ART 450 - PORTFOLIO DESIGN

Rubric Sheet

Hardcover Portfolio Book Assignment

HOW THIS RUBRIC WORKS

This rubric is designed to reward portfolio thinking that employers can trust: clear targeting, readable storytelling, professional production, and visible iteration. If process evidence is missing, the highest score in the related category is not possible.

Use the criteria below to score each category. The scoring grid at the end is meant for quick, print-friendly grading.

PERFORMANCE LEVELS

• Exemplary: Professional-ready work with clear intent, consistent craft, and decisions you can defend.

• Proficient: Strong work with minor gaps in clarity, consistency, or production readiness.

• Developing: Partial success; noticeable issues in strategy, craft, or documentation reduce portfolio impact.

• Insufficient: Requirements missing or major flaws prevent the book from functioning as a credible portfolio artifact.

RUBRIC CATEGORIES (WITH EVIDENCE EXPECTATIONS)

1) Curation & Target Role Fit — 15 PTS

What is assessed:

• Project selection and sequencing communicate a specific target role (e.g., brand designer, UX/UI, motion, etc.).

• Each piece earns its place by demonstrating distinct skills, decision-making, and outcomes.

• The book reads like a coherent narrative rather than a dump of work.

Evidence expected:

• Short target-role statement (1–2 sentences) or role-aligned summary at the front or in an intro page.

• Table of contents or clear section structure (if used).

• Projects are labeled with role, tools, and responsibilities where relevant.

Performance guidance:

• Exemplary: Curation is ruthlessly focused; every project strengthens the same professional story and fills a purposeful skill gap.

• Proficient: Target role is clear; most projects support the story. Some redundancy or weaker pieces remain.

• Developing: Target role is vague or inconsistent; selection feels unfocused and the narrative is diluted.

• Insufficient: No clear target role; major gaps or indiscriminate inclusion make the portfolio hard to trust.

2) Case Study Storytelling & Clarity — 20 PTS

What is assessed:

• Case studies communicate problem, constraints, your role, process highlights, and outcomes clearly and concisely.

• Writing is scannable and employer-friendly (headlines, short paragraphs, captions).

• Claims are honest and specific (no vague 'made it modern' rationales).

Evidence expected:

• At least 3–5 complete case studies (or the course-required number), each with: context, your role, process, and final results.

• Process artifacts are purposeful (not filler): sketches, wireframes, iterations, explorations with brief captions.

• Outcomes are framed responsibly (what changed, what was learned, what was delivered).

Performance guidance:

• Exemplary: Case studies are persuasive and easy to scan; decisions are justified and outcomes are concrete.

• Proficient: Most case studies communicate the essentials; minor gaps in context, captions, or rationale reduce impact.

• Developing: Key information is missing or inconsistent; storytelling relies on aesthetics over reasoning and outcomes.

• Insufficient: Case studies are absent, unclear, or misleading; employers cannot understand what you did or why it matters.

3) Layout System & Typography Craft — 20 PTS

What is assessed:

• A consistent grid and typographic system create hierarchy, pacing, and readability across the book.

• Typography shows professional control (spacing, alignment, line length, rhythm).

• Layout supports the work rather than competing with it.

Evidence expected:

• Defined type hierarchy (headline/subhead/body/captions) used consistently.

• Consistent margins, baseline rhythm, and alignment rules across spreads.

• Intentional pacing (full-bleed moments vs. dense information spreads) that feels designed, not accidental.

Performance guidance:

• Exemplary: A disciplined system produces confident hierarchy, excellent readability, and polished pacing across every spread.

• Proficient: Strong overall structure with minor inconsistencies (spacing, alignment, type details) that do not derail readability.

• Developing: System is weak or inconsistent; type and spacing errors distract and reduce clarity.

• Insufficient: Layout/typography problems are severe; the book is difficult to read or feels unprofessional.

4) Image Handling & Consistency — 10 PTS

What is assessed:

• Images are cropped, aligned, and scaled intentionally; quality is consistent.

• Mockups are used selectively and credibly (not as camouflage).

• Color management and contrast support clarity (no muddy or pixelated work).

Evidence expected:

• High-resolution exports; no visible compression artifacts on key work.

• Consistent treatment for screenshots and mockups (style, shadows, framing).

• Captions identify what the viewer is seeing when needed.

Performance guidance:

• Exemplary: Imagery is crisp and consistent; mockups and screenshots enhance comprehension without distracting.

• Proficient: Mostly consistent; occasional quality or cropping issues appear but are minor.

• Developing: Noticeable inconsistency in resolution, cropping, or mockup credibility reduces trust.

• Insufficient: Images are frequently low quality, distorted, or misleading; work cannot be evaluated clearly.

5) Print Production Readiness — 15 PTS

What is assessed:

• The book is prepared correctly for print production (size, bleed, margins, color mode, export settings).

• File organization supports a real print workflow.

• Proofing practices reduce avoidable errors.

Evidence expected:

• Print-ready PDF export settings are appropriate to the selected vendor/workflow (bleed, crop marks if needed).

• Preflight checklist completed (fonts embedded, images linked/embedded correctly, no missing assets).

• At least one physical or digital proof step documented (screenshots/notes).

Performance guidance:

• Exemplary: Production specs are correct and clearly documented; the file could be sent to print with confidence.

• Proficient: Minor spec issues or small proofing misses; overall print readiness is strong.

• Developing: Multiple preventable production issues (bleed, margins, export settings) suggest weak print workflow knowledge.

• Insufficient: File is not print-ready; major production errors would cause print failure or unacceptable results.

6) Professionalism & Completeness — 10 PTS

What is assessed:

• Book includes required portfolio elements (intro/about, contact, project list as required).

• Tone, writing, and presentation match professional expectations.

• Final packaging looks intentional and complete.

Evidence expected:

• Cover/spine/front matter present if required (or vendor spec met).

• Contact information is easy to find; links/QR codes work if used.

• Consistent naming conventions and clean file packaging for submission.

Performance guidance:

• Exemplary: All requirements met with polish; the artifact reads as job-application ready.

• Proficient: Requirements met; small completeness or polish gaps remain.

• Developing: Missing pieces or inconsistent presentation reduce professional impact.

• Insufficient: Major required elements are missing; the portfolio book feels unfinished.

7) Process Evidence & Iteration (Anti-shortcut) — 10 PTS

What is assessed:

• Your workflow shows genuine iteration (not one-shot outputs).

• Decisions are supported by drafts, revisions, and feedback integration.

• Any AI/tool assistance is transparent and does not replace learning objectives.

Evidence expected:

• Visible drafts: layout iterations, copy revisions, curation changes, critique notes, proofing notes.

• Before/after examples of at least two meaningful improvements you made during the course.

• If AI is used: an AI Use Note describing tool, purpose, representative inputs, and what you changed.

Performance guidance:

• Exemplary: Strong evidence of iteration and critique integration; authorship and decision-making are clear and credible.

• Proficient: Process evidence is present; iteration is visible but could be deeper or better documented.

• Developing: Limited process evidence; work appears overly finalized too early or lacks a clear decision trail.

• Insufficient: No meaningful process evidence or disclosure; integrity/learning concerns prevent a passing score in this category.

SCORING GRID

Enter scores for each category below. Total possible: 100 points.

Category	Pts Possible	Student Score
Curation & Target Role Fit	15	
Case Study Storytelling & Clarity	20	
Layout System & Typography Craft	20	
Image Handling & Consistency	10	
Print Production Readiness	15	
Professionalism & Completeness	10	
Process Evidence & Iteration (Anti-shortcut)	10	
TOTAL	100	