a gif or jpg in your portfolio folder
The instructions in this section assume that you have previously prepared the images and placed them in your portfolio folder. Carefully note the **EXACT** filename of each image that you will be adding to your portfolio. Read each of the different methods, described below, to decide how you want to use the image in your portfolio.

- **To replace an image that has already been placed on a page**—like the Smiley Face—open the html page that displays the image, and choose **Edit page...** from the File menu. Double click on the image to "open" the **Image Properties** dialog box. Notice the URL for the present image. Simply type the

filename of the image you wish to appear in its place and it magically appears on the page! Save the edited html page—and remember **Rule #4**.

- **To place a new image on an html page of text**, click into the text at the place you wish the image to appear. You may want to press [RETURN] to provide a little space within the text. (The image will actually be spaced within the text as a giant text character and it behaves like text.) From the Insert menu choose **Image…** and the **Image Properties** dialog will appear. Carefully type the image name exactly as you have it saved in the portfolio folder of your disk. After the image appears on the page you may wish to press [RETURN] again to adjust spacing. If you want to add a text caption, type it now, and then save the html page. Don't forget **Rule #4**!
- **To make an image open in its own page**—perhaps it is large—create a text link like in the *lesson plan* example described previously, only the filename is the exact image filename, not an html document. When the user clicks on the text link, the picture opens in its own page. This works–except that the user must close the window to return to the last page viewed.

Note regarding images that you display on your web pages: Place meaningful text into the alternate text field when making links to images. This provides users, who are relying on screen readers, text that can briefly describe the image.

3. Making a link to a *PowerPoint* presentation
You may wish to include a *PowerPoint* presentation as an artifact for one of your INTASC standards. First, open the presentation and from the File menu select **Save as HTML…**. The software will convert your presentation document into a collection of individual files, all of which go together to deliver your presentation from the web. The saved folder and html document that result from the conversion are named based on the original name you gave the presentation. You will see a folder named: ***originalname_files*** and a single file named: ***originalname.htm***

- It is important that you publish these documents to the proper location in your web account. Place both the **folder of files** and the **htm** document **outside** of the portfolio folder—loose in your account! Why? You'll soon see why!
- Open the html document on your Zip disk from which you want to make a link to the presentation, enter the edit mode (*Composer*), and highlight the text that you wish to become a link to your *PowerPoint* presentation.
- From the Insert menu, choose **Link…**. Be careful here as there are some special steps you must take at this point. The name you type into Link Location must contain the complete path to the document:

  e.g.: http://www.bsu.edu/web/*your username/originalname.htm* (***originalname.htm*** is the name of the html document generated by the conversion of your *PowerPoint* document.

- Next, within the same Link Properties dialog box click on **Advanced Edit…**.
- When the **Advanced Attributes Editor** opens, at the bottom, notice two small text fields—**Attribute:** and **Value:**. The attribute field has a small button

that, upon pressing, reveals a list of attributes. Select **target**. Then, into the value field type: **_blank** (That is, the underline character followed by the word *blank*.

• Save and publish this revised html document.

• Now, access your portfolio through the Internet and view the *PowerPoint* presentation. This can be tricky because of the frameset that your portfolio uses. Because *PowerPoint* also uses frames, the presentation cannot be displayed within a frame like your other html documents can. If your presentation does not work, check that you published both the htm document and also the folder of files to a location loose in your publishing area and not in your portfolio folder. Also, do not place the htm document inside the folder of files. The path name that you typed may have an error too. Check it carefully!

Note: You may have noticed that *PowerPoint* creates an ".htm" document, not ".html." This is not a typo! Both extensions are "legal" for html documents, but are not interchangeable. When creating a link to an ".html" or an ".htm" document, be sure to use the exact extension on your document to create your link.

Tips and Troubleshooting

Remember the Rules:

RULE #1: **Place all new or edited documents into your portfolio folder before you establish any links or publish any documents.**

Rule #2: **Edited web pages must be saved and reloaded in the browser in order to view the changes.**

Rule #3: **Always keep the latest version of each of your portfolio documents in your portfolio folder for easy access to editing.**

Rule #4: **Publish the artifact document AND the edited html document—when you are ready to publish.**

To get additional help with all aspects of creating web pages in *Netscape Composer*, while you are working with *Composer*, from the Help menu choose **Help and Support Center** and then the section **Creating Web Pages**.

To "right-click" (reveal a contextual menu) on the Mac, press [ctrl]or [CONTROL] as you press the mouse button.

When experimenting with background colors and images for your pages, take care not to degrade the readability of text on the page.

To change an image size, open and edit the html page containing the image. Double click the image to view the **Image Properties** dialog. Click on **Custom** and check **Constrain** to preserve the image height and width ratio. If you "mess up," simply click on **Actual Size** to restore the original. These changes only affect how the image is displayed on the page and do not change the image stored on your disk. Other image attributes such as spacing and alignment with text are available through this same dialog box. If you are using many images, explore these options to present your artifacts in the best way possible.

To create a link to a published web site on the Internet—not within the BSU network—first use a browser to go to the exact page you want your viewers to have access to. **Copy** the URL—including the prefix; e.g., http://www.pagename. Return to the html page, in *Composer*, where you wish to place the link. Highlight the text, click the Link tool on the toolbar or open the Insert menu and choose **Link…**. Paste the complete URL into the Link Location. Save the html page and publish it as usual.

When including a previously produced document that has been converted to html, you should proofread the html copy carefully. For example, a text document written with *Microsoft Word* using a bullet format will display the bullets as accented vowels when converted to html. To fix this, just open the new html document in *Navigator*, choose **Edit page…** and type in any necessary changes.

To use symbols or special characters in text that appears in any html document, enter the characters while editing the html document. Open the Insert menu and choose **Characters and Symbols**.

Use TC 709 portfolio help services when you need additional help. Portfolio help hours are posted in the lab. Also visit the PT3 Digital Portfolio web site for updates on workshops and current portfolio issues.

   http://www.bsu.edu/web/portfolio