Using Digital Portfolios to Foster Student Learning

Workshop Syllabus

Workshop Overview

In this workshop, participants will take an in-depth look at the power of digital portfolios as a tool to document student learning through exploring various formats and uses of digital portfolios in classrooms. Participants will also be introduced to a wide variety of tools that can be used to create and assemble digital portfolios, and investigate criteria that may be used to select components that would be included in the portfolio. Participants will leave the workshop with detailed plans for implementing a digital portfolio project in their respective classrooms.

Goals

During this workshop, participants will learn skills and strategies to:

- Identify the potential of digital portfolios to demonstrate student understanding and growth over time;
- Select meaningful components for digital portfolios;
- Explore a variety of software tools for the creation of digital portfolios;
- Use portfolios as a means of alternative assessment; and
- Plan a digital portfolio project for classroom use.

Alignment to Standards

This workshop meets the standards for Content, Instructional Design, and Technology as defined in the National Standards of Quality for Online Courses, published by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL).

This workshop provides teachers with an opportunity to meet the Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership standard as defined in the National Educational Technology Standards and Performance Indicators for Teachers, published by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

Intended Audience

This is an introductory workshop for K-12 teachers, technology specialists, curriculum specialists, professional development specialists, or other school personnel. Participants are expected to have regular access to computers and be proficient with email and current Web-browsers.
Workshop Outline

Session One: Reviewing Digital Portfolios

This session's readings will introduce the power and potential of digital portfolios (also called webfolios, electronic portfolios or ePortfolios). After reading two introductions on how the Internet has changed the use of academic portfolios in the K-12 classroom, participants will have an opportunity to review and compare a number of portfolios developed by different grade levels and content areas. In the discussion board, they will reflect on how digital portfolios are being used in schools to demonstrate student learning.

Session Two: Collecting the Components of a Digital Portfolio

Collecting the components of a student portfolio is the first step in the digital portfolio process. In this session participants will consider how to choose components for their students’ digital portfolios, and will watch another video to better understand the different stages of the portfolio process. After completing another section of the Portfolio Design Plan, participants will discuss various portfolio components in the discussion board.

Session Three: Selecting the Right Tools for Building a Digital Portfolio

In this session participants will explore what tools would be most appropriate for creating a digital portfolio in their school systems, as well as what platform or system would be best to contain these portfolios. They will consider local assessment initiatives and available technology resources as they review the different platforms available. For this session's activities, participants will explore tools and resources to design a Portfolio Template to use in their classrooms and will then share their ideas with their online colleagues.

Session Four: Using Digital Portfolios as a Tool for Student Self-Reflection

In this session, participants will think about selecting portfolio pieces that encourage students to reflect on their work, revealing their growth. This session’s activities will give participants an opportunity to explore some checklists developed for that purpose. They will then use the discussion board to share their ideas on the importance of student self-reflection and how that reflection might translate into a digital portfolio activity.

Session Five: Using Digital Portfolios to Assess Student Learning

This session's readings introduce portfolios as an alternative tool for assessing student learning and discuss how portfolios relate to other methods of ongoing assessment. In the Activity section, participants will explore an assessment package, developed and used in a California school district, that incorporates digital portfolios. In the workshop discussion board, participants will share and learn from one another's perspectives on the use of portfolios as assessment measures.

Session Six: Putting it All Together

In this session participants will work on completing their Portfolio Design Plans and will reflect on what they have learned in this workshop. They will also read about various strategies for implementing portfolios in their school. In the discussion board, they will have the opportunity to review and comment on the final versions of other participants' portfolio plans.