

Reflective Essay

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### Abstract

This reflective essay examines how creating an electronic portfolio during my Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) program changed my life. Emphasizing three key areas of development technical competencies, analytical thinking, and research/writing experience this shows my path from a pre-nursing degree to a cybersecurity specialist. By doing some assignments, I have developed in my technical skills, analytical thinking, and capacity to combine several points of view. Among the projects under way are a Linux-based security exercise, a lab meant for digital forensics, a term paper for transdisciplinary studies, and a Bio-Cybersecurity Capstone Project. Participating in academic events stressing the criminological features of gun violence, security vulnerabilities, and the social consequences of technology has helped me to become better in writing and in doing research. Centered on reflective practice, my electronic portfolio not only shows my personal and academic development but also helps me be ready for a career in cybersecurity by stressing my contributions and ability to handle problems found in the real world.

### Reflective Essay

In their journal on ePortfolios as a measure of reflective practice, Parkes, Dredger, and Hicks (2013) observed that “support for electronic portfolio use in higher education has increased over the past decade due to calls for greater accountability concerning student learning” (p. 1). During my time in the IDS program, the process of creating an electronic portfolio has been a transforming experience that has provided me with valuable insights into my academic career. At the same time that it has provided a forum for me to demonstrate my increasing talents and multidisciplinary approach, it has also functioned as a tool for me to reflect on my academic and personal development. My ePortfolio has evolved from a pre-nursing major to a cybersecurity major, and it now serves as a dynamic portal that effectively communicates both my identity and my story. I have demonstrated that I have improved crucial abilities such as technical proficiency, critical thinking, and writing by working on various types of projects such as research papers and technical tasks.

#### Theme 1: Technical Skills Development

The Sword vs. Shield assignment I completed for my Cyber Techniques and Operations course demonstrates my technological proficiency. I successfully applied what I learned in school to this exciting and rewarding work. It comprised of three essential steps. The first thing I needed to do was set up Linux user groups. This meant making sure everyone had a safe place to work and fixing problems caused by bad passwords. Now that this project is over, I have a better understanding of the strategies used by both security experts and hackers. Experience helps me to identify and handle such kinds of hazards more effectively. At the end of the job, I advocated investigating the safety of Windows passwords. This program gave me a lot of knowledge on

keeping systems safe and safeguarding priceless digital data. This project improved my technical expertise by clarifying Linux commands and underlining the need of strict password policies.

One of my compulsory main projects in my Digital Forensics course looked at the junction of legal ideas and computer science. This work is quite valuable. This effort, with special attention on the tools and techniques used to compile and evaluate digital evidence, resulted in my entire immersion in digital forensics. The major goal of the project was to generate an all-inclusive report for a futuristic computer forensics center. The construction of the laboratory's physical infrastructure, the building of secure evidence storage systems, the creation of advanced analytical stations, and the implementation of rigorous security protocols were all necessary activities. Alongside the hardware, I was tasked with compiling an inventory of the equipment, formulating a maintenance strategy, devising an accreditation plan, and delegating responsibilities to the laboratory personnel.

### Theme 2: Critical Thinking

Critical thinking It improves decision-making by carefully weighing the benefits and dangers. The Intrusion Detection System (IDS) program had a big impact on how this skill was developed. It gives a complete education that helps people understand complicated issues and inspires them to come up with new solutions, both of which are necessary to deal with complicated security issues in the area of cybersecurity.

My capacity to think critically has improved with time, as seen by the term paper I completed for my Interdisciplinary Studies class. This was one of the most difficult jobs I had to complete in college since I had to combine ideas from at least three different fields of study to create a story that made sense. I opted to investigate how teenagers' usage of social media

influences their behavior, which necessitated expertise of technology, psychology, and sociology. It felt like I was trying to fit together a puzzle while switching between fields, each adding a new piece. Despite the difficulty, this experience showed me the importance of approaching problems from several perspectives and ways. With the skills I've learned through this project, I'll be able to look at problems in the real world from different angles, which will be very helpful when I look for work in the future. It wasn't just an assignment for school; this work was a step toward making a better way of handling problems.

Another watershed point in my career came when I worked on the Bio-Cybersecurity Capstone Project. This semester-long group project sought to conduct a ten-step evaluation of a publicly traded firm in the biological sciences. This cooperative initiative was undertaken with three other classmates. We were a cybersecurity consulting firm that specialized in the cybersecurity environment of Baxter International. This was our group's responsibility. The project, which aimed to address the industry's ever-changing ethical and security issues, required a collaboration between biology and cybersecurity. We were able to create a comprehensive cybersecurity evaluation using collaborative brainstorming sessions, extensive research, and strategic planning. The project concluded with an executive briefing and board presentation, during which we presented our findings and suggestions to the Board of Directors.

### Theme 3: Research/Writing Skills

Especially in the topic of cybersecurity, my academic career has revolved mostly on the growth of solid research and writing skills. This continuous attention has highlighted the need of mastering these abilities, understanding challenging ideas, and debating delicate issues with fairness and ethical integrity. Participating in a range of research projects over my time in college

helped me tremendously boost my ability to do in-depth studies and clearly present the findings of those investigations. Three projects particularly caught my attention and greatly shaped my academic and professional viewpoint: the Societal Impacts of Modern Technology, the Identity Theft Attack at Domino's India, and Gun Violence in the United States.

One of the opportunities that was presented by the paper titled "The Societal Impacts of Modern Technology" was to investigate the far-reaching consequences that technology has on society. This project required me to struggle with complex themes, such as the advantages and disadvantages of technology, which include addiction, health challenges, and cyberbullying, among other things. Through this experience, I was able to hone my skills in critical analysis, data evaluation, and the synthesis of many types of information while also being reminded of the significance of responsible technology use.

In the case of Domino's India Identity Theft Attack, I investigated a real-world cyberattack, which involved locating vulnerabilities inside the company's security infrastructure and examining the wider repercussions of breaches of this kind. This study helped me to better understand the several aspects of cybersecurity and underlined the effects of cyberattacks on society. It improved my ability to break out complex problems and concisely express my ideas in the exciting field of cybersecurity.

Upon further reflection, the examination of gun violence in the United States has led me to the realization that criminological theories must be applied to real-world situations in order to remain impartial and ethical. This interaction facilitated the development of my analytical and investigation abilities, as well as my understanding of fundamental criminological concepts. It underlined the need of tackling complex problems with evidence-based thinking and an open mind, both of which are absolutely essential in scholarly and practical settings within

criminology and criminal justice.

By means of these initiatives, my research, writing, and analytical abilities have become better; so, I have a complete perspective, and the pragmatic tools required to handle issues in cybersecurity and other domains.

### Conclusion

Throughout my academic career, I've encountered some common themes that have helped me increase my knowledge, improve my skills, and strengthen my character. As a result, I am more ready to face real-world challenges in both my career and personal development. I've had an excellent experience with my ePortfolio. It illustrates my evolving skills and methodologies, drawing from other disciplines, alongside my scholarly and personal development. Celeste Fowles Nguyen (2013) asserts that ePortfolios enhance "new understandings of traditions and current experiences," cultivating a sense of belonging and augmenting assessment. My growth has been effectively documented through the use of the ePortfolio, which has also proved the practical usefulness of my talents across a variety of situations. This was accomplished through the IDS program.

The technical skills, critical thinking, and research/writing talents are the three most important areas of development that I can identify after reflecting on the coursework I completed during my undergraduate studies and the artifacts I have gathered. Common threads bind all the objects together, especially their link to the rhetorical situation. This helps each artifact to show a diverse purpose. Every project, from labs to technical assignments to research papers, captures its rhetorical setting. This helps me become more adaptable and improves my ability to write well in a variety of contexts. In addition, creativity played a vital role in a number of jobs, but the level of its involvement varied. In contrast to merely satisfying standards such as examinations

or certifications, each item is an original piece of work that reflects my one-of-a-kind contribution.

Throughout the course of my academic journey, the talents that I developed in many domains have consistently complemented and supported one other despite their differences. During the process of reflecting on and combining my abilities and artifacts, I became aware of this interaction, which highlights the significance of reflection in the learning process. These ideas have been very important for me throughout my life and will still affect my future employment in cybersecurity. My program is almost done, and the process of creating an electronic portfolio has been quite beneficial in identifying my areas of competence and preparing me for the working life. It serves as a platform that helps me to show my credentials and underline the remarkable successes I have made, therefore positioning myself for success in the field of cybersecurity.

## Works Cited

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