

Introducing the **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**



PDP STUDENT PORTFOLIO

FIRST YEAR SEMINARS

SPRING SEMESTER 2013

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WHAT IS A PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP)?

The Personal Development Plan (PDP) student portfolio is a practical tool to help you reflect on your learning, performance and achievements. This process is important for all university students and it will help you organise your personal, educational and career development.

When you graduate from university, you will have a good understanding of your subject discipline (major). Although this is very desirable, it is only part of the story...

Being at university provides opportunities for you to mix with a wide range of people, to learn and develop skills, to take part in new activities, to manage positions of responsibility and to broaden your outlook on life. Many of these lie outside the curriculum. The PDP portfolio encourages you adopt a broad-based approach to the university experience and to use your time and opportunities in positive and imaginative ways.



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HOW IT WORKS...

THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A PDP e-PORTFOLIO

In your First Semester Seminar at Richmond, many of the Wednesday 4:30 afternoon sessions and the LEAD seminars specifically address issues that you will be asked to reflect on in your personal portfolio – such as Learning Styles, Setting Goals, successful self-management at university (time, money, stress), developing a variety of skills and responding to the feedback you receive from your professors.

This is a structured process, clarified in this booklet, and you will receive a mark/grade for this at the end of the semester.

After your first year at Richmond, your PDP portfolio will become more a departmentally based process related to your major. Career Advice, various workshops and internship opportunities will be the focus of your portfolio development after the FYS.

Your PDP will be less structured and monitored after the FYS, but equally important. You will need to share your portfolio with the internship office, with different professors and staff at Richmond. When you graduate from Richmond, you will have a collection of useful documents, some of which you may need to share with future employers.

ENGAGING WITH THE PDP process should enable you to:

- Clarify your personal career goals;
- Understand more fully what and how you are learning, what your strengths and weakness are and how to get better results;
- Take responsibility for your own development by setting yourself personal and academic targets and evaluating progress towards these;
- Improve your employability;
- Start the process of continuing professional development in your chosen career area.

THE ART OF SELF-REFLECTION: Being CRITICAL but POSITIVE

“There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that’s your own self.” Aldous Huxley

Most of your portfolio requires you “to reflect” in a structured way on your goals and aims, on your personal/interpersonal and academic skills, and finally on the FEEDBACK you have received from your professors.

In each section, you are asked to reflect – to think about yourself – how you learn, the kinds of skills you have developed and other skills you need.

This is achieved by reflecting on the various sessions and LEAD seminars you have attended this semester and by reflecting on the various forms of feedback you have received from your professor.

From the LEAD seminars and Wednesday 4:30 FYS sessions, reflect on:

Am I involved in campus activities and why this is important?

What is my Learning Style and how does the way I study, take notes, write papers and assignments correspond to my particular learning style?

How am I improving my Critical Thinking skills?

How can I improve my Time Management skills?

How can I improve my Money Management skills?

How do I deal with stress and what can I do to make it easier for myself?

How are my GRADES?

The FEEDBACK from your professors is important. Reflect on:

What have they written on my exams and papers?

What have they talked to me about?

Do I understand why I received the grades I have?

What could I have been done better :

- Develop ideas more?
- Read more?
- Analyse more and describe less?
- Write better English?
- Take better notes?

What do I do well?

Time management?
Critical thinking?
Class participation?
Being positive and responsive ?

ASSESS YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ...

REFLECT on how you plan to act on the information above – do you need to spend more time preparing? Proofreading? Taking better notes? Following Instructions? Improving your academic writing style?

USEFUL, PRODUCTIVE REFLECTION is not that easy of a process:

it is associated with a type of thinking that requires some deep thought aimed at better understanding of who you are, where you are going and how you can succeed. It *is* a rewarding process – so make the effort!

How are you TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN LEARNING?

Guide to Creating an FYS electronic-PDP

All students in the FYS are expected to create, manage and share their PDP with their FYS professor at the end of the semester. It must be submitted no later than April 17th.

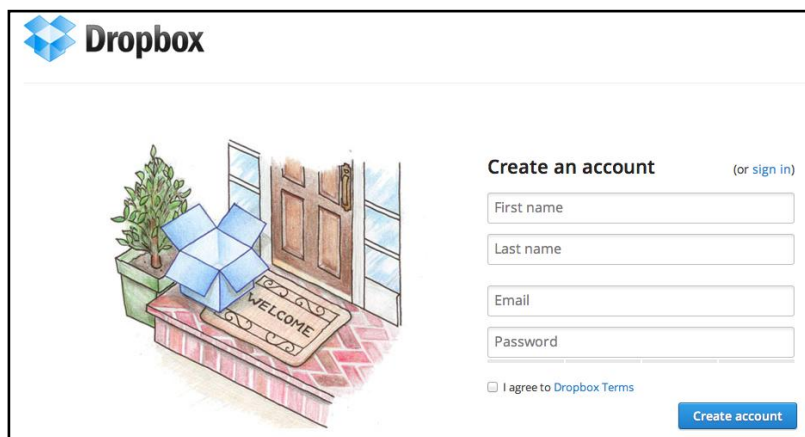
The PDP is a very useful portfolio for placements, internships and employment - and has other uses too which will be outlined in class. Completion of this counts towards your final grade.

HOW TO SET UP A PDP

The first requirement is to make an online folder that you can share with your professor. There are various options here, but perhaps the simplest (and cheapest) is to set up a free 'Dropbox' account. (If you prefer a different online facility, please explain it to your professor, but otherwise please follow these instructions.)

SETTING UP A DROPBOX ACCOUNT

1. Go to www.dropbox.com/register and create a new (free) account: you will need to give an email address, your name, and choose a password.



2. Follow the simple instructions:

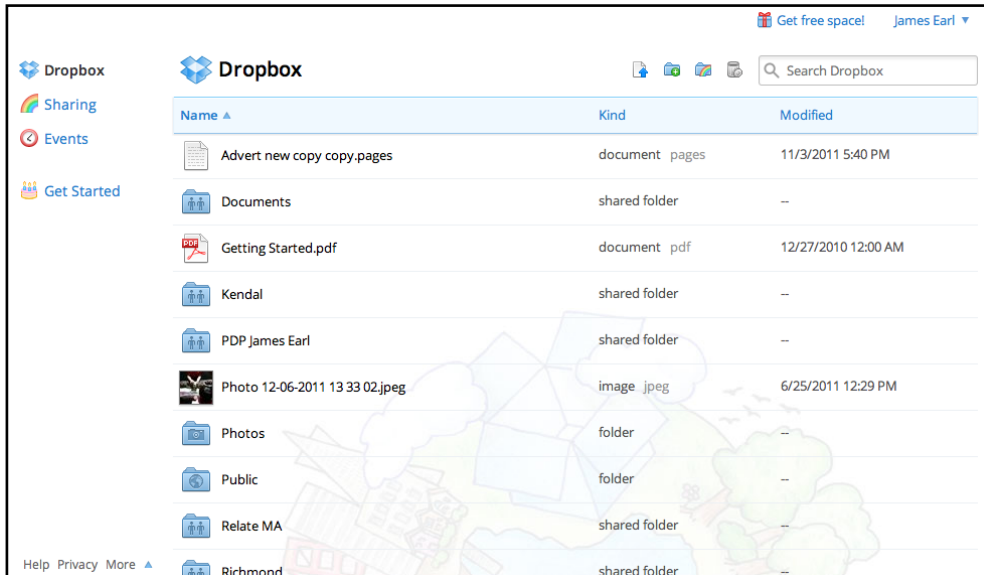


Downloading Dropbox...

Your Dropbox download should automatically start within seconds.
If it doesn't, [restart the download](#).

1. Run the Dropbox installer
From your browser's Downloads window, double click the .dmg file that just downloaded.
2. Drag the Dropbox icon
Drag the Dropbox icon into your Applications folder to copy it to your computer.
3. Double-Click the Dropbox icon
Double click the Dropbox icon in your Applications folder to get all set up, and you're good to go!

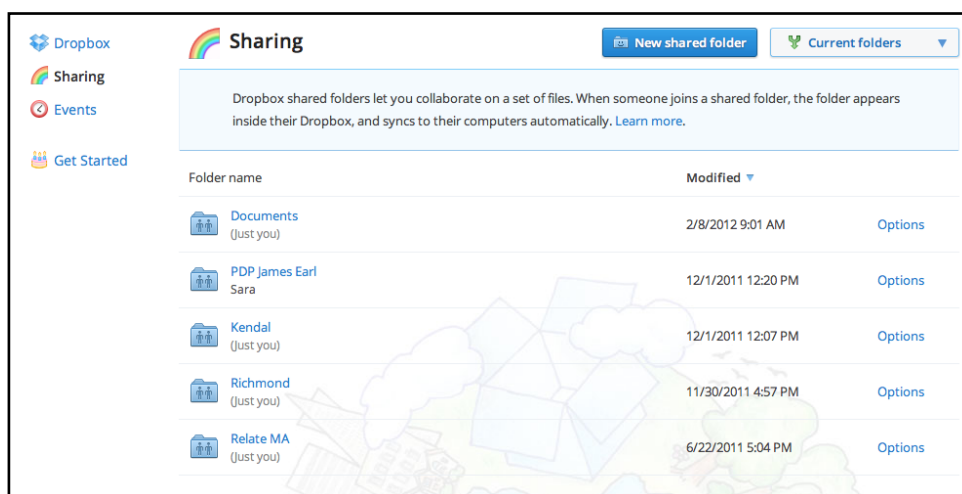
3. Launch the Dropbox application (this is merely an easy way to launch the dropbox website) or just login at www.dropbox.com.
4. You can now easily upload files of any kind to your dropbox folder, create sub-folders and so on. Here is James Earl's as an example:



This can be accessed anywhere you have a web connection and can also be viewed on cell phones. The help system on Dropbox is fairly informative but if you have any questions, ask James Earl .

STARTING & SHARING A PDP

1. Create a folder in your Dropbox called '(your name)'s PDP' e.g.: James Earl's PDP.
2. You will be asked to 'share' this folder with your professor. If you click the 'Sharing' link in the left hand column, you can send a link to your PDP folder to any email address you specify. Your professor will give you his/her email address (or find it on the Portal).



You do not need to ‘share’ immediately. Get used to uploading, downloading, and viewing files on your dropbox first! In class you will be taken through how to do this.

3. You will then start to fill the PDP folder with content as explained below:

ADDING CONTENT TO YOUR PDP FOLDER

1. **UPLOAD YOUR DEGREE PLANNER** (downloaded from the University’s portal) to your PDP folder. This will be in Excel format.
2. **UPLOAD AN UP-TO-DATE RESUMÉ OR CV** to your PDP Folder and entitle it ‘CV’ or ‘Resumé.’ This document can be in DOC, TXT, or PDF format - please avoid formats that are not available on all platforms (PC, Mac, Linux , IOS etc).
3. **CREATE A FOLDER CALLED ‘ESSAYS’**. In this folder, upload a copy of your essay for FYS, PLUS any other essays you are proud of or have received good grades for.

4. Then:

Create and upload a Word Document and call it **PDP REFLECTIONS**. This will include the following 5 headings A, B, C, D, E as described below. Each listed section should be about a page long (it can be in point form, in a powerpoint form, etc.) – so your document should be between 5-10 pages, depending on other material and/or visuals you may want to include.

PLEASE DO NOT UPLOAD 5 SEPARATE DOCUMENTS.

In your PDP REFLECTIONS file, make sure the headings within it **follow the titles listed here.**

The key thing we are looking for is an engagement with the task: more will be said about this in class, but in general try and write enough to show you have thought seriously about each section.

See the following pages for a clear indication of what is expected and how much is expected to receive a passing grade.

FYS EXPECTATIONS on your “PDP REFLECTIONS”

A. WELCOME PAGE

Say something about yourself, perhaps with photos, words and pictures, as you wish. This is a brief introduction to who you are. You might mention, for example, where you are from, where you have lived (where is ‘home’?) and travelled, and what you are studying. It should be no more than one page.

B. GOALS & AIMS

Include both short-term goals (what you want to achieve this semester), and some longer term goals about your time in London and perhaps beyond. This should ideally include a wide range of areas including academic, social and career areas.

This should be about a page, depending on whether you use lists or a more conversational style.

On this page, you might include goals like:

- gain a deeper understanding of my specialist subject or major
- stretch myself intellectually
- gain self-confidence and the ability to speak in groups
- join in student clubs and societies
- work with a wide range of people
- gain volunteer experience
- extend my networking and make useful contacts
- develop my emotional intelligence
- take positions of responsibility

List clubs and societies you’ve joined that help toward these goals. Think about the changes you have made so far and the changes you want to make. Where have you travelled to and where do you want to go while at Richmond?

Relevant Threshold Criteria (to get a ‘C’): You should articulate your long-term vision and short-term goal both academically and in a wider context.

C. PERSONAL/INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Acquiring transferable skills is an important part of life at University - and beyond!

PERSONAL SKILLS include aspects of your development such as flexibility, self-confidence and self-discipline; assertiveness is also important and is related to the ability to take appropriate risks, be polite and stand up for yourself. Other personal skills include how to balance life/ work/ study and the social demands on your time - together with looking after your physical health.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS include your relationships with others, working as a team member, managing yourself in a group and leading others,

The LEAD seminars and the other FYS sessions are designed to help you reflect on these skills.

In this section reflect on your ‘Learning Style’: you should have completed a VARK test or the one on the portal in the First Year Programme “Student Success” section. You should also consider the subject of the sessions on Time Management, Money Management, and Stress Management (look at your FYS Handbook and Weekly Planner for further details)

For interpersonal skills, reflect on the subjects of the workshops and again, look at your FYS Handbook and Weekly Planner.

***Relevant Threshold Criteria (to get a ‘C’):** Identify your basic learning style(s), indicate your strengths and weaknesses in relation to managing time, stress, finances, and identify those interpersonal skills you are good at and those you are looking to improve. This should be at least one page.*

D. ACADEMIC SKILLS

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS are essential for your academic life and future career.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS involve your ability to use a variety of written, visual, aural and verbal means in which you communicate with others. Technical skills such as numerical ability are important for many kinds of academic and career pathways.

CREATIVE SKILLS are equally as important in all walks of life.

These all include problem-solving, research, critical thinking and research skills – all vital components of the academic skill-set needed at university.

Some questions to ask yourself:

What are my study habits? (Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses). What are my critical thinking skills? Reflect on feedback from professors, particularly with regard to analytic versus merely descriptive writing.

How are your essay writing, oral presentation and exam skills?

***Relevant Threshold Criteria (to get a ‘C’):** Identify the academic areas in which you excel and those in which you need to improve. This should be at least one page.*

E. REFLECTIONS ON FEEDBACK

In this PDP handbook, read ‘The Art of Self-Reflection (pp. 7-8). What is the feedback your professors have given you this term? What do you plan to do with the feedback to improve? (Follow the format on Page 8).

***Relevant Threshold Criteria (to get a ‘C’):** Identify your professors’ feedback and explain how you intend to act on it to improve your performance. This should be at least one page.*

HOW YOUR PORTFOLIO WILL BE ASSESSED?

What kind of GRADE / MARK can you expect?

Remember: with completion of your FYS class, you will receive 4 credits, unlike most classes which receive only 3 credits. Part of this 4 credit component of your FYS is related to the PDP. The PDP is worth 15% of your final FYS mark. So it could tip the difference on your final mark (A- not B+? C+ not B-?) . Therefore, take it seriously.

What your professors are looking for - and these will be double marked to ensure fairness of grading across all FYS:

The quality of your content and level of reflection... your thoughts, your plans, your actions, your ideas...

The quality of the form – there are numerous ways you can record your thoughts, your plans, your actions and your ideas. How much effort, care and imagination have gone into your portfolio?

F: If you fail to submit a portfolio, you will receive an ‘F’.

D: If you submit a portfolio but have done virtually no work, you can expect a ‘D’ grade.

C: If you do the minimum for each of the 7 categories, you can expect a ‘C’ grade for your portfolio. See “Relevant Threshold Criteria” above.

B: If you show good effort and concern for how things are presented as well as for the content and level of reflection, you could expect a ‘B’ grade.

A: An ‘A’ grade is reserved for exceptional portfolios – those portfolios which reflect imagination, intelligence and responsiveness.

CHECKLIST before Submitting the PDP

You must submit your PDP to your FYS professor Wednesday 17 April.

☐ **DEGREE PLANNER (see page 11)**

The Degree Planner for your major with courses (including transfer credits) ticked. If you are unsure of your major, then include a list of the General Education Requirements with the ones you are currently taking and the ones you will taking in Spring 2012.

☐ **UPDATED CV / RESUME (see page 11)**

☐ **FOLDER for CLASS ASSIGNMENTS (see page 11)**

- ☐ Have you included the specific assignment (s) your FYS professor required?
- ☐ Have you attached any other assignments that would reflect your progress this semester?

☐ **. WELCOME (see page 12) (Section “A” of your PDP REFLECTIONS doc.)**

- ☐ Introduction to who you are with text, pictures, music, art, etc.
- ☐ Your updated CV

☐ **GOALS and AIMS (see page 12) (Section “B” of your PDP REFLECTIONS doc.)**

- ☐ Your long term vision
- ☐ Your short term goals
- ☐ Your extra-curricular activities (clubs? societies? volunteer work?)

☐ **. PERSONAL/INTERPERSONAL SKILLS (see page 12-13) (SECTION “C”...)**

- ☐ Identify and reflect on Your Basic Learning Style
- ☐ Reflect on your Self Management Skills (time, stress, financial)
- ☐ Identify and reflect on your interpersonal skills and how to move forward
- ☐ (Leadership & team building, your Emotional Intelligence, your ‘image’)

☐ **ACADEMIC SKILLS (see page 13) (SECTION “D”...)**

- ☐ Identify and reflect on your Study Habits
- ☐ Reflect on your Critical Thinking Skills
- ☐ Reflect on your Essay Writing, Oral Presentation and Exam-taking Skills

☐ **REFLECTIONS ON FEEDBACK (see pages 7-8 and page 14) (SECTION “E”...)**

- ☐ Identify the various forms of feedback you have received from your professors
- ☐ Reflect on how you plan to use the feedback given to you