

Fall 2020

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Signature Assignment Introduction

You are required to create and maintain a General Education ePortfolio. For help in creating the ePortfolio, please see the "Info for Students" link on the college's [ePortfolio website](#) . On this page you will find tutorials that will walk you through the process of setting up your ePortfolio. If you want in-person help, you can sign up for an ePortfolio workshop on the same site.

The requirement for your ePortfolio for this class includes a paper and a corresponding reflective writing entry. The paper for this course is for you to write your experience of an "astronomy conversation" with at least three or more of your family or peers. Your paper and reflective writing need to be **separate** entries in your ePortfolio.

Timeline

During the course of the semester you will be asked to complete various parts of the ePortfolio Assignment. At this point I only ask that you are aware of the assignment and timeline for the assignment so you can be preparing. You will want to check the calendar for specific dates. You will need to complete the following throughout the semester.

- Plan for and schedule the conversation
- Have the conversation
- Write your paper and submit it for peer review
- Peer review a classmate's paper
- Submit assignment

Instructions for the Astronomy Conversation

Plan for and Schedule the Conversation

- Invite family members, friends, and/or other individuals to the conversation.
- Plan for the conversation to spend at least an hour on astronomy topics.
- Plan the topics of conversation in advance, however, be flexible during the conversation.

Have the Conversation

- The planned topics are to help initiate the conversation or move it forward if it gets stuck.
- During the conversation allow everyone to explore facts and opinions about interesting astronomy topics.
- Respect all opinions in during the conversation.
- Take notes, you will need to write about this later.

Write about the Conversation

There are really 2 parts of the paper, the astronomy topics and the social elements. For the astronomy topics make sure you do the following:

- Introduce the astronomy topic.
- Explain how it came up in the conversation.
- Provide relevant background about the topic.
- Describe what was said about the topic.
- You will need to cite sources for the astronomy topics.

The following social aspects also need to be addressed:

- When, where, and how long was your conversation?
- What planning process did you go through to prepare for the conversation?
- How well did the conversation follow your plan?
- Who did you choose to be part of your conversation and why did you choose them? (You do not need to use specific names)
- How did the participants feel about the discussion?
- What, if anything, surprised you about the conversation?
- What would you do differently if you had to go about this assignment again?

Instructions for writing your Paper

Introduction/Thesis

The introduction engages the reader. This is a good place to answer questions about preparing for the conversation (the first few questions above).

Content

The paper needs to be more than just answers to the questions posed. It needs to read like an essay and be an overview of your experience. Make sure you answer the questions above as part of your essay. In your paper, tell me the topics you talked about, but you do not need to give me direct quotes from all of the participants. If you have questions, let me know.

Conclusion

Wraps up the paper well. This is a good place to answer questions about what you learned, what you would do differently, etc (the last few questions above).

Formatting

The paper must be typed, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, and 10 to 12 point font (whichever is easiest to read with the font you select). Include your name at the top of the paper. The body of your paper needs to include three to five pages of text (not including figures, diagrams, etc.) and references.

Citing Sources

You must have at least three different sources. If you use any general internet source, like Wikipedia, follow their sources to the original research. Please cite your sources in the text, don't just list them all at the end. I want to know what information you tell me came from what source. The paper must have appropriate source documentation and in-text citations in some consistent format. Be sure to properly document your sources. Be careful about what internet sources you trust. Please use [reputable sources](#). If you need help finding sources, visit the library.

ePortfolio and Reflective Writing

This assignment must be posted on your college e-Portfolio and must also include Reflective Writing. The Reflective Writing must **not** be part of your paper, it must be a separate portion on your ePortfolio. Many students choose to write the reflective writing on their Physical Sciences page and then attach the paper separately. Things you should address in your reflective writing:

- What did you learn from this course or assignment and why do you consider it valuable? (for example, how might what you have learned affect future courses, your career, hobbies?)
- How does this course connect with what you learned in other Gen Ed courses? (for example, are there connecting concepts, similar study habits needed, etc.)

Please note that the reflective writing is **not** whether or not you liked the instructor, the class, or the assignment. Look at the questions above. How does/will knowing more or studying about astronomy affect you in the future? Look beyond the General Education checklist and see how you have benefitted by taking this course.

Grading Rubric

The paper will be graded on in three areas: Content, Format and Style, and References.

1. Content: The content of the paper is worth 30 points. To earn full credit you need to have a clear introduction, information that is factually correct, excellent details, demonstrated understanding, and an effective conclusion.
2. Style and Formatting: The style and formatting are worth 15 points. To earn full credit, The paper needs to be well organized, flow smoothly, and have correct grammar and spelling.
3. References: The references are worth 10 points. To earn full credit, you need to correctly cite at least 3 reputable sources. You will need to have references for each of the topics in the conversation. You do not need to cite references for opinions expressed during the conversation.
4. The ePortfolio and Reflective Writing are worth 15 points. To earn credit you must upload your Signature Assignment to your ePortfolio and your Reflective Writing must respond to at least one of the prompts above.

The following is the grading rubric that will be used to grade your final Signature Assignment.

Signature Assignment Rubric				
Criteria	Ratings			Pts
Content -- Introduction	5.0 pts Introduction is clear and engaging	3.0 pts Introduction is clear and somewhat engaging	1.0 pts Introduction is poor	5.0 pts
Content -- Information factually correct	10.0 pts All information is factually correct	5.0 pts Most information is factually correct	1.0 pts Many factual errors/inconsistencies	10.0 pts
Content -- Discussion of detail and demonstration of understanding	10.0 pts Excellent discussion of detail, and impressive demonstration of understanding	5.0 pts Some discussion of detail, adequate demonstration of understanding	1.0 pts Vague discussion of detail, unexceptional demonstration of understanding	10.0 pts
Content -- Conclusion	5.0 pts Effective conclusion	3.0 pts Adequate conclusion	1.0 pts Weak conclusion	5.0 pts
Format and Style -- Organization	5.0 pts Clear organization	3.0 pts Adequate organization	1.0 pts Confusing organization	5.0 pts
Format and Style -- Transitions	5.0 pts Smooth transitions	3.0 pts Adequate transitions	1.0 pts Awkward transitions	5.0 pts
Format and Style -- Grammar/spelling	5.0 pts Correct grammar/no spelling mistakes	3.0 pts Few grammar errors/few spelling mistakes	1.0 pts Incorrect grammar/many spelling mistakes	5.0 pts
References -- Sources	5.0 pts Sources are excellent	3.0 pts Sources are adequate	1.0 pts Sources are poor	5.0 pts
References -- Citations	5.0 pts References are cited correctly	3.0 pts Some references are cited correctly	1.0 pts References are cited incorrectly	5.0 pts
ePortfolio -- Paper Submission	5.0 pts ePortfolio link is submitted accurately. Papers are submitted.	3.0 pts Partial or incorrect submission.	1.0 pts Missing ePortfolio or Paper	5.0 pts

ePortfolio -- Reflective Writing	10.0 pts Reflective writing addresses one or more of the reflective writing prompts.	5.0 pts Reflective writing, but does not address the prompts.	1.0 pts Irrelevant reflective writing.	10.0 pts
				Total Points: 70.0

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