ePortfolios

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Overview

• Categories of Portfolios in Academia
• What are “Portfolios”?
• Characteristics of an ePortfolio
• Types of ePortfolios
  – Showcase ePortfolio
  – Learning ePortfolio
  – Structured ePortfolio
• Advantages of ePortfolios
• Challenges of ePortfolios
• Resources and Bibliography
Categories of Portfolios in Academia

Since the mid-1990s:
- Student Learning Portfolios Course
  Departmental or Program Portfolios
- Faculty Portfolios
- Administrative Portfolios
- Institutional Portfolios

What are “Portfolios”

- Tools for assessment of learning, professional development, and accreditation
- For the most part such portfolios are “products” (providing evidence of accomplishments)

Over the past 4 or 5 years:
- Learning Electronic Portfolios (Learning ePortfolios)
Characteristics of an ePortfolio

Not a personal home page with links to examples of work but rather an Interactive “learning object”

- A “learning landscape” allowing engagement and the formation of communities of learning through various modes of communication
  - Exchange of comments between the author and teachers, mentors, or coaches
  - Discussions and peer review with classmates, colleagues, or friends
  - Feedback for specific questions and concerns
  - Personal reflection on work in progress or completed

Requires a technological network with administrative functions [for managing and organizing work (files)] created with different applications and for controlling access

Types of ePortfolios

1. The showcase ePortfolio: to organize and present accomplishments [the “career” portfolio]
2. The learning ePortfolio: organization of the work evolves as the work is created (dynamic)
3. The structured ePortfolio: a predefined organization exists for work that is yet to be created (ensures that specified work will be done)
1. Showcase ePortfolio

- Job applications and applications to graduate school
  Pennsylvania State University
  http://portfolio.psu.edu
  http://portfolio.psu.edu/gallery/index.shtml

- Examples of student work
  Elon University
  http://www.elon.edu/student/mtriman/

1. Showcase ePortfolio (Cont’d)

- Career ePortfolios to formulate career goals and successfully move on to a profession or graduate school
  Florida State University
  http://www.career-recruit.fsu.edu/careerportfolio/enter/login.html
  (password defended)

  Resumes, references, examples of work, and a “Skills Matrix” (students document their experiences with examples of work, extracurricular activities, and personal interests).
1. Showcase ePortfolio (Cont’d)

Project-based (intended to advance knowledge and experience in a field while bringing people together around common interests and concerns)

- The Knowledge Media Laboratory (KML) - Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
  http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/KML

  Search by key word - e.g., “assessment”:
  http://gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/bcerbin/Resources/Course_Portfolio/Portfolio_Summary/portfolio_summary.html

  Free Toolkit:
  http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/KML/KEEP/index.htm

2. Learning Portfolio

- Organization of work evolves over time - extends beyond the time frame of specific courses
- Dynamic - personal interactions among changing communities of people (not restricted to class or immediate instructor)
  - Private exchange between author and teachers or mentors
  - Shared discussions about work in progress; formal and informal peer review
  - Solicit feedback about specific issues and concerns
- Encourages ongoing reflection that can help faculty/departments/students better understand their learning process
2. Learning Portfolio (Cont’d)

- Catalyst (Univ. of Wash. Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT))
  http://catalyst.washington.edu/
  Collection of web-based tools and resources to support teaching and learning with technology with new technologies. Includes teaching guides and student learning outcomes [SLOs]
  http://depts.washington.edu/grading/slo/SLO-Home.htm

- The Folio Thinking Project (Stanford)
  http://scil.stanford.edu/research/projects/folio.html
  - A collaboration of six research groups at three universities—the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Uppsala University, and Stanford University.

3. Structured ePortfolio

Establishes a predefined organization in anticipation of work that will be completed (demonstrating accomplishments; fulfillments of specific requirements)

- Example: A “Learning Matrix” - formal learning objectives and student outcomes (to ensure that an institution’s commitment to learning is being achieved by all students):
  Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
  http://www.rose-hulman.edu/irpa/reps/demo/index.html
  Student Outcomes Goal
  https://reps.rose-hulman.edu/newdemo/obj.cgi
3. Structured ePortfolio (Cont’d)

- Center for Technology in Education (CTE) - Johns Hopkins University (launched in 2001)
- Standards-based for teacher education
  
  http://cte.jhu.edu/epweb
  http://cte.jhu.edu/epweb/About_Overview.htm

  Allows students to demonstrate attainment of competency in relation to established educational standards, provides an online journal for reflection, and includes a powerful, embedded messaging system that promotes ongoing collaboration with peers and advisors.

3. Structured ePortfolio (Cont’d)

University of Denver Portfolio Community
  
  http://portfolio.du.edu

  - Supports academic program and student assessment, electronic portfolios for students, faculty and staff, and community discussion.
  - Assessment tools enable students, instructors, and advisors to measure student learning and to use the results to improve effectively the curriculum.
  - Portfolios and discussion forums provide a mechanism for unprecedented levels of sharing and communication within the DU community as well as with the world beyond the campus.

- Faculty Portfolios at DU
  
  https://portfolio.du.edu/pc/port?portfolio=dsaitta
  https://portfolio.du.edu/pc/port?portfolio=jrutenbe
Advantages of ePortfolios

Long-term personal and professional benefits
- By “making learning visible” authentic assessment becomes possible
- Important role in life-long career advancement (showcase ePortfolio)
- Ongoing interactions throughout one’s career: new mentors and colleagues (learning communities)
- Ongoing reflections about one’s work; connections with one’s previous work (learning ePortfolio)

Learning and Structured Portfolios - Technological Challenges

The most challenging resources to develop and maintain:
- Extends beyond the time frame of specific courses, programs, and faculty research
- Dynamic interactions among changing communities
- Chronological maintenance of archived documents is essential: the history of discussions and interactions is as critical to the learning process as is the evolution of the work itself
Challenges of ePortfolios

- An environment loaded with electronic tools for creation, management, maintenance, and presentation of ePortfolios
- Requires the invention of a new software-management system
- Requires a lifelong system that promises access and maintenance beyond graduation or faculty institutional moves
  - Standards for interoperability for various types of ePortfolios (languages, protocols, and communication standards)
  - Transportability (should have common functional requirements)

Resources

- USC Center for Excellence in Teaching. Electronic/ Online Portfolios
  http://www.usc.edu/programs/cet/resources/eportfolio/
- Educause NLII (National Learning Infrastructure Initiative) Electronic Portfolios
  http://www.educause.edu/nlii/keythemes/eportfolios.asp
- Electronic Portfolio Action Committee (E-PAC) Virtual Community of Practice
  http://www.educause.edu/vcop/e_port.asp
- Electronic Portfolio Consortium
  http://www.eportconsortium.org/
Bibliography


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