CAREER SERVICES
SANTA MONICA COLLEGE
GENERAL PORTFOLIO GUIDE

PHONE
(310) 434–4337
HOURS
Mon-Thur: 8am-4:45pm
Fri: 8am–12:45pm

PORTFOLIOS

It is important to think about your portfolio from the very beginning of your educational experience, so you are not scrambling for content at the last minute. Portfolios demand a great deal of time and energy to create. Knowing that potential employers will see your work may help you think about classroom assignments differently.

1) **Content**

   At the beginning stages of your career employers would like to understand your thought process.
   We recommend for each project in your portfolio, you include (if applicable):
   - a brief summary of the project/problem you were asked to solve
   - the process you used to solve that problem
   - inspiration
   - material/color choices
   - consumer profile
   - problems/solutions
   - sketches
   - final work

   If you share a team project please clearly indicate:
   - Your role
   - The Team's role

   A **BRIEF** bio may be included on the final page of the portfolio, not to exceed six sentences.

   Senior portfolio example: http://www.adambookbinder.com/ab
   Junior: https://www.rachelbenderdesign.com/about

2) **Portfolio host sites**

   Some recommended Portfolio Host Sites include:
   - Cargo: https://2.cargocollective.com/
   - Square Space: https://www.squarespace.com/
   - Adobe Portfolio: https://www.myportfolio.com/
   - Wordpress: www.wordpress.com

   If an employer requests a PDF file of your portfolio, on each page please include:
   1) your Name, email and phone number
   2) Page numbers

GRAPHIC DESIGN PORTFOLIO MISTAKES TO AVOID:

1) **Too much work.**
   It's far stronger to have five quality projects showing five design pieces within it, than 20 average projects with 10+ design pieces within them.
2) **Not enough work.**
   Your work should tell a story. Avoid putting one poster here and two logos there. Show your work as projects.
3) **Contact details are hard to find.**
   What's the best way to contact you — and can your potential new art director or boss find it?
4) **It's not mobile responsive.**
5) **No captions, no context.**
   A picture may be worth a thousand words, but a picture coupled with some words is worth even more.

PORTFOLIOS EVALUATION

1) **Employers like to see**
   a. A branding project.
   b. A breadth of design work
   c. Showcase of your interests
   d. Any fine art skills: painting, ceramics etc.
   e. Self-driven design work
   f. Innovation

2) **Evaluation criteria:**
   a. Did you do good research
   b. Was it inspiring
   c. How did you apply your research and inspiration
   d. Was your product/solution creative.

3) **Employers will look at**
   a. Your skill and your potential
   b. Your ability to summarize your creative processes from inspiration to sketching to execution. The journey from inspiration to product informs the marketing strategy
   c. Research skills
      i. Google is not enough
      ii. What are subcultures up to, can it be commercialized?
      iii. Mood boards
      iv. Tumblr
      v. History of design classes good to have
      vi. Can you use social disparate trends to forecast future trends?
   d. Point of view - diversity of thought
   e. Critical thinking