eFolios: Supporting Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

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Session Goals

• Define what an eFolio is
• Understand how eFolios support student and teacher learning and assessment
• List some of the development tools available
• Apply criteria for selecting a development tool
• Understand important characteristics of the portfolio process
• Describe the importance of reflection
• See some examples
• Know where to find useful resources
What is a portfolio/efolio?

A portfolio is a goal-driven, organized, collection of materials that demonstrates a person's expansion of knowledge and skills over time.

The contents, organization, and presentation of materials in portfolios vary depending on their audience and purpose.
Types of portfolios

• Working Portfolios
  - Descriptive
  - Learning
  - Project*

• Presentation Portfolios
  - Assessment
  - Class
  - Project*
  - Employment
  - Showcase
  - Teaching
A portfolio can be a flexible tool that can be used for a variety of purposes.
Why electronic portfolios?

• They facilitate the reproduction of content making materials more practical and portable
• They are easy and inexpensive to duplicate
• They support greater creativity
• They communicate a professionals competence in using technology
• They can be the only way for a tech savvy teacher to demonstrate their skill
• They can act as a catalyst for learning
• They can build community
What goes in a portfolio?

Artifacts
An artifact is “tangible evidence that indicates the attainment of knowledge and skills and the ability to apply understandings to complex tasks” (Campbell, Melenyzer, Nettles & Wyman, 2000, p. 147).

NOTE: These include reflections about the artifacts.
Artifact examples

• Projects
• Papers
• Cartoons
• Drawings
• Multimedia presentations
• Photos
• Resumes
Example reflective questioning

• How does this artifact demonstrate competence in a particular standard?
• Why did I include this artifact (why is it important to me)?
• What did I learn as a result of using/creating this artifact?
• How would I do things differently as a result of the artifact?
What other items can be collected and included?

**Supporting documentation**
Items that do not fit into “artifact” definition. Such items provide information about the person/portfolio, but are not artifacts.
eFolios for Teachers and eFolios for Students Benefits

• Expressing identity/ increasing self-awareness

• Building self confidence through accomplishment

• Learning through the development process
  – Technology skills, graphic design, knowledge

• Creating a valuable product
  – Communicates to self, communicates to others
What are teaching portfolios?

- Special type of presentation portfolio
- Contain artifacts from teaching
- Demonstrate deliberate selection, reflection, and communication revolving around the artifacts
- Illustrate a professional’s recognition of personal competence
Critical attributes of teaching portfolios

"structured documentary history of a set of coached or mentored acts of teaching, substantiated by samples of student portfolios, and fully realized only through reflective writing, deliberation, and conversation (Shulman 1998, p. 37)."

Student eFolios

- Personal Representation
- Teaching & Learning
- Assessment & Accreditation
What do students and teachers say about eFolios?
Dear Miss Melbourne,

One word describes my first portfolio (1st-3rd grade): embarrassing. Some of the drawings I could draw better today. The portfolio shows my interests back then.

When I looked at my 1st grade stuff, I was proud. I think saving your work is a good idea. Portfolios is fun.

Signed,

Alex Cone
When I saw my portfolio, I was stunned. I really enjoyed looking at the things we done in the past. I don't hardly ever remember doing these things at all. It's very fun to see how much you have learned from them. Through this past year, I feel I have learned many new things and learned a number of different things about myself. It was a good idea to have us look in our portfolios and see all the different things we have learned. And I'm glad someone has been saving all this stuff, because it is all very important to me.

By Blair Selva 4A
Dear Miss Willow,

When I saw my portfolio I was shocked. I couldn't believe that I did the work all by myself. I couldn't really spell but know I'm in fourth grade I write better and spell better. I have learned a lot. I think it was a great idea. I think we should had kept some of the spelling test because I'm good in spelling. I've learned a great amount this year. I wish I can take some of my 1st and 3rd grade stuff home.

From: Jennifer
Suleika

6/1/95

Dear Miss Killane,

When I saw my portfolio I felt like my life flashed before my eyes. I saw things from first, second, and third grade. I can tell that I’ve learned a lot since the first grade. When I saw my fourth grade portfolio, I saw things from the beginning of the year to the end. I’m very proud of myself.
I have learned that there is more significance to the work that I do than I thought. I have rarely taken time to reflect on any type of work that I do. The process of producing artifacts and reflecting has allowed me to see a little deeper into the significance of artifacts" (SCDE 1, Participant #11, week 15 online discussion posting, 2002).
On the professional level of creating my portfolio it has been very helpful to have other teachers around to give feedback. There are many teachers on many levels and coming from various backgrounds in this class. This diversity gives us many perspectives from which to work and think. Having a few people read over my educational philosophy was very helpful. It helped to see what kind of message I am sending to my reader. If I were working on my own to create this portfolio, I would not have the input of other members of the class. I would not have the feedback about pieces of the portfolio or on myself as a teacher. It has helped me to reflect on my role as an educator. It has also taught me about working together; it is a new experience for me to work together as a team to create individual pieces of work. Usually a team works together towards one common goal for the team. Here however, we work as a team to create personal products-- we work together to have everyone come out with a product they are proud of. (SCDE 2, Participant #5, journal entry, 2002).
Learning to create a digital teaching portfolio in HTML format definitely helped me remember what it feels like to be a first time learner. Many times I found myself ready to pull my hair out I was so frustrated! It was almost the same feeling as when I was learning another language - very different and unfamiliar. I think learning Spanish was the last time I felt exactly like this. I think that going through this process will help me as an educator by allowing me, when teaching, to step back and get in my students shoes more. This way I will recall how it felt to be in their place and therefore will be more patient and understanding with their frustrations. (SCDE 2, Participant#3, journal entry, 2002).
It is good to reflect back on work that was accomplished numerous years ago and see where I was in my educational and developmental stages. Am I still in the same train of thought? Do I feel that I need to change things? These are some of the questions that I ask myself as I go through the process of gathering artifacts for my portfolio. (SCDE 2, Participant #7, journal 2002).
What is the portfolio development process?

1. Planning the portfolio: Focus & frame
2. Considering portfolio contents: Collect, select, & reflect
3. Designing the portfolio: Organize & produce
4. Evaluating the portfolio: Perform formative & summative evaluation
5. Publishing the portfolio
Stage 1: Planning the portfolio

**Focusing** the portfolio - determine the purpose of the portfolio and its intended audience. (RATIONALE)

- Who is my audience?
- Why am I creating a portfolio?
Stage 1: Planning the portfolio (cont’d)

Framing - determine how to create continuity among the various components of the portfolio. (FRAMEWORK)

- How can I create continuity? (theme, standards, question)
Stage 2: Considering Portfolio

Contents

Collect

Select

Reflect

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Selection guidelines

• **Examine** as many artifacts as possible (i.e., lesson plans, student work samples, etc.)

• **Determine** which artifacts support the framework by asking questions about each artifact.
Stage 2: Reflecting

“A [digital teaching] portfolio without reflection is just a multimedia presentation, or a fancy electronic résumé, or a digital scrapbook” (Barrett, 2000).
Reflective questioning

• How does this artifact demonstrate competence in a particular standard?
• Why did I include this artifact (why is it important to me)?
• What did I learn as a result of using/creating this artifact?
• How would I do things differently as a result of the artifact?
Stage 3: Designing the Portfolio

Organizing

- Creating a table of contents (toc)
- Putting artifacts into different categories in the toc
- Creating storyboard
- Creating a design grid (layout of web pages)
Stage 3: Designing the Portfolio

Before Producing - Consider

- Skills
- Portfolio development process
- Resources (Software, Hardware, People)
- Need to digitize artifacts
- Time
Stage 3: Designing the Portfolio

Producing

• Transforming artifacts and supporting documentation into digital format
• Creating, testing, and building the portfolio from a template
Stage 4: Evaluating the Portfolio

• Conducting both formative and summative evaluation (involve “critical friends in the process)
• Revising the portfolio
Step 5: Publishing the Portfolio

- FTP to WWW
- Turn-key tool
  - Taskstream, Chalk and Wire, Lectura others.
- Save on CD, DVD, Zip disk
- Print a hard copy
- SHARING of portfolio with students, colleagues, administrators, professors
Let’s look at some examples

http://www.otterbein.edu/home/fac/ckilbane/stateconf/portfolios.html