Preparing Your ePortfolio: What, Why, and How?

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November 15, 2013

Session Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain uses for & key components of e-portfolios,
- Identify platforms/services for creating e-portfolios,
- Describe how to classify & select artifacts for an effective e-portfolio,
- Apply a 5-step method to create an e-portfolio, and
- Integrate reflective practice skills into the creation of an e-portfolio.
But who cares about ePortfolios?

- **Employers (and educators too)!**
- **Ward & Moser (2008):**
  - 16% of 5000 employers used for initial employment screening
  - 56% planned to use in future for hiring purposes
- **Whitworth, Deering, Hardy & Jones (2011):**
  - Value in using during teacher hiring process
  - Excellent tool for teacher candidates to:
    - Reflect on abilities & skills
    - Anticipate & organize answers to prepare for job interviews
    - Distinguish their application by highlighting teaching strengths
What is an ePortfolio?
No really, what is an ePortfolio?

- **ePortfolios:**
  - are purposeful, organized collections of materials
  - highlight key skills and accomplishments
  - record professional development & learning
  - evolving, dynamic works-in-progress
  - “learning documentaries”

Image source: http://eportfolio.sfsu.edu/images/eportoverBIG.jpg
Why would I want one?

ePortfolios are tools to meet various purposes:

- Document knowledge, skills, values, & learning
- Opportunity for critical reflection
- Record professional development
- Showcase accomplishments
- Assistance in a job search
- Demonstrate achievement of professional standards of practice
Flexibility of ePortfolios

- Flexible delivery based on two key components:
  1. Intended audience
  2. Purpose

- Same ingredients, different recipe???
Defining your Purpose

Assists in creating your e-portfolio:
- Consider intended audience
- Helps direct writing
- Guides the artifacts selected for inclusion
- Help select the means to build your e-portfolio
Options for creating an ePortfolio

Basically, any tool that allows you to design and publish digital content, including:

- **HTML editors & Web Design tools**
  - Adobe Dreamweaver, Microsoft Expression Web, CoffeeCup

- **Blogs, Content management tools**
  - Wordpress, Weebly, Wix, Yola, Drupal, Plone

- **ePorfolio software & online options**
  - Foliofor.me, Carbonmade, Myefolio
What can an ePortfolio look like?

- Be creative!
- ePortfolio galleries:
  - http://portfolio.psu.edu/gallery/
  - http://blogs.ubc.ca/portfolios/e-portfolio-examples/
  - http://eportfolio.sfsu.edu/gallery.php
- A quick internet search will find lots more!
ePortfolio examples

- UBC teacher candidates:
  - https://efolio.educ.ubc.ca/aevi/
  - https://efolio.educ.ubc.ca/sarahwr/artifacts-and-reflections/
  - https://efolio.educ.ubc.ca/gchase/

- Other teaching examples:
  - http://tams.yolasite.com/
  - http://amytesslersteachingportfolio.weebly.com/

- Other examples:
  - http://meganmcgahan.weebly.com/
  - http://jessicabowker.myefolio.com/intro
5 Steps to Create an ePortfolio

1. Collect
2. Select
3. Reflect
4. Connect
5. Project
1. Collect

- Collect artifacts
- Present a holistic picture of yourself
- Electronic evidence about you - academic, teaching, co-curricular, service, personal experiences, research
- What artifacts might you want to include?
- Main types of artifacts:
  - Text
  - Graphics
  - Sound
  - Video
2. Select

- Keep your purpose in mind to guide your selection

- Depth and breadth:
  - Represent your experiences in many areas
  - Demonstrate a variety of skills
  - Showcase work and growth over time
  - Use a variety of media as appropriate
3. Reflect

- Analyze and interpret your selections
- Give your audience a sense of who you are
- Explore your learning and development
- Reflective process is a constructive way to explore your growth and development
Reflection in ePortfolios

- Provides context for the artifact
- Adds depth to your ePortfolio
- Demonstrates what you learned from an experience
- Calls attention to your development or growth
- Prepares you for future professional opportunities
- Addresses competencies in your professional field
Reflective Practice

- “Process of learning through and from experiences to gain new insights of self and/or practice” (Finlay, 2008)
- Involves self awareness, critical evaluation of one’s responses to experiences, and examination of assumptions of everyday practice
  - “Unless teachers develop the practice of critical reflection, they stay trapped in unexamined judgments, interpretations, assumptions, and expectations. Approaching teaching as a reflective practitioner involves infusing professional beliefs and values into a professional identity, resulting in developing a deliberate code of conduct.” (Larrivee, 2000)
How to write reflectively

3 basic steps to reflective writing (Driscoll & Teh, 2001):
1. **What?** Description - What happened? Who was involved?
2. **So What?** Interpretation - What does this mean?
3. **Now What?** Outcome - What have you learned? What are the implications for the future?

For your ePortfolio – write for the web
- Short paragraphs
- Clear topic sentences & transition words
- Specific details
- Reflection, not just description
- Edit, edit, edit!
4. Connect & 5. Project

**Connect:**
- Share your purpose with your audience
- More than just the sum of its parts!
- Clearly state your purpose and goals
- Connect your selected artifacts to one another
- Share your vision for the future

**Project:**
- Share your work and invite feedback!
Conclusion

- ePortfolios flexible and valuable tools
- Can serve many purposes now and in the future
- Once created, it’s a dynamic work in progress documenting your journey
- It’s an opportunity to express yourself!
Questions or comments?

- Thanks for listening!
- Contact information:
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Note: Unless otherwise noted, images in this presentation are from Microsoft Office Clip Art
ePortfolio Resources

SELECTION OF USEFUL RESOURCES
Links to potential ePorfolio platforms

- CoffeeCup - http://www.coffeecup.com/
- Weebly - http://www.weebly.com/
- Wix - http://www.wix.com/
- Yola - https://www.yola.com/
- Drupal - https://drupal.org/
- Plone - http://plone.org/
- foliofor.me - http://foliofor.me/
- Carbonmade - http://carbonmade.com/
- Myefolio - http://www.myefolio.com/
Useful Websites

- Creative Commons:
  - Legally obtain music, video, and images for your e-portfolio.
  - [http://creativecommons.org/](http://creativecommons.org/)

- Pictaculous:
  - Generate color palettes to help decide what colors to use with an image.

- Copyblogger:
  - Advice about blogging, social media, multimedia, and marketing.
Recommended Electronic Resources

- Evolving List of ePortfolio-related Tools: http://epac.pbworks.com/w/page/12559686/Evolving%20List%C2%A0of%C2%A0ePortfolio-related%C2%A0Tools
- Dr. Helen Barrett’s ePortfolio website: http://electronicportfolios.org/
- Video on ePortfolios in teacher training (6:30): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uDac3gUbw
Recommended Readings


