

Using Digital Portfolios to Foster Student Learning

Course Syllabus

Catalog Description

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.

This workshop was influenced in part by a workshop designed by the Amherst Public Schools in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Prerequisites

This is an introductory workshop for teachers, technology specialists, curriculum specialists, professional development specialists, or other school personnel. Participants are expected to have regular access to computers, and proficiency with email and current web-browsers.

Goals

This online workshop will enable participants to:

1. Learn about the potential of digital portfolios to demonstrate student understanding and growth over time;
2. Learn how to select meaningful components for digital portfolios;
3. Explore a variety of software tools for the creation of digital portfolios;
4. Develop a collection of relevant, up-to-date, web-based digital portfolio resources; and
5. Plan a digital portfolio project for classroom use.

Assessment and Course Requirements

This workshop is divided into six one-week sessions which each include readings, an activity, and an online discussion among workshop participants. The time for completing each session is estimated to be two to four hours.

Course Products

As a final product, participants will complete a [Planning Template](http://www.edtechleaders.org/documents/portfolio/dp_template.doc) (http://www.edtechleaders.org/documents/portfolio/dp_template.doc) that will help them to plan to implement a portfolio project in their classroom.

Discussion Participation

Participants will be evaluated on the frequency and quality of their discussion board participation. Participants are required to post a minimum of two substantial postings each session, including one that begins a new thread and one that responds to an existing thread. Postings that begin new threads will be reviewed based on their relevance, demonstrated understanding of course concepts, examples cited, and overall quality. Postings that respond to other participants will be evaluated on relevance, degree to which they extend the discussion, and tone.

Required Readings, Activities and Assignments

Session One: Reviewing Digital Portfolios to Document Understanding

In this session you will review several examples of how digital portfolios are being used in schools. In light of the varied uses of digital portfolios, you will carefully consider if and how such tools can be used to demonstrate student understanding of concepts over time.

- **Electronic Portfolio Development by Dr. Helen Barrett**
http://ali.apple.com/ali_sites/ali/exhibits/1000156/Introduction.html
- **The Digital Portfolio: A Richer Picture of Student Performance, by David Niguidula**
http://www.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces_res/225

Session Two: Selecting the Components of a Digital Portfolio

In this session you think about and decide what types of pieces to include in digital portfolios designed for use with your own students.

- **Lessons Learned about Student Portfolios, by Beth Herbert**
<http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kheb9804.htm>
- **The Electronic Portfolio: Development Process**
<http://electronicportfolios.com/portfolios/aahe2000.html>

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

In this session you will explore appropriate technology and tools for building digital portfolios.

- **Technology-Supported Portfolio Assessment, by Dr. Helen Barrett in Computing Teacher Mar, 1994**
<http://electronicportfolios.com/portfolios/compteach0394.html>
- **My Online Portfolio Adventure by Dr. Helen Barrett**
<http://www.electronicportfolios.com/myportfolio/versions.html>

Session Four: Using Digital Portfolios to Foster Student Learning

In this session you will explore a portfolio assessment package for a district in California developed as a framework for assessing student learning. As part of this exploration, you will begin to think about how digital portfolios can be used as a valid means of student assessment.

- **Create, Grade, Prosper, from Scholastic Administrator**
<http://www.scholastic.com/administrator/aug05/articles.asp?article=eportfolio>
- **Portfolio Assessment, by Jay Mathews**
<http://www.educationnext.org/20043/72.html>

Session Five: Using Digital Portfolios as a tool for Student Self-Reflection

In this session you will focus on the characteristics of digital portfolios as a reflection tool for gauging student strengths and weaknesses of understanding. Additionally, you will brainstorm activities that demonstrate student reflection of growth over time.

- **Student Portfolios 3. Reflect**
http://www.wblrd.sk.ca/curr_content/bestpractice/portfolios/process4.html
- **Portfolios: More than Just a File Folder – Connecting the Pieces**
http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/aar/afl/docs/assessment_support/portfolios.pdf
- **Reflection on Samples of Work**
<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/portfolios.htm#reflection>

Session Six: Putting it All Together

In this session you will work on finalizing your Portfolio Design Template to ensure that you have a solid plan for implementing digital portfolios in your classroom.

- **The Digital Convergence: Extending the Portfolio Model, by Gary Greenberg**
<http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/erm0441.pdf>
- **Dr. Helen Barrett's E-Portfolios for Learning Blog**
<http://electronicportfolios.org/blog/>