THE PORTFOLIO
Instructor: Dr. Beth Howells

The Final Portfolio is fast approaching. As you now know this class is very much about revising, so this final portfolio is crucial. A piece of writing is never really finished. There are so many choices you as a writer must make, and there are so many possibilities for any one piece of writing. Here, for this final portfolio, you will have a chance to work through the comments that I made which try to direct you towards possible revision strategies. Here, you must work on both global and local revisions. Here, you can think of developing new “leads” to capture the reader’s attention. Here, you can consolidate and rearticulate your purpose. Here, you can work on elaborating description and detail while choosing the best, most vivid words and phrases to capture the moment—work on observing. Here, you can smooth out transitions. Here, you can work on organization and flow. Here, you can make sure that your style, your voice, is present. Here, you can wind things up with the slam-bam conclusion your essay was missing.

Ultimately, you’ll find that writing and revising is about making choices. There is no right way exactly. It is about trying things. Here you will want to gather together the bits and pieces and apply what you have been learning to your writing: the model essays we have been reading, handouts and class discussions on writing, the comments I have made, maybe the Writing Center, and, most importantly, your very smart brain. Take all of these things and see what you can make of your work with your new perspective:

1. Choose at least 15-20 PAGES (not pieces) 15-20 PAGES of your writing to revise.
2. This can include a combination of types, but I would like to see you include at least 2 of your longer essays. For example, include 2 longer essays, 3 in-class reading responses, and a free-write. Elaborate and revise a variety of things. You may think about variety. You may even think about including something that is not so great now that you think you can do a super job with revising that will then show improvement.
3. START NOW, thinking about revising. Look above, maybe, for some ideas of what to be looking for.
4. Work hard on revising these, taking risks with these, making these the best you know how. You may want to make appointments with me or see the Writing Center or consult with your peers. You must also remember that there isn’t one way, and it is just done. You must try things and then sometimes try other things. These will be evaluated based on the quality of the revisions; the revision should be substantial.
5. They must all be TYPED: the 15-20 pages.
6. They must be bound in some way by a folder, a binder, or getting it bound at a copy center. Collect them in something where the pages can be turned.
7. Gather the rough drafts together in a paper clip and put those at the back. Include my letters to you about your long essays as well.
8. Be thoughtful. Include visual aids, maybe, that inform your essays or your theme. Have fun with it! It’s yours!
9. Develop a theme that somehow unifies these disparate pieces of writing. It may be our class theme of OBSERVING. It may be your own theme.

FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

These portfolios will be beautiful. They will be records of the hard work and smart thinking you have done in this class this semester. They will be something you will be proud of. You will pick them up from me with your final letter in my office during the assigned time.