

ENGH 388-003**To:** Professor H. Lawrence**From:** Kristen Shifflett**Date:** May 3, 2016**Re:** Portfolio Cover Letter

Dear Professor Lawrence,

I have included four documents, one video, and a website in my portfolio. My major is in English with a concentration in writing and rhetoric, but my minor is also in journalism. These pieces were selected to showcase the adaptability of my writing as well as other skills I have developed.

The first piece, titled “12th Annual King Street Art Festival Success”, was written for COMM 361: Online Journalism. Our assignment was to write a profile piece or attend an event and report on it. I attended the King Street Art Festival, an event held by Visit Alexandria and Howard Alan Events. I interviewed a representative from Howard Alan Events and Visit Alexandria, as well as visitors at the festival. I tried to ascertain the reason for the event, its origin and history, and how and why artists were chosen. While not hard news, it is a nicely written journalism piece. It is intended to show my writing style in journalism as well as my other journalism and photography skills.

The second piece, titled “Mandatory GMO Labeling Concerns”, was written for this course. It was intended to allow the students who had joined the final proposal topics from the round robin to outline major points and concerns of the controversy. My group’s controversy was GMO vs. non-GMO food labeling in the U.S. Our group decided to mainly focus on the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act’s (SAFLA) role and effect on the future of genetically modified food labeling in the U.S. We each outlined certain theories and concerns that political, scientific, businesses, and the food industry’s concerns. My focus was on the scientific theories and research, the public’s opinions, and the food industry’s concerns. It concisely and accurately defines each of those concerns in a brief in-depth summarization of the controversy. It is also intended to show my abilities in research, communicating an unfamiliar topic, and as a technical writer.

My third piece, titled “The Fanfiction Craze”, was initially written for COMM 303: Writing Across the Media, but was revised as part of a writing portfolio for ENGH 486: Writing for Publication. I wrote it with a non-fiction and journalism style of writing in mind. I included this piece because it talks about something not everyone is familiar with and it informs them. It arouses conversation because the idea of changing a fandom is not always something people or authors approve of. I am personally a fan of fanfiction as long as it is well-written and thought out. I had prior knowledge but also had to research, outline, and write the article into a coherent, well-written piece. It showcases those strengths as well as my ability to communicate an unfamiliar topic to others and writing skills.

The fourth piece, titled “Compulsive Buying Disorder - addiction, compulsion, poor impulse control, or no problem at all?”, was a research topic paper for PSYCH 324: Personality Psychology. I researched and wrote this piece to research and summarize the disorder and the psychology community’s theories and opinions about compulsive buying disorder and its classifications. It shows my skills as a writer and researcher.

Lastly, I decided to introduce two other skills I have developed in two other courses. The first is a video I co-produced and directed with M. Quinn and S. Foltz for COMM 451: Multimedia Journalism. We had to make a short documentary video about some event or issue in the DMV area. We co-wrote a proposal together describing our process that can be viewed under the Writing Samples tab. It’s a little harder to define my parts in the video since the three of us interviewed, directed, and produced this video together. We used video cameras, microphones, and video editing software to direct and produce this video. I was the main contact with the Office of the Arts who fund the effort we wanted to document. The Office of the Arts for Alexandria, VA created a program called the Alexandria Mobile Arts Lab. They drive around in a bus to different locations in Alexandria introducing art and spurring interest in the public through shows, demonstrations, and workshops. It shows my skills with video equipment and video editing software, directing the narrative, and my ability to collaborate with other to produce a quality product. The other skills are the website on which this portfolio is displayed. I had to create a website from a topic of my choice pending approval for ENGH 375: Web Authoring and Design. I learned how to code HTML and CSS and created this website. It shows my ability to learn an unfamiliar skill and utilize it well.

This combination of documents and other materials shows a strong demonstration of my writing and various skills for this portfolio.

Best,

Kristen Shifflett