

INSTITUTE WRITING PROGRAM

THE WRITING CENTER

ePortfolio guide #1: Logging in and understanding your Dashboard

This guide will take you from logging into your ePortfolio for the first time to understanding the control center of your ePortfolio, which is known as the Dashboard.

Logging in

Each faculty member and cadet has an ePortfolio. Only members of the VMI community will be able to see it, and you may need to log in to view it. To access yours:

1. Go to <http://sites.vmi.edu>.
2. Choose “Cadet and faculty login” from the menu at the top.
3. Enter your VMI username and password on the next screen.
4. Your ePortfolio can be accessed at any time by visiting <http://sites.vmi.edu/yourusername>

CADET AND FACULTY LOGIN

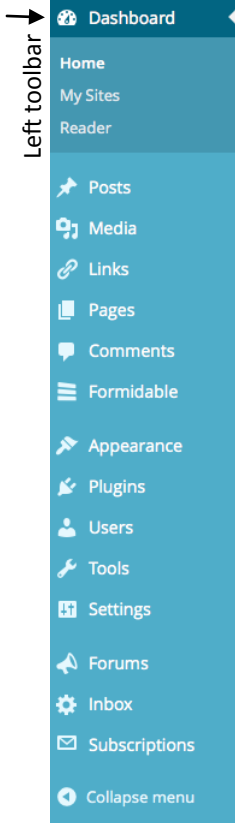
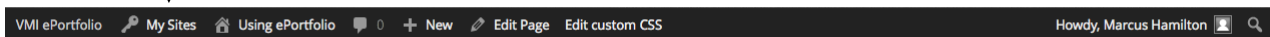
Username
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Password
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Remember Me

Log In

Top toolbar ↓



Understanding your Dashboard

Think of your Dashboard as the “backstage” area where you build sets, rehearse your lines, and rewrite your script. Your ePortfolio is the “front stage” area where the audience sees the fruits of your labors. All content creation and design work is done in the Dashboard, but you may need to go back and forth between your Dashboard and ePortfolio to ensure the finished product meets your standards.

To access your Dashboard, log in at <http://sites.vmi.edu>, hover over **My Sites** in the top toolbar, then hover over the name of your ePortfolio (by default, your username) and click **Dashboard**. Here’s what you need to know:

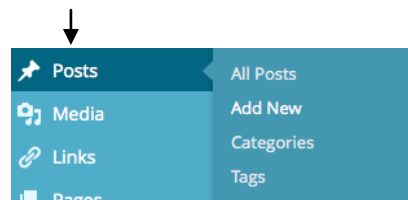
1. **The top toolbar:** This toolbar will be visible whenever you are logged in; use it to go between your ePortfolio and your Dashboard. Hover over “My Sites” and then the title of your ePortfolio to return to your Dashboard or view your front page at any time.
2. **The left toolbar:** This toolbar houses all the tools you need to build, personalize, and manage your ePortfolio.
3. **Expand your options:** Explore tools in the Dashboard by clicking any of the buttons in the left toolbar; each offers more features than are visible here.
4. **Save your work:** The Dashboard is a great place to play around with content and design, but it is easy to lose these changes; make sure to save any changes you make by clicking “Save,” “Save as Draft,” or “Publish,” as appropriate.



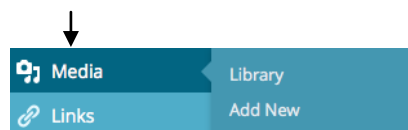
The Dashboard's most important tools

Exploring and becoming comfortable with the Dashboard takes time, but its many easy-to-use features make it worth it. Here is an introduction to a few of its most important and most useful features:

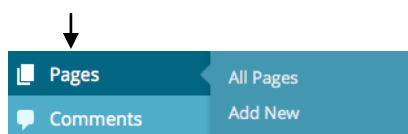
1. **Posts:** The **Posts** feature allows you to view previous posts you've created, publish new posts, and create **Categories** and **Tags** to label related posts and organize them into groups. For more information, see "ePortfolio Guide #4: Using Posts."



2. **Media:** The **Media** feature allows you to upload new media files by choosing **Add New** or view and manage any media files you have used elsewhere in your ePortfolio by choosing **Library**. For more information, see "ePortfolio Guide #5: Adding media."

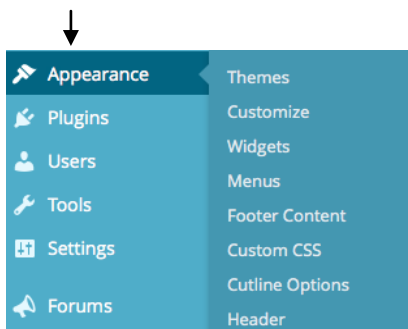


3. **Pages:** The **Pages** feature allows you to create a new, static page by choosing **Add new** or view and manage existing pages by choosing **All Pages**.



Note: newly published pages must be added to your menu before they can be found by visitors to your ePortfolio. For more information, see "ePortfolio Guide #3: Creating pages."

1. **Appearance:** The **Appearance** feature provides a wealth of options for changing the visual design *and* the organization/navigation used in your ePortfolio. You can choose a theme, customize your ePortfolio's title, header image, background image, and color options, and also design the menu that will connect all pages of your ePortfolio together for easy navigation. For more information, see "ePortfolio Guide #2: Setting up your ePortfolio and its front page."



2. **Tools:** The **Tools** feature includes many functions, but **Import** and **Export** will be most useful to you. These allow you to import material from another platform into your ePortfolio or export content from your ePortfolio to another platform (for example, you could export your entire ePortfolio to make a publically visible version on the free version of the WordPress platform that our ePortfolio system is based on). For more information, see "ePortfolio Guide #10: Exporting your ePortfolio."

