Using E-Portfolios for Course, Professional, and Evaluation Purposes

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e-portfolios in Education

• “Electronic portfolios have a greater potential to alter higher education at its very core than any other technology application we’ve known thus far.”
  – Trent Batson, Write for Campus Technology and Director of IT, University of Rhode Island

• “No matter what the tools used to create them...portfolios offer, most importantly, the chance to collect, select, and reflect.”
  – Kathleen Yancey, Professor of English, Florida State University
Outcomes of Session
(By the end of this session, you should be able to …)

I. Identify the various types e-portfolios in the academic context
II. Understand the processes that go into the construction of a teaching e-portfolio
III. Begin designing your own e-portfolio for teaching and/or learning purposes
Introduction

• E-portfolios have the potential to enhance teaching, learning, and assessment practices. They can also support:
  • Student advisement and career preparation
  • Student or alumni credential documentation
  • Sharing of teaching philosophies and practices
  • Department and program self-studies
  • Institutional and program accreditation processes
Types of e-portfolios

- Learning e-portfolios
  - Document the learning process
  - Include essays, tests, notes, journals, and other artifacts that best represent engagement with the learning process in a particular subject area.
  - Provide a framework for assessing academic progress and skills learned over time
  - Showcase the “best-Works” for evaluation or presentation purposes
  - Used as part of application for jobs, graduate school, or other professional purposes
- Sample of learning e-portfolios
Types of e-portfolios

• Learning e-portfolios
• Teaching e-portfolios
  • Demonstrate teaching effectiveness
  • Include original course materials, samples of students’ work, and various teaching artifacts
  • Highlight instructors’ skills, practices, and accomplishments
  • Increasingly used in hiring, academic reviews, professional development, and career advancement
• Sample teaching e-portfolios
Types of e-portfolios

- Learning e-portfolios
- Teaching e-portfolios
- Institutional e-portfolios
  - Derived from teaching and learning e-portfolios
  - Used to assess the efficacy of a given instructional program or objective
  - Include quantitative measures of student performance gauged against a set of learning outcomes that have been identified by an instructor, program, department or institution
  - Increasingly used as a standard tool for accountability measures and accreditation purposes in higher education
- Sample institutional e-portfolio
What is a Teaching Portfolio?

• “…a personalized collection of materials that document teaching effectiveness.” – UCLA Office of Instructional Development

• “…a factual description of a professor’s teaching accomplishments supported by relevant data and analyzed by the professor to show the thinking process behind the artifacts.” – UT, Austin’s Center for Teaching Effectiveness

• Essentially, it is an argument about what makes you an effective teacher, backed by evidence of your achievements.
What would you like your teaching portfolio to represent?

(selected responses from WP faculty, spring 07)

• “I’d want my teaching portfolio to show my engagement with students’ learning and achievements”

• “Successes, of course, but also failed attempts at innovation (there are several) – represented in an honest manner, yet emphasizing how the trial-and-error method was used with the right spirit.”

• “The energy of education, which is where my frustration with e-portfolio comes in – how can it capture dynamism, rapport, affection, the passage of time?”

• “I would like my teaching portfolio to represent both my strengths as a teacher and the changes my teaching has undergone.”

• “Tangible representation of effort, growth and vision.”
What is included in a teaching portfolio?

• Although there is no established format or length for teaching portfolios, some commonly found components include the following:
  • Cover letter
  • Teaching philosophy
  • Courses taught
  • Instructional goals and objectives
  • Samples of original instructional materials (handouts, worksheets, paper assignments, webpages, exams, etc.)
  • Samples of student work
  • Summary of student evaluations and sample comments
  • Teaching improvements and achievements
  • Teaching observation reports by peer faculty
  • Curriculum vita
Sample Teaching e-portfolios

- Helen Barrett Word Press
- Mike Truong – UCM Writing Program
- Charles Care – CS Dept., Warwick
- Adam Bowen – CS Dept., Warwick
- Carnegie Foundation – Gallery of Teaching and Learning
Practical Considerations

1. COLLECT
   - Determine purpose and audience (i.e. job, fellowship, etc.)
   - Selectively and reflectively gather materials – be explicit in what you choose and why
   - Organize materials into appropriate categories (i.e. assignments, pedagogy, etc.)
   - Standardized artifacts into one format if necessary (i.e. pdf, doc, etc.)
Practical Considerations

1. **COLLECT**
2. **SELECT**
   - Carefully choose among the artifacts gathered that best demonstrate various aspects of teaching effectiveness (i.e. class facilitation skills, student feedback, lesson planning, etc.)
   - Include teaching artifacts that highlight **self-reflection** (i.e. teaching journal, self-evaluation of lesson, etc.)
   - Thoughtfully decide which **electronic platform** you want to use (i.e. pbwiki, wetpaint, weebly, google page, etc.)
Practical Considerations

1. COLLECT
2. SELECT
3. REFLECT

- Write an introductory cover note for each section of the portfolio, explaining what you’ve included and why
- Include self-reflection and/or self-evaluation of the materials included
Practical Considerations

1. COLLECT
2. SELECT
3. REFLECT
4. PROJECT

- Construct portfolio one section at a time
- Play with design and layout to fit audience
- Share portfolio with friends and get feedback
- Make different versions of the portfolio for different purposes and audiences
Practical Considerations

1. COLLECT
2. SELECT
3. REFLECT
4. PROJECT

Give yourself plenty of time. It’ll take longer than you think!