

Reflection

Angel Tanoh

Old Dominion University

IDS 493: Eportfolio Project

Professor Virginia Tucker

11 October 2025

Introduction

My name is Angel Tanoh, and I'm majoring in Cybersecurity. The goal of my e-portfolio is to bring together everything I've learned throughout my degree and show how my experiences connect to my long-term professional goal of becoming a cybersecurity consultant. I want my portfolio to reflect both my technical growth and my personal development. How I've learned to think critically, communicate effectively, and apply security principles in real-world situations.

The e-portfolio isn't just a collection of assignments for me. It's a story that explains where I started, what I've learned, and where I'm going next. For now, the two main artifacts I'm including are a group photo from the end of my internship and my work using the NIST cybersecurity framework during that same internship. Together, they represent both the human and technical sides of cybersecurity.

The group photo shows collaboration, teamwork, and professional experience. The NIST framework, on the other hand, reflects the structure and discipline behind how cybersecurity problems are solved in the real world. When combined, these two artifacts tell a story of growth from being a student learning theories in class to becoming a professional applying industry standards and working directly with clients.

My portfolio's goal is to show employers that I'm not just learning cybersecurity; I'm living it. Every experience, reflection, and artifact shows that I can integrate my technical training with professional communication which is the foundation of a strong cybersecurity consultant.

Integration and Purpose of My Portfolio

The idea of e-portfolios being “agents of integration.” That concept really connected with me because, throughout college, I’ve often felt like my work was scattered across classes: a paper here, a lab report there, a project somewhere else. But through this portfolio, I’m starting to see how it all connects.

Cybersecurity is a field that demands integration. It’s not enough to be strong technically; you also have to be ethical, analytical, and collaborative. My portfolio helps me show how those skills work together. The group photo from my internship represents my ability to collaborate in real-world environments, while the NIST framework work I did demonstrates my ability to apply structured methodologies to manage risk and protect systems.

During the internship, I saw firsthand how cybersecurity consulting isn’t just about identifying vulnerabilities, it’s about understanding the client’s business, communicating risks clearly, and applying frameworks like NIST to ensure consistency and compliance. This integration of theory and practice is what my portfolio highlights. It’s proof that my education at Old Dominion University has prepared me to connect classroom knowledge with professional work.

Skills and Meaning Behind My Artifacts

Both of my chosen artifacts, the internship group photo and the NIST framework application, capture two important sides of my growth.

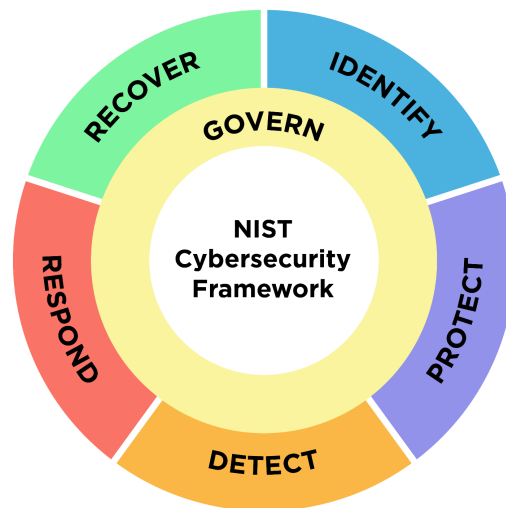
The **internship group photo** is more than just a picture. It represents the teamwork,



communication, and professionalism that I

developed during my time working with a real client. That internship taught me that cybersecurity isn't done in isolation. Every issue we faced required discussions, planning, and coordination. The picture reminds me of the trust and connection built within our team, something that's just as valuable as technical skill.

Then there's the **NIST cybersecurity framework**, which stands for the structured, technical side



of what I learned. We used NIST

constantly during the internship to assess risks, set controls, and create response strategies.

Applying NIST taught me how to think like a consultant analyzing, documenting, and justifying each step in a cybersecurity process.

These two artifacts complement each other perfectly. The photo shows the human side of cybersecurity, and NIST represents the technical rigor that supports it. Together, they demonstrate the balance that's necessary for success in consulting strong technical expertise backed by collaboration and communication.

When I include them in my portfolio, I plan to pair each artifact with a reflection explaining how it contributed to my growth. For the photo, I'll reflect on how teamwork helped me improve my communication skills. For the NIST framework, I'll focus on how it deepened my understanding

of cybersecurity structure and compliance. This combination shows that my skills go beyond the classroom; they're practical, professional, and adaptable.

Connection to the Assigned Reading

The assigned reading “*Self-Reflection*” from *Eportfolio: Reflecting on Learning* (University of Arkansas, n.d.) shaped how I approached this portfolio. One part that stood out to me says that self-reflection is about “making sense of what you have learned and how it connects to your goals.” (Meade, 2023) That idea changed how I thought about building my portfolio because it reminded me that it’s not about showing off random pieces of work, it's about understanding how each one connects to my career path.

For example, I chose the internship photo not just because it’s a nice memory but because it connects to my consulting goals. The photo reminds me that successful consulting depends on teamwork, adaptability, and clear communication all of which I practiced during that experience.

The same goes for the NIST framework. The reading helped me see that reflection is about identifying patterns and connections in learning. When I looked at my experiences with NIST, I realized how much it reflected my growth in analytical thinking and structured problem-solving. NIST became a bridge between classroom theory and practical application.

The reading also said reflection “gives shape to who you are becoming.” That line stuck with me because my portfolio really is shaping my professional identity. By reflecting on these two artifacts, I can clearly see how I’ve grown from a student learning definitions and concepts to a future cybersecurity consultant who understands how to apply those tools in real scenarios.

The *Self-Reflection*” from *Eportfolio: Reflecting on Learning* helped me move from just documenting experiences to analyzing what those experiences mean for my future. That’s why my portfolio isn’t just a record, it’s a personal and professional reflection that shows the direction I’m heading.

Design and Imagery Choices

The design of my portfolio plays a huge role in how I present myself professionally. Since cybersecurity consulting is about trust, organization, and clarity, I want my portfolio’s design to reflect those values. My layout will be clean, minimal, and structured, using colors like deep blue and gray shades often associated with stability and professionalism.

The internship photo will be the centerpiece of my homepage. It will immediately communicate authenticity and teamwork. It’s real, showing the people and experiences that shaped my growth. Next to the photo, I’ll include a short reflection about what the internship taught me, emphasizing communication, collaboration, and adaptability.

During the internship, I used NIST to assess their current security environment, identify vulnerabilities, and prioritize areas that needed immediate attention. By following the framework’s steps Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover I was able to map out actionable recommendations for the client. For example, in the Identify phase, I helped document all critical assets and their associated risks. In Protect, I worked on recommending controls to reduce those risks, such as access restrictions and updated policies. Detect and Respond involved helping the client set up monitoring tools and response plans, while Recover focused on strategies to maintain business continuity in case of an incident. Including this artifact in my

portfolio demonstrates not just that I know NIST, but that I can apply it in a professional, real-world setting to support a client's security goals.

The assigned reading also reminded me that reflection and design go hand in hand because how you present something affects how people interpret it. So, my design choices from layout to imagery will reinforce my identity as someone who's detail-oriented, reflective, and client-focused.

Interpretation and Reflection

Interpreting my experiences through these artifacts helped me realize that growth doesn't happen all at once; it builds over time through experience, challenges, and reflection.

When I look at the internship photo, I see more than faces. I see long hours, team discussions, and problem-solving under pressure. I see how I learned to adapt and stay calm when things didn't go as planned. I learned how to communicate my ideas clearly, even to non-technical clients, and how to collaborate with people who had different strengths. That experience taught me that cybersecurity consulting isn't just about knowing the right answers; it's about knowing how to work with people to find them.

On the other hand, the NIST framework represents precision and consistency. It gave me a structured way to approach complex problems and ensure that our client's systems aligned with security standards. Using NIST made me realize that cybersecurity is a balance between flexibility and structure. You have to be able to adapt while still following proven best practices.

Both artifacts also show me how much reflection matters. The *Self-Reflection* reading emphasized that looking back helps us "see patterns in our learning and growth." (Meade, 2023).

I can see that pattern now from learning theory in class, to applying NIST in real projects, to collaborating with others in professional environments. Every piece fits together, showing progress toward my consulting goals.

Completeness and Professional Growth

Even though my portfolio focuses on just two artifacts, I feel that it's complete because each one captures a major part of my development. The internship photo represents the interpersonal side of consulting communication, collaboration, and professional presence. The NIST framework reflects the technical side structure, analysis, and risk management.

Together, they show that I understand both people and processes, which is what consulting is all about. My portfolio doesn't just show what I've done; it explains how those experiences have shaped me into someone who's ready to step into the cybersecurity field with confidence.

Completeness also means growth. Through this reflection process, I've learned that a portfolio isn't static. It's something that evolves with me. As I continue gaining experience, I'll add new reflections, certifications, and projects, but these two artifacts will always represent the foundation of who I am as a cybersecurity professional.

Conclusion: Reflection as a Path to Identity

Building my e-portfolio has helped me connect my academic learning with my professional goals in ways I hadn't before. The *Self-Reflection* reading reminded me that reflection isn't about repeating experiences, it's about understanding them. It's about asking, "What did this teach me about who I'm becoming?" (Meade, 2023).

The internship photo and NIST framework together tell the story of my transformation. The photo shows the human side of cybersecurity collaboration, trust, and teamwork. The NIST framework shows the technical side structure, analysis, and strategic thinking. Both are essential in the consulting career I'm pursuing.

As I continue to build this portfolio, I want it to reflect not just what I've done, but what I value: integrity, problem-solving, communication, and continuous growth. Reflection has shown me that every experience whether it's a photo or a technical framework contributes to my professional identity.

My portfolio, in the end, isn't just a showcase. It's a map of my journey, showing how I've learned, adapted, and grown into the kind of cybersecurity consultant I want to be someone who can merge technical skill with human understanding to create a safer, smarter digital world.

Reference

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