Student Guide to Using the Learning Portfolio
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Learning Portfolio – What Is It?

The Learning Portfolio is a powerful student-centered application for storing, organizing, reflecting on and sharing items that represent you. Within the Learning Portfolio you may include documents, graphics, audio files, presentations and any other digital files that reflect your own experiences inside and outside McMaster. You can also set your own learning goals; then follow and track your progress towards achieving those goals. You can then easily share your achievements, your knowledge and your reflections with faculty, advisors, potential employers or peers in the form of a presentation – which looks and acts like a website. You have full control over the content of your Learning Portfolio presentations, and can customize and create as many presentations as you like. You have up to 2 gigabytes of storage in your Learning Portfolio.

Accessing Your Learning Portfolio

To access your Learning Portfolio you must login to Avenue to Learn. Once you are logged in, click Learning Portfolio from the menu bar at the top of the page.

If you are within a course on Avenue, you can access your Learning Portfolio from the Learning Portfolio link at the top of the page next to Assessments, but be aware that the links at the top of your Learning Portfolio may appear different than those in the screenshots in this document.
Exploring Your Learning Portfolio Dashboard

The first time you enter your Learning Portfolio you will see a pop up window.

In fact, you probably clicked on the Close button right away. There’s a lot of text in that pop up, but it’s useful information you may want to review. Here it is again:

Your Learning Portfolio is a personal portfolio tool for storing, organizing, reflecting on, and sharing items that represent your learning. You can include documents, graphics, audio files, videos, presentations, course work, etc. that demonstrate your improvement or mastery in a certain area. You decide what items you want to include in your Learning Portfolio, how you want to organize them, and who you want to share them with.

You can create:
- Artifacts (individual items)
- Collections (groups of related items)
- Reflections (thoughts about your learning)
- Presentations (web projects showcasing your items and achievements)
- Learning objectives (plans for specific learning outcomes)

You can share items with others by giving them permission to:
- View an item
- Comment on an Item
- View comments from others
- Access an item
- View assessments from others
- Edit an item

You can use the Explore area to see what items other people are sharing with you.

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• View an item
• Comment on an item
• View comments from others
• Assess an item
• View assessments from others
• Edit an item

You can use the Explore area to see what items other people are sharing with you.

Once you’ve closed the pop up window, you can begin to work with the Learning Portfolio. The page you see (displayed below) is called your Dashboard. The Dashboard provides an easy way to upload files, make a quick reflection and see the items you’ve created in the last 60 days.

The What are you learning? prompt provides you a quick place to write a Reflection. If you want to upload a file (eg. a Word document) or other digital media, you can click the Add Files link, and drag those items into your Learning Portfolio. Your files are now considered Artifacts.

Along the right hand side are additional tools that enhance your Learning Portfolio. A Presentation is a mini-website, curated and created by you, that displays your Artifacts and Reflections. A Collection is a way to organize the items in your Learning Portfolio. You might think a Collection works like a folder on your computer, but it doesn’t hold the Artifacts, Reflections and Presentations
inside the Collection. The Collection acts like a filter to exclude any other items. For more information about Collections, see the section on Organizing Your Learning Portfolio on page 30.

Under the Add Other Items menu, you can bring in Course Results as Artifacts from your courses at McMaster, create a Web Document (in HTML format), add an audio recording or fill out a Form that becomes an Artifact in your Learning Portfolio.

Click on the Settings gear wheel icon in the top right corner to customize the defaults and number of items you will see on your Dashboard.

Within the Dashboard settings, you will be able to control how many items you see in your Newsfeed, set item defaults permissions and adjust your Sharing settings.
Adding To and Creating In Your Learning Portfolio
Setting Your Learning Goals

McMaster University is the only university in Canada that we are aware of, to have a tool embedded within their Learning Management System to assist you make your own learning goal(s) explicit, trackable and managed by you. You decide what learning goal(s) you wish to embrace. Additionally you can take any of the Undergraduate (and Graduate) Degree Level Expectations, which represent the threshold level skills and knowledge Ontario students must demonstrate in order to successfully complete their programs.

If you struggle with the idea of setting learning goals, The Student Success Centre at McMaster (located in Gilmour Hall, room 110) has a worksheet that will assist you in setting goals that are attainable, achievable, and manageable. For more information about setting goals, consult this PDF document about SMART goals.

http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/images/pdf/academic_skills/online-resources/smart_goal-setting_worksheet.pdf

The learning goals form will help you keep track of your personal learning goals, which often aren’t quite the same as those goals defined by your academic program. Perhaps you are a Humanities student who is interested in climate change, or a Software Engineering student who has an interest in poetry. How can you mix those diverse interests and connect your personal interests and your academic ones? Write a learning goal that encompasses those two interests. Your goals are yours alone - no one will see your learning goals, or your progress towards that goal, unless you share it with someone.

To begin setting your own learning goals, login to Avenue to Learn. Once you have logged in, locate the widget located in the top left hand corner of the screen labelled Set Your Learning Goals. Click the My Learning Goal link which will direct you to a form you can fill out to write out your learning goal and track your personal progress.
Notice that what you are doing when you are writing a learning goal is creating a form response **Artifact**. All Artifacts in the Learning Portfolio can be tagged with search terms, connected to other related artifacts, assessed, commented on by others (or yourself) and have reflections attached to them – so it makes them a great candidate to help you define whether you have met your personal learning goals. Each learning goal form response has two major areas, the Learning Goal and the Highest Achievement to Date.

Don’t worry about this learning goal being permanent – all aspects of this form are editable if you need to make a change. Your goals may change as you learn more about your subject, or something changes in your life that forces you to prioritize a new challenge or social cause. For more information about editing, see the section **Editing or Adjusting Your Learning Goal** on page 12. You may also want to keep all learning goals you set, rather than overwrite them when you have a change in goals, so that you have a record of how your experience at McMaster has changed.

When setting your own personal learning goal, delete all the initial text and type in your own learning goal. If you are having trouble writing your learning goal, see the linked document above for a learning goals worksheet, or alternately, you can attend a workshop on learning goals through the Student Success Centre.
The **Highest Achievement to Date** section is for you to select where you are in achieving this learning goal. Select **Not Started** if this learning goal might be one that you want to achieve, but cannot start until you know more about a topic, or develop a network of contacts in that area. For goals that you have already begun, or that are lifelong goals, select **In Progress**. If you are adding a goal that you have already achieved in your university life, (such as going on a MacServe trip or graduating first year) you could choose **Achieved**.

The third area is for **Comments** – these could include your action plan to achieve this goal or steps that have to occur before you can begin to work on this goal. It is important to note that if you share this learning goal with others, and you have written a highly personal note in this Comment area, it will be visible to whomever you shared the learning goal. If you want to have nothing appear in the Comment area, click in the box, you will see the full HTML editor appear, and delete the default text.
The area at the bottom of the form is for you to define the Artifact Details. This is how the learning goal will appear in your Dashboard, so it is important to edit this information. We suggest you keep the My Learning Goal part of the title – but add some more information at the end of the title. The **Description** will only be seen by you, unless you share this Artifact with another person.

Finally, you should add at least one tag, a word or phrase specific to your learning goal. This tag can help you keep related Artifacts organized. If the tag consists of multiple words, the tag should be enclosed in double quotes. Double quotes keep multiple word tags as one distinct tag. Click **Add Tag**, to attach the tag to the learning goal Artifact. In the next section, we will discuss different options for organizing your learning goals and adding other objects as evidence towards your learning goal.

When you are finished, click **Save**.

Once saved, you will be taken to an Artifact settings screen – the default values are typically fine. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select **Save and Close**, which will return you to your My Items page.

**Editing or Adjusting Your Learning Goal**

When you have achieved your learning goal, you will want to edit the existing Artifact to reflect this change in status. From your Learning Portfolio Dashboard, or My Items page, find the goal you need to change. From the item’s contextual menu (located under the
down arrow at the end of the Artifact title, select **Edit**.

Next choose **Modify Form**.

Alter the form items you wish to change, then choose **Save**.

**Tagging**

Tags are keywords or descriptive labels that you add to items to help categorize them. For example, you can tag items with course codes, subjects, topics, purpose, or status. In the learning goals example, we gave the learning goal a tag of *learning goal html*, your learning goal tag might be *learning goal volunteering*, or *learning goal climate change*. You can search both your own portfolio and items shared with you by tags. Throughout this
document we recommend that you use tags. We do this because how you use the Learning Portfolio for your own learning is up to you. However, if you use the Learning Portfolio with any regularity, you will find that your Dashboard and My Items pages can become very cluttered. Tagging solves this issue by organizing your Learning Portfolio Artifacts, Reflections and Presentations by topic. For more information see the section in this guide, Organizing Your Learning Portfolio on page 30.

**Adding Reflections to Your Learning Portfolio**

Reflections are a very important piece of your Learning Portfolio – they outline the thinking behind your Artifacts, as well as many other insights into your learning. Reflections are highly individualized, help you think through problems, which can help you identify how you learn best as well as accentuate your individuality.

To create a Reflection using the Learning Portfolio, you can click in the box with the What are you learning? prompt on your Dashboard and begin typing your reflection.

Remember to add tags to your Reflection in order to organize the contents of your portfolio. When finished, click Add to Learning Portfolio.
You will see the Reflection added to your Dashboard immediately.

Adding Files to Your Learning Portfolio as an Artifact

When you add a file to your Learning Portfolio, it becomes an Artifact. You can add several files at once to your Learning Portfolio, and then individually add tags to the Artifacts, or add the Artifacts to a Presentation.

An Artifact is any digital file that is added to your Learning Portfolio – it could be an AutoCAD file, a text file, a picture, a Word document, an Excel spreadsheet – the only restriction is on ASP files, EXE files, and many Javascript files. Also, any HTML file you create and add to your Learning Portfolio is also considered an Artifact. Additionally, any form response you fill in is also added to to your Learning Portfolio as an Artifact.

To add files to your Learning Portfolio, click Add Files.
Choose to upload files using the dialog box interface by clicking **Upload** or Drag and Drop files from your desktop to the area indicated in the Learning Portfolio Dashboard. Multiple files can be uploaded at one time.

To help organize your Learning Portfolio, add tags to all the uploaded files.

Click the **Add to Learning Portfolio** button to finish adding the files to your Learning Portfolio.

**NOTE:** You are responsible for any Artifact you add to your Learning Portfolio, which includes making sure you have cleared the copyright for the contents of the file. Additionally you may want to take time to review the Terms of Use, posted here:

Filling out a Form Response and Adding it to Your Learning Portfolio

You may have been prompted by your instructor, mentor or colleague to fill out a form and add it to your Learning Portfolio. Forms may be used to guide reflection, report on progress, or make note of an important event. The forms available to everyone are broadly applicable, and have been added to the system to help you write your learning goals and reflections, if you find you are having trouble. Only you can see your response to a form, unless you choose to share it with others.

To create a Form Response, click on the Add Other Items button on the right hand side of the Dashboard, then choose Form Response.

Then choose the form you wish to fill out – you will notice that some forms have a course name attached to them. These are forms created by your Instructor and may be specific to that course. To begin filling out the form, click the title of the form (in blue)
Click in each box next to the pencil to write a response to each question or idea.

You will have access to the full HTML editor, so you will be able to style, colour your text and add additional media objects from any website like Prezi, YouTube, Flickr, Pinterest or any other website that has an embed feature (for more information, see the Creating a Web Document Artifact section on page 20).
After you have completed the form, scroll down to the bottom and be sure to give the Critical Incident Questionnaire a distinct name – that way you can quickly identify and find this particular form response. Also, remember to add tags to further organize your Learning Portfolio.

When finished, click **Save** to convert this form response to an Artifact within your Learning Portfolio. You will then have the option to add an assessment rubric to this Artifact, or add this Artifact to a Presentation or Collection directly. Alternately, you can choose the **Save and Close** button.
Creating a Web Document Artifact

There are times when you want to create a piece of your Learning Portfolio directly without creating a file on your computer and uploading it to your Learning Portfolio. Creating a **Web Document** allows you greater control of how your content will appear and gives you access to the HTML editor.

To create a Web Document, enter the Learning Portfolio and click **Add Other Items** and select **Web Document**.

Before you can proceed to develop your Web Document, you have to give it a name – enter this in the **File Name** field. Then click on the **Content** box to begin to edit your web document.
You have two tabs in the Content window; the **Basic** tab has several options to control text styles and page alignments.

You also have controls for lists as well as a way to add tables, links and other media (labelled Insert Stuff). Under the Insert Stuff tool, you can embed any content from external websites, like Prezi, YouTube, Vimeo, Pinterest and many other social media websites quickly and easily without using the HTML editor.
You can also choose the **Advanced** tab to embed equations, change your text color and font size as well as many other options.

At the bottom of the HTML editor window you have five icons: Spell Check, HTML Code View, Preview, Full Screen and a manual adjustment of the HTML editor boundaries. If you have some HTML tagging skill, you are welcome to essentially rewrite how the page will look by clicking the **HTML Code View** button. Don’t worry, if you don’t know HTML, you can continue to type in the editor as if it were a Google Doc or Word document and the editor will create the HTML for you.

If you choose to edit HTML, you can click the **HTML Code View** button, and you will get a pop-up window. Be forewarned, Avenue may alter any potentially damaging code that you may enter. Write or paste your code in the window and click Update to save the changes to the web document.
Depending on the type of HTML you are adding it may not alter the Content window. In the case demonstrated here, it does, so you can see what has changed. Click Next to advance.

This next step alters the information about the web document you just created. In the name field, you will see the file name you gave this file, however, you can rewrite that here to be something different if you wish to change how the web document Artifact appears in your Learning Portfolio Dashboard. Add tags, to better be able to find this document later. When finished, click Save.
After clicking Save, you have a screen where you can perform additional tasks, including adding this Artifact directly to a Collection or Presentation of your choice.

If you do not want to perform these tasks now, scroll to the bottom of the page and click Save and Close.
Adding a Quiz Submission to your Learning Portfolio

If the Instructor of the course has allowed, you may be able to access your Quiz submissions and bring the results into your Learning Portfolio. Bringing your quizzes back into your Learning Portfolio allows you to attach your classroom learning to your own learning goals as well as an opportunity to reflect on how you can improve your studying for future quizzes.

NOTE: If the Quiz has not closed, you will be able to add the Quiz submission to your Learning Portfolio, but you will not see it in the Learning Portfolio Dashboard until the Quiz closing occurs.

To add a Quiz result to your Learning Portfolio, go into the course where you took the Quiz, then select under Assessments, Quizzes.

From the quiz list, identify the quiz you wish to add to your Learning Portfolio and from the contextual menu at the end of the quiz name, select Submissions.
On the Quiz Submissions page, you can click the button labelled **Add to Learning Portfolio** – this will add all attempts on the page to the Learning Portfolio.

A pop-up window will give you the opportunity to give the Artifact a new name and add tags to the item. When you are finished, click **Add**.

The process of adding the quiz results may take a minute or two. Do not close the pop-up window until you receive confirmation that the Artifact was created successfully.
Adding a Dropbox Submission to your Learning Portfolio

If the Instructor of the course has allowed, you may be able to access your Dropbox submissions and bring the submission and the feedback provided by the Instructor into your Learning Portfolio. Bringing your assignments back into your Learning Portfolio allows you a place to attach your classroom learning to your own learning goals as well as an opportunity to reflect on how you can improve future assignments.

NOTE: If the Dropbox has not closed, you will be able to add the submission to your Learning Portfolio, but you will not see it in the Learning Portfolio Dashboard until the Dropbox closes.

To add a Dropbox submission to your Learning Portfolio, select the Add Other Items button and choose Course Results.

You will see a list of your courses that you can choose from – not all of these courses will have Dropboxes enabled to allow you to take back your assignments and feedback. If you do have a course that allows you to import your assignments into the Learning Portfolio, select that course.
You will see all the course related activities that you can pull from this course – you will see the My Grades Results, which will be empty as final grades are delivered through Registrar’s Office. By default the system will also show My Competency Results, which is a tool that is not widely used across McMaster campus.

Check the checkbox next to your Dropbox submission and click the **Next** button to continue.
You can further customize how this Artifact (Dropbox submission) will appear in your Learning Portfolio by editing the name and adding tags to help you find the Artifact later. Click **Save** when finished.

You will return to the My Items page when you are finished with this step.
Organizing Your Learning Portfolio
Creating a Learning Portfolio Collection

If you want to keep your Learning Portfolio organized you will end up making use of Collections. Collections are groups of artifacts, reflections and presentations. They are like folders, except an item can belong to multiple collections at the same time. You can also use tags to set up Collections to automatically do your organization for you.

To begin creating your Learning Portfolio Collection, choose New Collection from options on the right hand side of your Dashboard.

Give the Collection a name and add tags to help organize your items in your Learning Portfolio. When finished, click Save if you want to setup the autocollection feature, or Save and Close if you will manually collect Artifacts, Reflections and Presentations.
Creating a Collection that Automatically Collects Objects Based on Tags

To automate some of the organization work within the Learning Portfolio, we suggest that you use consistent tags to help you keep things able to be organized. Throughout this example I’m using 1a06 as a tag.

Click the Add to Collection button to begin to setup a tag-based Collection.

Select Tag List from the options in the dialog box.
Give the Tag List a name, and enter the appropriate tag in the Tags In List field, and click the Add Tag button to add the tag to the Tag List. When finished, click Save.

You will see your Collection has an additional area added to the bottom of the screen. Click Save and Close to finish.
You will now see that the Collection has looked at everything in your Learning Portfolio and added a link to it in this Collection. Whenever you add a new item to your Learning Portfolio with the tag you’ve set to be automatically collected, you will see it also appear in this Collection.

This is useful for collecting everything that uses 1a06 as tag into one place to then later add to a Presentation and submit for assessment.

Organizing and Tracking Your Learning Goals

Once you’ve created your learning goals, you will need to organize them so you can better track your progress for your own goals. Use the same process as above to automatically collect items in your portfolio. I will be using learning goal html5 as a tag. Substitute your own learning goal tag instead of the example for your own use. The only difference is the tag. With multiple word tags, you will have to enclose them in double quotes, so when you are typing the tag into the tag field, you should type “learning goal html5”.

This makes it much easier to add items from your Learning Portfolio to Presentations that you can share with faculty, mentors, peers or family, or for your own use to track how you are doing at achieving your own learning goals.
Showing and Sharing Your Learning Portfolio
Creating a Learning Portfolio Presentation

If you have a person who wants to see what you’ve learned in University so far; that could be a parent, a sibling, a potential employer, a mentor or a friend. You will have to put together a Learning Portfolio Presentation to share with them. You may also be asked to put together a Learning Portfolio Presentation to submit in a class as an assignment. Think of the Learning Portfolio Presentation as a mini-website rather than a PowerPoint presentation.

To begin creating your Learning Portfolio Presentation, choose New Presentation from your Dashboard.

Give the presentation a name.
Add tags to make the Presentation easier to find in your Learning Portfolio.

Switch to the **Content/Layout** tab to begin constructing each page.
The first thing you will probably want to do is rename the New Page to something more appropriate for your first page. In this example I’ll change it to Introduction by clicking on the contextual menu and selecting **Page Properties**.

A pop-up window will appear to edit the page - rename the page by entering a new name in the Page Name field and click **Save**.
Optionally add additional pages by clicking the New Page icon.

Give the new page a title in the Page Name field and click Save.
To add content to each page, you have to add items already in your Learning Portfolio to each page. Make sure you are on the correct page to add the component to by checking the page that is currently active – you will be able to identify the page by looking for the bolded title in the Pages list. Additionally, the page title may also appear right underneath the label Content Area 1. Add Artifacts or Reflections to presentation by clicking Add Component.

Optionally select the Comments Enabled checkbox to allow comments on individual Artifacts or Reflections.

Click the Banner tab next. Edit the Banner Title to reflect your name. This is the text that appears at the top left hand corner of your page.

When finished, click the Theme tab, to select a theme to apply to your Presentation.
There are twenty one themes available to apply to your Presentation. Each theme is editable, so you do have the ability to customize how your Presentation looks. There are a few McMaster branded options, as well as several other options that may suit your needs. To preview the theme, select the icon at the right hand side of the screen. To select the theme, click the Select button.

Confirm you want to select this theme clicking Set Theme.
Learning Portfolio Layouts

The following diagrams show the different areas of the Learning Portfolio presentations, and gives you some dimensions if you wish to substitute your own images and color schemes. The following diagram is for a page layout with “2 Content Areas - Main Area First” and the Presentation Navigation as “Navigation as Header”.

This diagram is for a page layout with “2 Content Areas - Main Area First” and the Presentation Navigation as “Navigation before Content”. The dimensions are similar for “Navigation after Content”
Sharing Learning Portfolio Items with Other Avenue Users

The process for sharing within your Learning Portfolio is a key benefit of using the Learning Portfolio over other portfolio type services. You can share individual Artifacts, or a series of Artifacts embedded in a Presentation with faculty, mentors, peers or family. When you share an item, you can give individuals different abilities to edit, assess or comment on the item.

To begin sharing, you will have to click on the menu located under the down pointing arrow at the end of the title of the item you want to share. If you have more than one item to share, you should collect these items as a Presentation, and share that rather than sharing many individual Artifacts.

From the menu choose Share to open the Sharing Settings.
In this screen, you can make this item publicly available, as long as someone has the URL (or website address) for your Presentation or Artifact. You do not have to make items publicly available to share them. To share with an individual or group, you should scroll down to the Presentation Sharing List section. Click **Add Users and Groups** to begin selecting who you wish to invite.

You can search for the individual by typing their name in the Search for box, or you can browse everyone you are connected to and select them by clicking on their listing.
Then click the blue Add button to add that person to the list of people with which you wish to share.

You can further specify what the invitee is allowed to do with your presentation on the next screen. You can allow Avenue users to assess (using a Rubric shared with you by an Instructor), comment or edit the item you are sharing. There are options to control whether the invitee is allowed to assess, comment or edit the item that is shared. Click the blue Add button to complete this step.

Click Done and Send Invite to issue a mail to the person’s Avenue Mail account, and an invitation to their Learning Portfolio Dashboard. On the next screen you will be able to customize and add any additional information to the message. You will also be able to send an invitation to your own Avenue Mail to see how it will look. We do suggest that you set your Reply-To address and forward your Avenue Mail to your official McMaster e-mail account, so that any mail is not missed. Click OK to finish.

NOTE: if your instructor has a Dropbox setup to receive Learning Portfolio Presentations, you should not use this sharing feature to send your presentation to them, instead, go into the course, under Assessments, Dropbox, find the appropriate Dropbox folder and submit your portfolio Presentation For more information see page 47.

Sharing a Presentation Externally

The process for sharing a presentation to someone who does not have an Avenue to Learn account (which could be an external mentor, a family member or a peer at a different institution), is very similar to sharing with a person with an Avenue account. You could use
the same steps as in the previous section up until when you would add an Avenue user to the list to share. Instead, scroll a little further down and select **Click to share this presentation with an external user.**

The one drawback to using this e-mail invitation is that it is limited to viewing for only 3 days – then the invitation dies. If your intended audience does not view the presentation before the invitation expires, you will have to re-invite them to view the presentation.

**Making Your Presentation Public**

An alternate way to invite someone to view your presentation is to make the presentation public. To do this, choose **Share** from the contextual menu.
You will want to make the presentation publicly available by checking the box next to anyone with this URL below can access this item.

Copy the address next to the URL: by highlighting and copying (by either right clicking and choosing Copy, or using keyboard shortcuts).

Once you have the address copied, you can use TinyURL.com or Bit.ly to shorten the address making it more manageable to send in an e-mail to your intended audience.

**Submitting a Learning Portfolio Presentation to a Course Dropbox**

This part assumes you have a Learning Portfolio Presentation already created and ready to submit for grading. If you have already submitted something through Avenue’s Dropbox tool, the process for submitting a Learning Portfolio Presentation is very similar to submitting a Word document to a Dropbox.

First go into the course, and under **Assessments**, select **Dropbox**.
You may have multiple Dropboxes, or just one. Select the correct Dropbox for this assignment.

Click the **Add a File** button.
From the pop-up window, choose **Learning Portfolio**

Select the item from the list of Learning Portfolio items by selecting the radio button next to the item. You can also use the search box to search by tag, or by title. When finished click the **Select Item** button to begin the process.
Depending on the size of the Presentation or Artifact, it may take several minutes to add this item to the Dropbox.

Do not close or leave this window yet – when the process is finished the pop-up window will automatically close. When you return to the Submit Files window, click the **Submit** button to complete the submission process.
Once complete, you will see a screen that confirms your submission and a copy of that confirmation was sent to your Avenue Mail. The Submission Date is the same date that is applied to the Avenue Mail that is generated and the date stamp applied to the item which your Instructor can see.
Appendix A

Learning Portfolio/ePortfolio

Google Chrome Plug-In
Setting Up the Learning Portfolio Google Chrome Plug-In

The Learning Portfolio, or as Desire2Learn call the product, ePortfolio, offers a plug-in for the Google Chrome Browser which adds the ability to easily select webpages and import them to your Learning Portfolio. This way, you can bring external visuals and other web based resources into your Learning Portfolio as artifacts, which then can be shared with other Learning Portfolio users or added to presentations.

To use this functionality, you will have to use Google Chrome as your web browser. You can download Google Chrome at this website: https://www.google.com/chrome

Open the Google Chrome browser and use this link: https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/nclkkikkkkbeonmelolmhkjeeknhmiai

You should see a window displaying the Desire2Learn ePortfolio plug-in.

Click the blue ADD TO CHROME button in the top right hand corner of the new window.
A “confirm new extension” window will open. Click Add.

In the new tab that opens automatically, you will need to enter a server address. Replace “d2l.myorganization.org” with avenue.cllmcmaster.ca as the server address. Make sure the box next to Use SSL is checked.

Click Login. This will bring you to the Avenue homepage, where you can login as normal.
The ePortfolio icon should now be in your toolbar. This icon allows you to create a new link, file, reflection or screenshot and import the artifact directly into your Learning Portfolio.

Using the ePortfolio Google Chrome Plug-in to add Reflections and Artifacts to your Learning Portfolio

After you have installed the plug-in, access to it will appear in the top right hand corner of your Chrome browser window. Click login and then enter your MacID. Once logged into Avenue, click on the widget and a drop down menu will appear. This drop down menu allows you quick access to your Dashboard, as well as the ability to create a link, add a file to your Learning Portfolio, create a new Reflection and directly add a screenshot as an Artifact.

New Link

A link is an Artifact that consists of a link to a website. You might create several links to a series of websites that provide background information on your field of study, or perhaps you have an online presence that you would like to share in your Learning Portfolio without recreating all that content. Using a link is different than a screenshot in that you are guiding the viewer of your portfolio to an external website, where you do not have control over the content. Be aware that should the content change on the page you send people
to, you might have to reconsider the link. We suggest that you preview all links before you invite someone to view your Learning Portfolio.

Select “New Link” from the drop down menu. A pop up window appears to add the new link.

You must give the link a title. The title of the webpage is automatically input into the box but you can re-name it if you want to provide a more descriptive title.

You can choose to add tags (which help organize Artifacts), a description, or share your link by inputting information into the appropriate boxes.
The URL, or web address, you are currently on is automatically put into the URL to save box. If you wanted to add a different URL, you could input one manually or go to that page then select the “New Link” option from the drop down menu.

Once you are satisfied with the link, click “Add”.

A new window will pop up saying the **Artifact** was created successfully. Click “OK”.

New File

This process is identical to using the Learning Portfolio tool in Avenue to upload a file as an **Artifact**.

Select “New File” from the drop down menu.

A pop up window appears to add a new file to your Learning Portfolio.
Add a title for the new file. You can choose to add tags (which help organize Artifacts), a description, or share by inputting information into the appropriate boxes.

On your computer, locate the file you want to add to your Learning Portfolio. Drag and drop the file in the blue rectangle underneath File. Once the file has uploaded the box will turn green. Click “Add” to upload.

A new window will pop up saying the Artifact was created successfully. Click “OK”.

Articfact created successfully!
New Reflection

A Reflection is a type of Artifact that has one additional feature; it can be linked to an Artifact. This is useful if you have an essay as an Artifact in your portfolio you can create a Reflection that reflects on that essay – and the Artifact and Reflection will be linked. Reflections do not have to be linked and can also be created as standalone items.

Select “New Reflection” from the drop down menu.

A pop up window appears to add a new reflection to your Learning Portfolio.

. Add a title for the new file.

Enter any tags you wish to add to this reflection.

Enter your reflection in the Reflection field – any text formatting you need to apply can be applied later within the web version of the tool – this is intended as a quick reflection.

Choose who, if anyone, you wish to share your Reflection with. From here, they have to be Avenue users.

Click Add.

A new window will pop up indicating the Reflection was created successfully. Click “Ok”.

New Screenshot

Screenshots are the easiest way to import images into Learning Portfolio – they are especially useful to visually illustrate how a project has changed over time (perhaps documenting your web research), as well as allowing you to bring in visual information.

Select “New Screenshot” from the drop down menu.

A pop up window appears to add a new screenshot to your Learning Portfolio.
Add a title for the new file. A thumbnail of the website that you are on is displayed at the bottom of the new window. The title from the page you are on is automatically inserted into the title box.

You can choose to add tags, a description, or share your file, by inputting information into the appropriate boxes.

Click “Add” to upload to your Learning Portfolio. A new window will pop up saying the artifact was created successfully. Click “Ok”.

Add a title for the new file. A thumbnail of the website that you are on is displayed at the bottom of the new window. The title from the page you are on is automatically inserted into the title box.

You can choose to add tags, a description, or share your file, by inputting information into the appropriate boxes.

Click “Add” to upload to your Learning Portfolio. A new window will pop up saying the artifact was created successfully. Click “Ok”.
Appendix B

Learning Portfolio Glossary
The following is a glossary describing the terms used in the Learning Portfolio in plain English. Keep this guide handy when you are orienting yourself to the Learning Portfolio so you can use it efficiently, and ask questions effectively using the same terminology we use. As always if you have questions on how a function works, feel free to contact Avenue Support at: (905) 525-9140 extension 22911 or avenue.support@cll.mcmaster.ca.

- **Artifacts**
  An artifact may be a document, graphic, audio file, video file, presentation, or other form of digital media. It can come from within Avenue or can be uploaded to the Learning Portfolio independent of a course.

- **Collections**
  Collections are groups of artifacts, reflections and presentations. They are like folders, except an item can belong to multiple collections at the same time.

- **Dashboard**
  The Dashboard is divided into a number of customizable areas that provide a snapshot of your portfolio activity. You may change your Dashboard settings so that all or some of the following areas are displayed. The Dashboard can be considered your homepage for your Learning Portfolio.

- **Learning Portfolio**
  The Learning Portfolio is a repository for digital artifacts that represent your learning.

- **Form**
  Forms are pages created by an institution or instructor for collecting information from users. When you create a form you specify what fields it includes, what type of information each field collects, and whether a field is required. When users fill out a form it becomes an artifact in their portfolio which they can share, edit, and add to collections and presentations. Users can fill out a form multiple times and they can allow others to comment on or evaluate their entries. Because forms are structured, they provide scaffolding and guidance.

- **Presentations**
  Presentations let you compile portfolio items in a web project that showcase your achievements. Your presentations may have multiple pages and use different themes and layouts. Presentations provide a polished medium to demonstrate your learning and accomplishments.

- **Push**
  Push describes a method of pushing the Learning Portfolio Content to Users' Portfolios which enables organizations to provide examples and template Learning Portfolio items for students. Organizations or instructors can customize content in their own Learning Portfolios and then push out the content to courses or sharing groups. This enables you to provide better support, scaffolds, and generic getting started tasks for students.

- **Reflections**
  Reflections may be independent portfolio items or associated with artifacts, collections, or presentations. Associating reflections with other items helps other users see the relationship between the items and makes it easier to revisit your goals and assumptions later.
• **Sharing Groups**
  Sharing groups let you save the permissions you want a user or group of users to have so you may reuse them with other items. You can create sharing groups for individual users or for all users in a particular course or group. You can have multiple sharing groups for the same users that you apply in different situations.

• **Tags**
  Tags are keywords or descriptive labels that you add to items to help categorize them. For example, you can tag items with course codes, subjects, topics, purpose, or status. You can search both your own portfolio and others’ shared items by tags.

• **Themes**
  The look and layout of a Presentation is called a Theme. Students can alter and change how a theme is presented giving the user control over the look and feel of how their learning is presented.