FETC2003
Electronic Portfolios in Education:
Definitions, Dilemmas and Decisions

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PT3 Catalyst Grant

Definitions

What is a Portfolio?

A purposeful collection of students' work that illustrates efforts, progress, and achievement [over time] (NW Eval Assoc.)

What is an Electronic Portfolio?

uses electronic technologies as the container

which allows students/teachers to collect and organize portfolio artifacts in many media types (audio, video, graphics, text)

using hypertext links **to organize the material**

connecting evidence to appropriate standards *(in a standards-based portfolio)*

Dr. Mary Diez' Metaphors
(Alverno College)

The portfolio as

Mirror

Captures the reflective nature of the portfolio
Allows students to "see" themselves over time

Diez, Mary (1994) "The Portfolio: Sonnet, Mirror and Map" in Burke, Kay, ed. (1996) *Professional Portfolios*, Skylight Training & Publishing

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Dr. Mary Diez' Metaphors
(Alverno College)

The portfolio as

Map

Creating a plan and setting goals

Diez, Mary (1994) "The Portfolio: Sonnet, Mirror and Map" in Burke, Kay, ed. (1996) *Professional Portfolios*, Skylight Training & Publishing

Dr. Mary Diez' Metaphors
(Alverno College)

The portfolio as

Sonnet

Provides a framework, but the contents can showcase creativity and diversity

Diez, Mary (1994) "The Portfolio: Sonnet, Mirror and Map" in Burke, Kay, ed. (1996) *Professional Portfolios*, Skylight Training & Publishing

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Financial or Professional Portfolio?

A financial portfolio documents the accumulation of fiscal capital or monetary assets

A professional portfolio documents the development of human capital or intellectual assets

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Professional Portfolios for Teachers
Wilcox & Tomei (1999) Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.

…extends the possibilities for portfolios in education by going beyond assessment, learning, and professional development to the use of the portfolio as a living history of a teaching-learning life.
(p.5)

Decisions

Electronic Portfolio Decision Considerations

PT3 Catalyst Grant focusing on Supporting Technology and Assessment in Teacher Education

Questions to ask

Basic Structure for Implementing Electronic Portfolios

– Credit to David Niguidula and Hilarie Davis for the basic structure to think about implementing electronic portfolios:

Vision

Culture

Assessment

Logistics

Use of Technology

Purpose & Goals for the portfolio
(Determine Content)

Many purposes:
- –Learning
- –Assessment
- –Marketing/Showcase

Audience
(Determine publishing format)

Who are the primary audiences for the portfolio?
- –Student
- –Parent
- –Faculty
- –Employer
- –College

What technologies do they have?

Assessment - What are the goals for students? How is the work assessed?

- –Standards
- –Rubrics
- –Is there a need to aggregate portfolio/assessment data for program assessment purposes?

Implementing Large Scale Change

Vision   (not confusion)

Skills   (not anxiety)

Incentives (not gradual change)

Resources   (not frustration)

Action Plan   (no false starts)

Curriculum Issues in Teacher Education

Where is the concept of the e-portfolio introduced to students?

Does the curriculum require "appropriate digital artifacts for electronic portfolio?"

Is there a course in the curriculum where the students develop their electronic portfolios?

How are the portfolios assessed?

Culture

What else has to change for the portfolio to be valued AND valuable?

Collaboration

Technology - Storage

How much storage to make available per student?
- 5 MB
- 20-30 MB
- 650 MB
- Unlimited

Type of Technology

What MEDIA best convey the messages of the learning journey?
- Text
- Images
- Audio
- Video

"Portfolios tell a story...put in anything that helps to tell the story"
- *Pearl & Leon Paulson, 1991*

Scarcest Resource:
Time

FACULTY
- Professional Development
- Implementation
- Planning
- Reflection
- Assessment

STUDENTS
- Collection
- Selection
- Reflection
- Direction

Directions in Electronic Portfolio Development

Generic/Common Tools Approach
- ß MS Office: Word/Excel/PowerPoint
- ß Higher level tool software
- ß Portable Document Format
- ß HTML
- ß Multimedia authoring
- **+** Low startup and maintenance costs
- **— Ability to aggregate data for assessment**

Directions in Electronic Portfolio Development

IT Customized Systems Approach
- ß Online database
- ß Assessment Management Systems
- ß Examples of commercial companies: LiveText, TaskStream, Chalk & Wire, McGraw-Hill's FolioLive, ePortaro, True Outcomes

— Server programming/purchase (or student fee subscription), maintenance & Internet access requirements
+ Ability to aggregate data for assessment

Pedagogical Requirements

An online portfolio system needs to support a culture of EVIDENCE:

Evidence =
Artifacts +
Learner Reflections +
Validation or Feedback

Pedagogical Requirements

- **Storage Space**
- **Security**
- **Linking** and Grouping Artifacts
- **Reflection**
- **Publishing**
- **Portability**

Storage Space

- To store digital artifacts (with meta-tags)
- To store learner self-reflection and self-assessment on each artifact
- To store feedback on each artifact from assessor(s) (independent validation)
- To store details of the assignment with criteria for assessment (rubrics)

Security

- Ability to restrict access, setting permissions to view:
  - Artifact only
  - Artifact with reflection
  - Artifact with reflection and feedback
- Ability to set permissions separately for faculty to view portfolio and provide feedback on work.

Linking and Grouping Artifacts

- Ability to organize portfolio in a variety of ways (flexibility in organization)
  - By standards or learning outcomes
  - By course
  - By date (entered, last updated, etc.)
  - By status of work (Work in progress, ready for assessment, ready for publication)
- Ability to include:
  - Goals for portfolio, Contents of portfolio
  - Learning Goals or Standards
  - Resume

Reflection

- Ability to reflect on a specific grouping of artifacts to make a particular case (i.e., how this collection demonstrates achievement of standards or learning goals)
- Ability to set learning goals and future direction

Publishing

- Ability to create a variety of portfolios, depending on audience and purpose
- Ability to individualize the portfolio, to allow creativity of expression in the presentation (how to avoid the "cookie cutter" effect or identical "look and feel" of a data-base or template-based portfolio)

Portability

Ability to archive work in a portable format such as:
- **CD-ROM**
- **HTML or PDF Archive**
- **DVD**

Learners can take their portfolio to another institution or maintain it on their own.

Dilemmas

Joanne Carney's Dilemmas on Electronic Portfolios

1. **Multiple Purpose Dilemma**
2. **Personal Revelation Dilemma**
3. **Cognitive Overload Dilemma**
4. **Self-Expression Dilemma**
5. **Dead-End Dilemma**
6. **Data-Aggregation Dilemma**

Carney, Joanne (in development) "Campfires Around Which We Tell Our Stories: Confronting the Dilemmas of Teacher Portfolios and New Technologies"

SITUATING PORTFOLIOS

FOUR PERSPECTIVES

Edited by
Kathleen Blake Yancey
Irwin Weiser

Cautions about Portfolio Use
(Lucas, 1992)

1. **The weakening of effect through careless imitation**
2. **The failure of research to validate the pedagogy**
3. **The co-option by large-scale external testing programs**

(Lucas, Catharine. 1992. Introduction: Writing Portfolios - Changes and Challenges. *Portfolios in the Writing Classroom: An Introduction*, ed. Kathleen Blake Yancey. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE: 1-11)

SITUATING PORTFOLIOS

" **…as portfolio systems are developed and implemented, teachers need to maintain as much power as possible over how these systems work if portfolios are to deliver on their potential to create important connections among teaching, learning, and assessing.** "

Yancey & Weiser (1997) Situating Portfolios: An Introduction. Situating portfolios: four perspectives. Ed. Kathleen Blake Yancey & Irwin Weiser, Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, p. 14.

SITUATING PORTFOLIOS

Lucas (1992):
- **…will [portfolios] become merely the newest vehicle to perform the old task, with the result that portfolios will become standardized--with "common assignments" and "clearly defined criteria" and restricting conditions…**
- **…resist the standardization characteristics of mass testing**

Yancey & Weiser (1997) Situating Portfolios: An Introduction. Situating portfolios: four perspectives. Ed. Kathleen Blake Yancey & Irwin Weiser, Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, p. 13, 14.

Let's See Some Examples

Teaching Portfolios

Early Childhood Portfolios

Above all else…

Electronic portfolios should provide a dynamic environment for learners to document and celebrate their learning across the lifespan

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http://electronicportfolios.com
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Planning Documents

http://helenbarrett.com/EPDirections.pdf
a paper by David Gibson that outlines issues between generic tools and computer systems approaches

http://helenbarrett.com/EPpedissues.pdf
a list of pedagogical issues to address when planning for electronic portfolios.