Announcement from Department Chair to Incoming Master of Science Students:

New ePortfolio Requirement for the Capstone Experience

Dear New Student,

I want to welcome you to the Department of Information Science and congratulate you on starting the Master of Science in Information Science or Master of Science in Library Science degree programs. I have some very important and exciting news to share with you about a new component of our American Library Association (ALA) accredited graduate program.

As a new student beginning the graduate program in the 2019 fall semester, we have a new method for completing the required Capstone Experience. Previously, the Capstone Experience was in the form of a written examination. We are joining many other ALA-accredited graduate programs in adopting an ePortfolio as an end-of-program demonstration of your readiness to be considered an information professional. The faculty in the Department of Information Science voted last academic year to replace the Capstone Experience examination with a Capstone Experience ePortfolio. You are likely wondering what is this ePortfolio, and this message is to introduce it to you.

The ALA accreditation of our graduate program requires the Department to provide clear evidence about the quality and coverage of topics students will experience in the program. This means that the courses, their content, the assignments, and any other curricular and co-curricular activities we offer as part of your learning experience result in you acquiring and enhancing appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities (i.e., competencies) for entry level positions in the information professions. The ePortfolio supports these accreditation requirements as reflected in the following objectives for the ePortfolio:

- Provide graduate students a platform to present and reflect on their curricular and non-curricular learning. In particular, the student will present evidence of their successful achievement of the stated professional competencies and program objectives.
- Provide the department, university, and accrediting body with a method of end-of-program assessment to demonstrate with evidence that students have been prepared as information professionals through their curricular and non-curricular learning experiences.

At the end of your program, faculty members will evaluate your ePortfolio as evidence of your readiness to graduate and become an information professional. A successful evaluation of your ePortfolio is a requirement for earning the master's degree. The assessment of your ePortfolio will be based on published criteria and rubric.

We will soon have more details about the ePortfolio (on the Department of Information Science website), how you will use it, and instructions for working with Foliotek, UNT's ePortfolio platform. Here are some key points we want you to know about the ePortfolio application and process:

- You will build your ePortfolio during the time you are in our graduate program, and you will begin building it in your first semester in the graduate program.

- We will provide you an ePortfolio template to use. The template has all the structural components and some of the content we require to be in the ePortfolio. You will have the opportunity for some customization, and we will provide more specifics on that.
- The faculty is deciding on specific content related to completed core course assignments that must be present in your ePortfolio as evidence of your learning – these are called signature assignments. We will likely identify signature assignments from other courses you take that you can include in your ePortfolio.
- At the end of your program, faculty members will use the ePortfolio to evaluate your overall readiness as an information professional and as a basis for awarding your graduate degree. We will provide you with the assessment criteria and rubric faculty members will use to assess your ePortfolio.
- The Department has a team of faculty members who have designed and developed the ePortfolio application and are ready to provide assistance to students (and our faculty members) as we start the this new initiative.

- We can't emphasize enough the following:
    - Your e-Portfolio is a product that represents you. The process to produce the ePortfolio requires you to work on it each semester you are in the program.
    - The content of your ePortfolio will change and expand as you go through the program.
    - We will have clear assessment criteria published on the Department of Information Science website so you understand how you and your ePortfolio will be evaluated as your end-of-program evaluation and requirement.

Thank you for choosing the University of North Texas, and specifically the graduate program in the Department of Information Science for your preparation as an information professional. I look forward to meeting you at some point during your studies. Please know that my door is always open and my inbox always has room for communicating with me!

With regards,

Jiangping Chen, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair, Information Science
https://informationscience.unt.edu/
University of North Texas
1155 Union Circle #311068
Denton, Texas 76203-5017
Phone: 940-369-5825