ePortfolios as a Tool for Program Assessment

Heba Fathelbab
Office of Strategy Management and Institutional Effectiveness
Session Overview

1. Background on ePortfolios as an assessment tool
2. Implementation of ePortfolio Assessment
3. Benefits, Challenges & Considerations
4. AUC Outcomes-based ePortfolio Initiative
5. Q & A
Think-Pair-Share

1. **Experience**
   Have you ever used ePortfolios in your teaching? If so, share your experiences.

2. **Purposes**
   What are some of the purposes of an ePortfolio?

3. **Assessment**
   What role can ePortfolios play in assessment?
What is a Portfolio?

A Portfolio is…

“…a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements. …and evidence of student self-reflection.”

Northwest Evaluation Association
What is an ePortfolio?

An ePortfolio is NOT a collection of all of a student’s work.

An ePortfolio IS a vehicle...

• for students to reflect on their learning progress and achievement
• for students to present evidence of achieving course/program learning outcomes
• to promote independent learning and self-expression
• for students to document learning and present work in capstone courses and programs that require professional accreditation.
• to support lifelong learning and records of learning that students can take with them into employment
What is an outcomes-based ePortfolio?

Primarily a process ePortfolio for students to reflect on learning progress and achievement of learning outcomes (Ring & Ramirez, 2012). They include:

1. **Reflections** on best work generally and for each learning outcome
2. **Selections** of artifacts chosen by students to show how they have met learning outcomes
3. **Connections** hub for artifacts of learning in various ways in various courses

What is an outcomes-based ePortfolio?
Outcomes-based ePortfolios as an assessment tool for various stakeholders

- reflection on learning progress and achievement of learning outcomes, for an individual course and over a whole program of study
- evaluation of achievement of learning outcomes
- evaluation of effectiveness of program/university curricula and achievement of program/university LOs
- evaluation of candidates for employment

Student self-assessment
Teacher self-assessment
Potential employers’ assessment
Program/University assessment

Teacher self-assessment
Potential employers’ assessment
Program/University assessment
Student self-assessment
3 Key Tasks of ePortfolios

- Collect artifacts as evidence
- Reflect to show growth
- Show achievement of learning outcomes
Rhet 1020 – ePortfolio Template

Freshman Year Learning Outcomes

Critical Thinking

AUC students explore, connect and evaluate issues, ideas, artifacts and events before accepting or formulating an informed opinion or conclusion.

```
Desired Outcomes

1. Engage in self-discovery and become aware of strengths and interests
2. Ask pertinent questions
3. Differentiate between facts and opinions
4. Accurately summarize information
5. Identify different elements or component parts in a variety of genres of texts and/or experiences
6. Identify evidence-conclusion relationships (develop rational arguments)
7. Analyze and evaluate arguments, explore options and draw conclusions
8. Evaluate one’s own performance individually and on a team
9. Present a scientific argument based on various sources
```

Instructions:

1. Answer the following questions in one-two paragraphs: What is critical thinking and why is it important to you? What critical thinking skills did you learn in the freshman program/course? Explain how you have improved or achieved them. What areas did you struggle with, and what areas did you improve? How did you overcome any challenges faced? Why did you select the artifact below? How does it show your mastery of this outcome? What specific goal can you set for yourself to continue developing your critical thinking skills in future? (300 words).

2. Below, insert an artifact that evidences your achievement of critical thinking (e.g. photo, screenshot, essay etc). Do this by clicking on the Insert button on the top menu on this page. (Tip: the More Gadgets option gives you interesting options). The page needs to show the artifact, not provide a link to it.

3. After adding your work to this page, remove all instructions that I have provided (except the learning outcome description). They should not be visible.
Activity 1 - Artifacts

1. **With the group on your table, think of a common learning outcome from a course you teach.**

2. **Brainstorm examples of potential artifacts that can be used to show student achievement of your chosen learning outcome.**

3. **Share with the group**
Sample ePortfolio Grading Rubric

Components:

- Selection of artifacts
- Layout & Readability
- Reflection/Critique
- Quality of Writing, Proofreading & Citation
## ePortfolio Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Limited</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selection of Artifacts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for this criterion: 25% of total score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The artifacts and work samples do not relate to the purpose of the eportfolio. No artifacts are accompanied by a caption that clearly explains the importance of the item including title, author, and date.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection/ Critique</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for this criterion: 25% of total score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is minimal or no reflection on some pages. The reflections do not describe growth. The reflections do not illustrate the ability to effectively critique work or provide suggestions for constructive practical alternatives.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Layout and Readability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for this criterion: 25% of total score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The eportfolio is difficult to read due to inappropriate use of fonts, type size for headings, sub-headings and text and font styles (italic, bold, underline). Color of background, fonts, and links decrease the readability of the text, is distracting and inconsistent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Writing, Proofreading, and Citation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for this criterion: 25% of total score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are numerous grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of writing does not facilitate effective communication and requires major editing and revision. No images, media or text created by others are cited accurately.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using ePortfolios as an assessment tool

Purposeful collection of student work that has been selected and organized to show student learning progress and to show samples of students best work.

ePortfolio assessment can be used in addition to other assessments or the sole source of assessment.

Some universities even use ePortfolio assessment as a basis for graduation!
How is an e-Portfolio Structured?

**COURSE BASED:**
- Helps faculty facilitate learning over the span of the course
- Can assess course-level outcomes

**PROGRAM BASED:**
- Helps faculty facilitate learning over the span of a program
- Helps students make connections between courses
- Can assess program goals for program assessment and/or accreditation

**UNIVERSITY-WIDE:**
- Can assess university goals over a 4-year span
- Helps students make cross-curricular connections
- Integrates all college experiences — academic and non-academic
How is an e-Portfolio Used?

**PRESENTATION OF STUDENT WORK**

- Students self-select work or “artifacts” from a course or program that highlights the skills and knowledge to demonstrate proficiency in that area
- Create a professional portfolio for employers and grad schools
- Final assessment for a course
- Create a capstone presentation to complete a program
How is an e-Portfolio Used?

**ASSESSMENT**

• Ongoing assessment/measurement of course, program or university learning outcomes

• Track student progress
  
  o Follow students through a course or program
  
  o Compare section to section
  
  o Compare year to year
Activity 2 – Direct and Indirect Assessment

1. **ON YOUR TABLE, DISCUSS HOW EPORTOLIOS CAN BE USED AS AN ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEASURES?**
2. **CAN IT BE USED AS A DIRECT MEASURE OR AN INDIRECT MEASURE? OR BOTH?**
3. **SHARE WITH THE GROUP**
How to Develop an ePortfolio Assessment Process

1. Define your learning outcomes
2. Get buy-in from key stakeholders
   - Other faculty
   - Department Chair
   - Administrators
3. Careful and efficient planning
4. Integrate it into the curriculum
5. Build in regular ePortfolio reviews
**How to prepare for ePortfolio assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages of ePortfolio assessment</th>
<th>What to do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Design and prepare for ePortfolio assessment** | • Integrate use of ePortfolio within assessment plan  
• Embed assessment in the curriculum and align with learning outcomes  
• Create grading rubrics  
• Introduce it at the beginning or the end of the program depending on purpose |
| **Introduce assessment by ePortfolio** | • Connect to LOs  
• Explain artifacts (definition & examples)  
• Demonstrate standards and explicitly outline criteria to students  
• Clarify rubrics and guidelines to students and assessors.  
• Clarify all aspects of the submission of the ePortfolio for assessment from the start, including due dates, expectations, content, selection and reflection. |
ePortfolio Benefits to Faculty & Administrators

1. Promote integration among existing programs
2. Can be used as a single assessment tool for both direct and indirect assessment measures
3. Alignment of course learning outcomes with university graduate capabilities.
4. Meaningful feedback about student perceptions of the course
5. Better knowledge of the “whole student”
6. Encourage sustainable assessment practices
ePortfolio Benefits to Students

1. Track accomplishments and feedback over a sustained period
2. Deeper understanding of learning outcomes
3. Evidence-based assessment and appreciation for learning and development
4. Showcase for stakeholders
5. Student self-authorship and agency
6. Digital literacy skills
Challenges for Faculty & Administrators

- may require changes to traditional assessment practices
- can be subjective and may compromise assessment reliability, if unsupported by rubrics
- time consuming, as it takes students time to become familiar with the ePortfolio process
- may require additional training for teachers implementing ePortfolio assessment
Challenges for Students

- may resist idea because they anticipate heavy workload

- may need direction on appropriate netiquette of ePortfolio environment and space

- may require support in further developing technical skills and critical skills, such as selecting, collecting and reflecting on material

- ePortfolios involve technical challenges for students without reliable internet access and some may require more training
Dealing with Challenges

• **Time and Energy**: ePortfolios use the same time for more benefit by empowering students to:
  - Document their own educational and professional progress
  - Get the feedback they want and need
  - Become more self-directed in their learning

**Money**: Once implemented, ongoing costs are minimized if you adopt an open source solution (i.e. Google, Moodle, etc.)

**Value of Reflection**: Reflective analysis improves everyone’s learning through promoting higher level thinking
Dealing with Challenges

*Skills:* The software is easy; the habit of documenting and reflecting upon one’s learning is more difficult

*Fear of technology:* ePortfolio, if set up right, is a user-friendly technology

*Resistance to change:* ePortfolio assessment necessitates new ways of thinking about teaching and learning

*Educating ePortfolio audiences:* raising awareness regarding the benefits of ePortfolio assessment increases buy-in
All courses in the Freshman Program include outcomes-based ePortfolios, linking to FP LOs.

Step 2: Freshman Program (FP)

An integrated skills project that demonstrates accomplishment of university LOs e.g. senior thesis, reflections on an internship, CBL project or reflection on study abroad.

Step 4: Signature Work

All courses within the Core curriculum include outcomes-based ePortfolios, linking to the Core curriculum LOs.

Step 3: Core Curriculum & Individual Programs

Step 1: Individual Courses
Pilot in individual courses

Step 1: Individual Courses
Pilot in individual courses
Considerations for Successful Integration of ePortfolios

The following strategies are recommended for the successful integration of ePortfolios (Krause, 2005):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consideration</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start small</td>
<td>Plan slow implementation. Run pilot projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build towards</td>
<td>a program-wide strategy, aiming for a new culture in assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align with</td>
<td>course learning outcomes, clearly defining purpose of ePortfolio for students and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make ePortfolio a sustainable</td>
<td>assessment tool. Use ePortfolios to track and gather resources for students from Year 1 onwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up Professional Development</td>
<td>and skill based workshops.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflection

On your tables, have a discussion about the ideas you can take away and the challenges that you still have with implementing ePortfolios within your programs. What possible ways could you deal with these challenges?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas I can take away</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you!

For more information or for assistance on how to implement ePortfolios in your program, contact:

Heba Fathelbab, Senior Director, Assessment & Accreditation, heba.f@aucegypt.edu, Ext #: 2233