Two birds, one eportfolio: utilising ePortfolios for assessment evidence of T&L engagement for lecturers

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Teaching context

- Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (fully online)
- Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (fully online)
- MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (face-to-face)
Our students wear many hats

Academic Educator

- Student
- Lecturer
- Teacher
- Researcher
- Administrator
Our students wear many hats: implications

Wickens, 2006; Laurillard, 2012

From face to face to online

BASS, 2012

From instructional paradigm to learning paradigm

HIGGS & MCCARTHY, 2008

From teacher to learner

HIGGS & MCCARTHY, 2008

From colleague to facilitator
Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL)

- create parity of esteem between research and teaching, engage in teaching in a scholarly and rigorous way

- teaching should be scrutinised the same ways as ‘traditional’ research by being open to peer review and available for public dissemination (Boyer, 1990; Shulman, 1993).

- good practice in SoTL requires that both the process of inquiry and the evidence of good teaching and student learning are public (Felten, 2013).

- These elements can often be difficult to capture, however the portfolio genre is perfect for doing so; the eportfolio even better (Bernstein & Bass, 2005). Exemplars of how teaching is going public via a course eportfolio model can be found here: https://peerreview.unl.edu/
What are portfolios in a T&L context?

- Documentation of student learning
- Documentation of teaching/achievement
- Traditionally paper-based
- DiChallis (2005): selective and structured collection of information gathered for specific purposes and showing/evidencing one’s accomplishments and growth

Published: 2007
### SoTL Teaching Portfolio Assessments

**Semester 1: Introducing SoTL**

- **Entry 1**: “A teacher affects eternity, he/she can never know where his/her influence stops”
- **Entry 2**: A CAT scan of your students’ learning—for example, the muddiest point/the minute paper
- **Entry 3**: A reader-response approach to key articles on SoTL

**Semester 2:**

**Teaching Portfolio as a method of inquiry and of documentation**

- **Entry 4**: Curriculum Design
- **Entry 5**: Exploring a new entry point/strategy
- **Entry 6**: Documentation and Reflection on Blackboard Discussions
- **Introduction and Conclusion**: Contextualises the portfolio Shows development in researching/documenting your teaching and students’ learning
# Marking of Portfolio Entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Well Achieved</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
<th>Nearly There</th>
<th>Not Achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction/Context of my teaching</td>
<td>I have discussed in some depth the context of my teaching, incorporating courses taught, stating the number and profile of students, and reflected on the implications of the spatial, social and/or cultural contexts of the learning environment.</td>
<td>I have clearly defined the context of my teaching, listing courses taught, stating the number and profile of students, and have considered the spatial, social and/or cultural contexts of the learning environment.</td>
<td>I have described the context of my teaching but I need to define aspects of it more clearly. I need to discuss the elements of the learning environment in more depth.</td>
<td>The context is too summative and not clearly defined and discussed. There is no clear picture of my students or the learning environment in which we operate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Week 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Philosophy/Vision</td>
<td>I have included an in-depth discussion of my teaching philosophy, its influences, assumptions and beliefs, with particular reference to Entries 1 and 3 of my portfolio.</td>
<td>I have discussed my teaching philosophy, with respect to its influences and beliefs in the context of Entries 1 and 3 of my portfolio.</td>
<td>I have discussed my teaching philosophy but its influences and beliefs need to be more explicit and grounded in Entries 1 and 3 of my portfolio.</td>
<td>I have stated but not discussed nor grounded my teaching philosophy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 words</td>
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</table>
Why did we change to eportfolios?

- different versions of documents to co-exist
- gave students the possibility of submitting different types of assets as evidence. For example, they now had the possibility to submit a video or a link etc..
- wanted them to have a portfolio that they could build on and share easily
- the course had changed to be delivered fully online it seemed to make sense that the medium of assessment would match the mode of delivery
Background to survey

- 29/82 students completed the survey in time
- 4/10 staff completed the survey in time.
- ‘staff’ were the teaching facilitators who were allocated to marking a set of entries and the final portfolio.
Feedback Themes

The survey feedback on Pathbrite for both staff and students could be grouped into three key themes:

– Usability
– Assignment organisation
– Bigger picture
1. Usability

Positive
- I really liked the Pathbrite environment. It was very easy to use and navigate. Would definitely like to use this platform again.
- Pathbrite is very easy to use.
- easy to use and a feasible way to have a shared portfolio between the teacher and student

Negative
- I found it confusing at times and hard to navigate but eventually got the hang of it
- It is a little tricky to navigate. Often in the comments section that you get back the teacher will refer to additional comments within the body of your essay - I could never locate these.

Staff
Meanwhile the staff, had a much more negative view on all aspects
- It was a bit ‘fiddly’ going from one assignment to the other. Some of the students found it confusing and I was not really able to assist them.
- I didn’t find the comment & highlighting tools etc very user friendly
- It was not accessible to my screenreader. I could locate student’s files and download them, but could not correct them on-line and could not enter result and feedback.
- Frequency of "session time out" on feedback was frustrating and required reloading assignment and reentering comments.
- Annotations not saving on several occasions - should autosave once you select "done"
2. Assignment Organisation

Positive
- It's usable and allows for the submission of more than one document for each section which is a downside of Blackboard
- I liked Pathbrite. A single place where all portfolios were stored.
- Assignment management and portfolio looks good at Pathbrite.
- I liked using Pathbrite. I had never used it previously but submissions were easy as was obtaining feedback.

Negative
- It would have been much easier to layout the portfolio in word. I think for this course it is unnecessary complication
- Bit confusing at first, wasn't sure if we were receiving feedback on assignments through this - found it difficult to locate where our feedback/grading of assignments was with in Pathbrite-maybe automatic email from our group instructor when grading was done would help

Staff
- Numerous dislikes. Not intuitive at all for me. Everytime I log on it asks do I want to save. Can't sort students by groups. I found it much more difficult to add comments and annotations than on BB. Finding versions of documents and navigating forward and back between students hit and miss. Perhaps all this is my lack of techie ability but I think it is not well designed.
- Lack of plagiarism check
- Lack of grouping facility for allocated students
- Shifting between documents somewhat clumsy - easy to move onto next student rather than next doc.
3. The Bigger Picture

Positive

● As I have immediate access to previous essays, I can self-critique the previous work with the knowledge gained subsequently.

● My ePortfolio on Pathbrite is pinning different ideas in a single place, and forming a bigger picture that I would love to revisit, reflect upon and apply in a different context, for example, helping shape T&L in Physics and Engineering.

Negative

● Hard to know the benefits of using path bright until the teaching portfolio is completed.

● It does not really add anything to the experience of taking the course.

● I think it's a good idea, although I think the benefit of using it is only highlighted at the end of the course (in the videos).

Staff

● Would you use an ePortfolio tool (doesn't have to be Pathbrite) for your own career development? 100% = Yes

● Do you think we should we continue to use Pathbrite on the Cert next year? 100% = No
A growing movement: support of eportfolios

Student focus:
- Assessment
- Evaluation
- Reflection
- Employability
- Life beyond university

Staff focus:
Faculty members may use teaching e-portfolios as a way to introduce themselves to students, document skills and accomplishments, and for critical reflection.

https://eportfolio.aacu.org/research-on-eportfolio/research-categories/
Tenure ePortfolios: Summative, Reflective, or Showcase Tools?

Danowitz (2012)

- My eportfolio served as a summative (Hallam & McAllister, 2008) collection of all the requirements I had to fulfill during my tenure-track years at the College.
- The tenure eportfolio also served as a reflective piece (Lin, 2008) as it included many areas where I reviewed my own experiences as an instructor and librarian and what I learned from my administrative and student evaluations.
- My many responsibilities could be listed in a paper tenure file. In an eportfolio, not only were these responsibilities highlighted they were also showcased prominently by including links to film clips, social networking projects, and actual online tutorials.
A Teaching Portfolio of **no more than 20 pages*** (inclusive of all supporting documentation). This should be reflective of the teaching approach and activity and organised in sections corresponding to the Teaching benchmarking criteria detailed below:

- Teaching and examining contribution (including details of the candidate’s full timetable with module titles and codes, student numbers, times and rooms);
- Quality of teaching (including Integration of Research and Teaching);
- Leadership and Curriculum design and development; and
- Innovation and personal development in Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methodology
Where to now?

Electronic Portfolios in a Digital Landscape
or An Inquiry into the Tacit, Digital ePortfolio Curriculum / kysance@isu.edu

THREE EXERCISES

• ONE Working from Outcomes: What Is the Tacit Curriculum?
  1. Briefly list the outcomes for your ePortfolio(s) (now and do).
  2. Identify the ePortfolio practices students need to engage in successfully for their ePortfolios to be successful. (How many of these are connected to the digital landscape?)

• TWO What ePortfolio Practices Should an ePortfolio Curriculum Support?**
  What do students need to be able to do well in order to create "successful" ePortfolios? (Multi-choice)
  - to define and/or create an archive of artifacts.
  - to tag artifacts.
  - to make selections for an ePortfolio thematically, to serve a given purpose and audience (e.g., for employability, for a graduation requirement, as part of a module).
  - to put artifacts in dialogue with each other.
  - to curate artifacts (e.g., contextualize and arrange).
  - to reflect--to provide accounts of process, for instance, or to synthesize learning across both inside and outside school.
  - to create reflective texts in various media—in video as well as in print.
  - to use design principles (e.g., font style and size, color, and graphics) to create ePortfolios expressing student identities and meeting the needs of purpose and audience.
  - to create an ePortfolio for an ill-structured context.
  - to integrate various artifacts and experiences.
  - to demonstrate digital literacy.
  - to demonstrate global citizenship.
  - to create social media as part of the ePortfolio and/or to link it to social media.

• THREE What Is Most Important in your ePortfolio Curriculum and Why?
  • Which three-five of these practices are most important for student ePortfolio success in your context, and why?
  • What is the interface between your ePortfolio and the digital landscape? How can they support each other?

**ePortfolio curricular elements represented in Yancey, Kathleen Blake, ed., ePortfolio e-Curriculum, forthcoming from Sybex.
References

• Pathbrite: https://pathbrite.com/#maker