The AAEEBL ePortfolio Review (AePR) invites you to submit articles and reports covering the broad area of eportfolio use. We publish articles about pedagogy, research, technical, and organizational issues bi-annually. Our readership includes eportfolio practitioners, administrators, and students. AePR is an online journal serving the needs of the global eportfolio community and seeks to promote portfolio learning as a major way to transform higher education.

The AePR is a theme-based journal; therefore, acceptance is competitive. After a paper proposal has been accepted for a specific issue, the authors are paired with one of our peer reviewers. Paper proposals submitted for a current issue may be considered for a subsequent issue if it fits the upcoming theme.

Article Types
We’re particularly interested in the following types of articles:

• Longer articles (3,000 to 5,000 words) about practical research, administrative reports, or case studies with generalizable results – again, not as peer-reviewed research but as reports.
• Short articles (1,000 to 1,500 words) discussing a case study at an institution/course, offering advice and opinions to other eportfolio practitioners.
• How-to articles, tutorials on specific tools or approaches (500 to 1,500 words).
• Interviews (500 to 1,000 words) with key individuals directly involved with the use of eportfolios.
• Announcements (up to 300 words) of items regarding the use of eportfolios in the field.

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Hello Readers,

I’m delighted to share with you the latest issue of the AAEEBL ePortfolio Review with its theme of “Building Bridges,” echoing the connections made during the annual meeting in July at Capilano University in Vancouver, British Columbia as well as the collaborative international seminar co-sponsored with the Centre for Recording Achievement at Dublin City University in May of this year. Both convenings created opportunities for attendees to explore how ePortfolios can connect learning across and within stakeholders, environments, and contexts in order to achieve transformative and sustainable systemic change as noted by Dr. Cassandra Volpe Horii, President of the POD Network, in her keynote address.

In the annual Batson Lecture, Dr. Terry Rhodes of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) highlighted the importance of integrative learning via reflection which continues to be integral to our ePortfolio work. In this issue, researchers and practitioners focus on the expansion of portfolios to address the needs of first gen college students and adult learners. The relevance of ePortfolios in settings as diverse as study abroad and culminating activities, group-based learning and professional development at conferences reiterates how the practices associated with ‘folio thinking’ continue to evolve as they are transferred and applied to new situations and domains.

We welcome your comments and look forward to engaging with you in person at AAC&U’s 10th Annual Forum on Digital Learning and ePortfolios on January 26, 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia, virtually at one of our AAEEBL/EPAC webinars, and in our online community.

Enjoy and happy reading!

Helen L. Chen
Stanford University and the AAEEBL Board of Directors
Dear Readers,

As Fall turns into Winter, many of us in the Northern hemisphere take the time to reflect on the past year and start turning our attention to the new one. In one sense, we are charting a course forward based on our past experiences, we are creating a new vision for the upcoming year or setting new goals after completing new ones. However you may think about it, we are building a path forward. We can’t help but be reminded of ePortfolios and how they have become a tool used to connect experiences across time and place. Therefore, it is only fitting that in this issue of the AePR we focus on how ePortfolios can build bridges.

AAEEBL’s annual conference in Vancouver, CA this past July focused on Building Bridges. There were many excellent presenters exploring concepts associated with this theme. Within this issue, we showcase six articles on ways ePortfolios bridge learning and experience from one context to another. While the context and activities are different, each of these articles demonstrate how ePortfolios—regardless of platform—provide the means in which diverse experiences can be brought together into a singular experience.

We hope you enjoy this issue as much as we did preparing it for you.

Happy reading,

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Building Bridges with ePortfolios for First-Generation College Students

Author: Theresa Conefrey
Editor: Elaine Grey

This research explores the role of ePortfolios in easing the transition from high school to college for first-generation students, as adapting to college can be challenging for this vulnerable student population. Although these students are entering post-secondary education in ever-greater numbers, their graduation rates are not commensurate because they are not being retained. This is especially troublesome because in times of growing income inequality, and changing workplace needs, a college degree is more essential than ever. First-generation students are most at risk for abandoning their college programs during or at the end of their first year; therefore, successfully adjusting to the first year at college is crucial, since the outcome of their first college classes informs their decision on whether or not to persist into their second year. This study focuses on first-generation students’ work in their composition course, a required course during their first term on campus. Drawing on an analysis of student ePortfolios created for that course, this research shows that ePortfolios can provide students with tools for telling their stories, mediating myths of deficit, showcasing their skills, integrating their learning, and encouraging self-efficacy. This research suggests that ePortfolios work synergistically with other high-impact practices to help bridge the gap between high school and university for first-generation students to enable them to begin viewing themselves as successful scholars who engage actively and effectively in the campus community.

First-generation students are most at risk for abandoning their college programs during or at the end of their first year; therefore, successfully adjusting to the first year at college is crucial

Introduction: From High School to College

Summer on campus brings graduation ceremonies followed in quick succession by new student orientations. For faculty, the cyclical rhythm can make these events feel commonplace but for students, they mark significant milestones. The excitement of these incoming students is palpable, but for some, achieving their college dreams will be a hard journey. To succeed, they will need academic ability, a sense of connection to their new community, and determination to persevere through inevitable challenges. Although students’ self-appraisals, perceptions of support, and motivation will vary along their journey, there are well-documented educational practices that have been shown to increase student engagement, and positively impact students’ academic outcomes across all institution types. Endorsed by the
American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and labeled High Impact Practices (HIPs), these eleven practices have been shown to benefit all students, especially those for whom the college journey is more challenging such as first-generation college students (Finley & McNair, 2013; Kinzie, Gonyea, Shoup, & Kuh, 2008). Additionally, these HIPs work synergistically with one another (Conefrey, 2017), and their impact is thought to be cumulative, therefore, the more of these eleven practices the students experience, the stronger their impact (Hubert, Pickavance, & Hyberger, 2013; Kuh, O’Donnell, & Reed, 2013; Tukibayeva & Gonyea, 2014). This article focuses on ePortfolios because of their unique ability to integrate learning across multiple HIPs to amplify their impact. Viewed from this perspective, ePortfolios help bridge the gap from high school to college; a noteworthy point for those who are first in their families to attend college.

**First-Generation College Students**

College degree attainment of parents continues to be a strong predictor of a child’s chances of successfully completing a degree program. Consequently, first-generation students, defined as individuals whose parents do not possess a baccalaureate degree, begin their college careers at a distinct disadvantage. A recent report showed that after three years of college, 67% of students with at least one parent who had earned a bachelor’s degree were still persisting towards their own degree compared to 48% of first-generation students (First-generation students: College access, persistence, and postbachelor’s outcomes: Statistics in brief ;2018 ASI 4826-10.134; NCES 2018-421.2018). While there are many reasons for this disparity, a commonly identified factor is poorer academic preparedness, often as a result of under-resourced schools. For example, figures from ACT college readiness reports show that whereas 28% of all test takers meet ACT College Readiness Benchmarks across all four areas, only 10% of first-generation students do so. In commenting on the differing preparedness of first-generation and continuing generation students, the authors of the report note that “young people whose parents graduated from college--in addition to their time in school--most often participate in a 17-year, 12-month, seven-day-a-week, invisible curriculum” (2016, p. 3). In contrast, first-generation students (who tend also to identify as low income and as persons of color) will have experienced fewer opportunities to accrue social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Because of their limited social capital, they may find that crossing the bridge from high school to college is more challenging. As Adelman (2006) observes, “the bridge is not always aligned with the road on the other side” (p. xviii) for first generation students.

**Institutional Context**

The institutional context for this research is Santa Clara University, a private, Jesuit, liberal arts college in California’s Bay Area, which lists its student population as 9,015 (5,438 undergraduate students and 3,296 graduate students) in the 2018-2019 Undergraduate Bulletin. According to institutional reports from 2007-2017, first-generation students make up on average 14% of the undergraduate student population each year. Although 52% of all other students identify themselves as White, only 25% of first-generation students do so, and the majority (40%) of the students identify themselves as Hispanic. At Santa Clara University, all students starting in their first year engage in multiple HIPs such as learning communities (LCs), writing-intensive-courses, and common intellectual experiences as part of the “core” curriculum. Approximately 9% of first-year students live on campus, but even those who live off-campus are members of a residential LC (RLC). Each RLC is associated with a specific residence hall and organized around broad themes not bound to a specific major. Students in the RLC participate in events and activities, and have opportunities to connect and learn, both inside and out of the classroom alongside fellow students, staff and faculty. These residents also take linked courses together, including a required two-sequenced, writing-intensive first-year
composition course, called Critical Thinking and Writing 1 and 2 (CTW). Although the specific readings and assignments vary among instructors, each instructor follows the same set of goals and learning outcomes mandated by the university’s Core Curriculum, which aims to prepare students for college-level reading and writing.

**LEAD Scholars Program**

In addition to being members of an RLC, first-generation students can also elect to become part of the Leadership, Excellence, and Academic Development Scholars Program (LEAD), the college’s LC for first-generation college students. Students in this program arrive on campus a week before the start of regular classes as part of a one-week program to introduce them to the university’s academic programs and campus life. Part of the time is also dedicated to helping students get to know each other, as shown in Figure 1. During this week, students begin CTW 1. Although each section follows a common syllabus, individual instructors still exercise choice over specific readings and assignments. Something unique to these CTW sections is that all students are required to create an ePortfolio. As the final assignment for CTW 1, students use their ePortfolios to demonstrate that they have mastered the goals and learning objectives of the course. There are typical assignment prompts to guide the students, so they upload their artifacts (drafts of their work, feedback from peers and
Building Bridges with ePortfolios for First-Generation College Students
Author: Theresa Conefrey

This research is part of a larger ongoing study into the impact of ePortfolios and other HIPs on first-year student retention. The study suggests, as represented in Figure 2, that ePortfolios function synergistically with other HIPs to interact dynamically with three important aspects of first-generation students’ successful transition to college: academics, sense of belonging and motivation. The following sections discuss each aspect in more detail.

Figure 2: ePortfolios as a bridge connecting academics, motivation and sense of belonging

Huesman, 2014; Tinto, 2017). This research is part of a larger ongoing study into the impact of ePortfolios and other HIPs on first-year student retention. The study suggests, as represented in Figure 2, that ePortfolios function synergistically with other HIPs to interact dynamically with three important aspects of first-generation students’ successful transition to college: academics, sense of belonging and motivation. The following sections discuss each aspect in more detail.

ePortfolios Support Academics

ePortfolios support learning by making it visible to students themselves, their instructors and other audiences. They enable students to weave together drafts of essays, final papers, digital annotations, photos of annotations in books, and so on, to effectively display the progress that they have made in their literacy and their academic-readiness/preparedness. As viewers examine the evidence of progress that students offer, they can judge for themselves how far students have come. In Figure 3, a student is reflecting on the progress that he has made in his critical reading. He reflects on his lack of high school preparation for college reading and writing which seems to be a result of tasks focused more on lower levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956). The student states that: “My reading was simply summarizing what the authors were saying. There were no questions, no specific areas that sparked an idea; it was all just reading and understanding. My essays had the basic five-paragraph format of intro, three supporting paragraphs and a conclusion.” Later in his reflection, he displayed examples from his reading summaries (CRLs), which showed that his annotations had become more critical as his higher-order thinking skills improved. The ePortfolio made learning visible, and helped this student realize that annotating was about processing his reading to arrive at “new questions and connections.”

Apart from commenting on the feedback that they had received from their instructors, students also appreciated opinions from their classmates. For example, in his ePortfolio, a student discussed comments from a classmate and described the important role that peer feedback had played in his writing process (See Figure 4). As he elaborated on improvements in his writing from early to final drafts and from early to later assignments, he also demonstrated increased metacognitive awareness, a skill that...
will support not only his writing but his progress in other courses as well.

Students’ appraisals of their academic abilities and self-regulation are important because research suggests that they correlate with actual academic attainment (Altun & Erden, 2013; Prat-Sala & Redford, 2010; Rosa Cera, Michela Mancini, & Alessandro Antonietti, 2013; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994).

ePortfolios Support a Sense of Belonging

The digital nature of ePortfolios allows students to upload multifarious artifacts from essays to audio-files, to videos, to photos and other graphics. In this way, they enable rich accounts of students’ progress in becoming part of an academic and a social community, as they process their learning from various HIPs. Students’ ePortfolios frequently featured visuals of friends, family, faculty and other sources of academic and social support. They also featured visuals of events on campus before the start of regular classes, when they were introduced to faculty, peer advisors, peer educators, and dedicated staff who are available to support them. In addition with the LC and writing-intensive core composition course, students also began other HIPs during their first quarter, which included their first-year seminar, their RLC and some would have started other required core experiences such as service learning and collaborative assignments and projects. Being able to begin multiple HIPs in their first year is beneficial impacting me. I am now more confident in my writing and reading for all the classes I have. Since I have become more productive and better at time management, I am now relaxed when I have to do an assignment.

Figure 4. Increased Metacognitive Awareness

In addition to offering evidence of improvements in the quality of their reading and writing, students also illustrated an increasing awareness of self-regulation. Most students arrived on campus accustomed to hanging out with friends or multi-tasking while they studied, and many were in the habit of writing their essays the night before. As one student noted, “Outlining was out of the question for me. I thought it was a waste of time, thus I used to start my essays right away.” Others expressed their shock when they realized how much studying was required to keep up with all their coursework: “I arrived here this year believing that high school had been my main life, and that I could officially cruise through college. I had never been more wrong in my life.” First-generation students, who do not have role models for college life, tend to fall back on inaccurate media portrayals and can experience “culture shock” when they arrive. Figures 5 and 6 show excerpts from a student who used her ePortfolio to illustrate graphically her reflection on her study habits and her effective self-regulation by the end of the quarter, as she began to realize key aspects of her study habits. Figure 6 demonstrates how she used the digital affordances of the ePortfolio to include time-lapse videos shot with her phone to make an engaging point. She noted:

After my first quarter in CTW class, I have made some realizations. I had never sat down to think about my different processes for reading and writing. Being able to look at the different habits I had accumulated over the years, I chose which ones I could keep and altered the habits that were negatively

Figure 5. Self-Regulation

Coming to college was a culture shock. I was not adequately prepared for the essays or the reading.
because a growing body of research suggests that, when done well, these and other HIPs are valuable for improving the engagement and retention of all students and in particular those who are most at risk of attrition.

An important explanation for the benefit of HIPs is the relationships that they encourage students to develop with faculty, counsellors and peers, who can support students’ academic and social acculturation. In addition, they can also strengthen students’ sense of belonging in the institution to help compensate for their under-developed social capital when they arrive. Social integration and sense of belonging are important because research suggests that students with stronger friendship networks achieve higher grades and persist with their studies (Martin, 2017; McEwan, 2013; Pascarella, Pierson, & Wolniak, 2004). The student who included the photo shown in Figure 6 noted how her new friends helped her by both offering feedback on her writing and keeping her on task when she was studying. The value of social connections should not be underestimated because students tend to need to establish friendships first before they seek out institutional support or start to engage in extracurricular activities such as joining the campus community clubs. References to social and academic engagement are also significant because first-generation students tend not to seek out contact with faculty and tend to underuse campus resources (Gansemer-Topf, Kollasch, & Sun, 2017; Hagerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusky, Bouwsema, & Collier, 1992; Katrevich & Aruguete, 2017; Pratt, Harwood, Cavad, & Ditzfeld, 2017; Stebleton et al., 2014).

**Student reflection on this artifact:**

Studying with others also keeps me focused and motivated to finish my work faster. Friends help me stay away from my phone. If I receive a message they give me a facial expression that says “do not even think about picking up that phone.” When I get frustrated, they help me not give up on the problem I am working on.

**Figure 6. Establishing a new community**

Students also included pictures of parents, teachers and mentors who had been a strong support to them during high-school. In this way, they could start integrating aspects of their old identities as high-school pupils and their new identity as college students. For many students, there will have been significant changes in how they saw themselves when they first arrived on campus and how they saw themselves at the end of the quarter. For example, one student charted an impressive trajectory from the wrong side of the digital divide to computer literacy: “At the beginning of the quarter, I felt like I lacked the basic knowledge and tools to succeed in the course. I had little knowledge of tools like annotations and computer skills. During this course, I started to learn how to use my first laptop ever, unsure of how to use a device that most of the other students at SCU considered a staple in their academic lives.” As shown in Figure 7, by the end of the course, she had integrated the “Me of the Past” with her new identity. In the process, she had learned about visual rhetorics, design principles, navigation and digital identity or presentation of self, all valuable skills that will serve her well in future classes and beyond.

**Figure 7. Navigating Identity**

Others provided accounts of what they had overcome such as low self-esteem, language deficits,
low expectations of teachers, and how they had persevered in doing additional work outside class to improve their skills. For example, one student who had won a scholarship to a private high school wrote: “Ever since my transition to a private institution, Loyola High School, during my second year of high school, I immediately felt as if I was not as smart, talented, or athletic as the other students. Never before had college been mentioned in school, and I surprisingly found myself among students whose parents went to Ivy League schools and started their own companies.” His narrative concluded with how he had persevered and come to feel comfortable in his new community. Similarly, another student reflected:

_A lot has changed. I doubted my abilities as a reader and writer in college; I wasn’t sure whether I would be able meet the expectations of work required for SCU. I was ready to give up. But through the support of those around me, I gained the confidence I needed in order to start improving and working on my ability as a writer. Now, nearing the end of my first quarter at SCU, I have exceeded my expectations of my ability as not only a critical thinker, but also as a college student._

The affordances of the ePortfolio allowed students to show in multiple media the supportive networks that they were developing both with peers, faculty, and others who could support them in their new environment. As noted, once students have established social networks, they are more likely to seek out academic communities and extra-curricular opportunities in their majors. Figure 8 shows an ePortfolio page from a student who was demonstrating commitment to her new institution by attending a club fair. Below the photo of the Engineering Club Fair, she noted a list of both academic and social clubs, suggesting her growing comfort in both academic and social aspects of campus life.

In writing about their sources of support inside and outside the classroom, students were further reinforcing their sense of belonging, which research suggests increases their chances of being retained. Such demonstrations of campus engagement are significant because first-generation students are less likely than their continuing-generation peers to be involved in campus activities (Katrevich & Aruguete, 2017; Pratt et al., 2017; Stephens, Covarrubias, Fryberg, Markus, & Johnson, 2012)

**ePortfolios Support Motivation**

This study suggests that first-year students reframed narratives of deficit and low self-esteem to portray a more efficacious identity by using their ePortfolio to integrate different aspects of their identity, to keep what was useful from their family and high school, and to take on new aspects of their identity as a college student. The whole CTW curriculum and the HIPs in which they were engaged attended to the whole student, mind, and heart. The reflective aspect of creating their ePortfolio encouraged...
them to connect all these beneficial experiences to consider who they were, and who they wanted to become. As noted, some students were explicit about the unique benefits of reflection, which is so central to ePortfolio pedagogy (See Figure 11). Reflection is crucial for deep learning because it connects experience with the generation of meaning. Reflection and integrative learning involve connections across time, space, and discipline, developing the capacity to merge, transfer and consolidate learning from new experiences to what has been learned already. Although for many students reflection can be an unfamiliar task, when it is scaffolded appropriately, all students find it valuable and some even find it transformative, such as the student who noted how reflection had not only helped her understand who she was, but had also helped her start thinking about her future goals:

This ePortfolio project ended up having more effects on me than I thought it would. Because of this project I have been able to identify, reflect on, and refine my different processes and habits as well as to better understand my background and influences and the important roles they’ve played in shaping who I am today. These are things that I have never needed to reflect on before.

Because of these reflections I have grown as a reader, writer, and student. I am walking out of my first quarter at SCU a very different person than when I walked in.

Similarly, other students used their ePortfolios to think through their long- and short-term goals. Figure 9 shows a student’s developing career awareness and reveals her intention to belong to both social and academic aspects of her new community. In her ePortfolio, the student noted the changes in her thinking over the quarter; as a result of exposure to courses on engineering for social good, she now had more intentionality in her study plan. She had developed a global perspective and knew that she wanted to work in a field where she could help others less fortunate than herself overseas.

GOALS
Coming to SCU has definitely given me a new perspective on my goals in life. Here’s my updated list:

Short term:
- Study abroad/immersion trips/exposure to the “outside world”
- Join a whole bunch of clubs and become proactive
- Meet a lot of new people!
- Stay fit…or get fit
- Be organized and become better at tracking time
- Actually try to go surfing
- Sleep
- Learn some “home-cooked” meals
- Win the cookie contest

Long term:
In terms of my career, so far I want to use my education in the field of Engineering for humanitarian causes. I actually never expected to go down this path until recently, and I find myself really drawn to it! I’ve always been interested in the sciences and being proactive in hands-on projects. Yet, I know that I want to help people who do not even have the things that I mostly take for granted everyday. This leads to me wanting to travel, and to actually live and immerse myself in new places around the world.
ePortfolio than simply his instructor, or his community.

The Publisher
After all my organizing, researching, writing, and editing is complete, I can finally publish my writing. However, this page is not just about how I publish my writing, but how I want to publish myself to the community around me. By publishing my writing, I am also publishing my own personal thoughts, background, and feelings; this is evident through the themes in my essays. Most of my essays revolve around coherence. Participation in HIPs encourages students to develop relationships with faculty, counselors and peers, which support their academic and social acculturation and strengthen their sense of belonging in the institution. Providing evidence of these experiences and reflecting on them in their ePortfolios further strengthens students’ motivation as shown in Figure 11. In other words, the reflective and integrative aspect, which is central to ePortfolios, helps bolster students’ self-regulation, their appraisal of self-efficacy and their metacognition. As a result, they strengthen students’ scholarly identity and their motivation to continue their studies. Figure 11 represents the dynamic nature of each of these aspects, which continually impact and are impacted by each other bi-directionally. By virtue of the reflective and integrative power of ePortfolios, all elements are mutually reinforcing regardless of the point of entry. For example, increased self-efficacy functions hand-in-hand with increased self-regulation and metacognition. As such, it leads to an improvement in scholarly identity and stronger motivation and sense of belonging, which in turn leads to an increase in self-efficacy.

Closing Thoughts
Making the transition from high school to college is a challenge for all students, but even more difficult for those who are first-generation college students. As the excerpts of student work above show, first-generation students, who were part of an LC that was created to meet their needs, appeared to be on track to persist in their academic programs. Their reflections displayed increased confidence in their literacy and study skills, a perception that their emotional needs were being met, and that they had additional sources of support from faculty, tutors, advisors and other mentors. Additionally, they presented themselves as students, writers, and scholars, identities that suggest that they felt comfortable in their new campus environment. While it is too early to say whether these first-year students will be retained, their campus program has proven highly successful in retaining and graduating first-generation students with an average four-year graduation rate of 83% from 2007-2014, compared with 81% for all others (Dancer, 2017).

ePortfolios in conjunction with other HIPs appear to offer a potent formula for increasing student success and retention. The integration that ePortfolios enable has led some to claim that it be considered a “meta-HIP” (Watson, Kuh, Rhodes, Light, & Chen, 2016). Eynon and Gambino (2017) provide convincing evidence from multiple institutions to show that ePortfolios help integrate learning from multiple HIPs giving them more meaning and
Conclusion

ePortfolios and other HIPs build bridges for first-generation students. They support the needs of the whole person; bolster academic efficacy, self-regulated learning, and metacognition; and enable the development of relationships with peers, instructors and others on campus to transition to college life. The combined effect of these HIPs results in a greater sense of belonging, leading to higher levels of motivation, improved grades and stronger institutional commitment. ePortfolios can provide students with tools for telling their stories, mediating myths of deficit, showcasing their skills, integrating their learning, and encouraging self-efficacy. In this way, they serve as a bridge to help students successfully navigate the path from high school to college to begin viewing themselves as efficacious students who belong on campus and feel academically and socially supported by it.

About the Author

Theresa Conefrey (Santa Clara University, California) obtained her BA in German and Linguistics with a minor in EFL/ESL. After teaching English in Germany, Denmark, Finland, Japan, and Spain, she returned to the UK to obtain a PGCE in high school teaching before heading overseas again. After graduating from the University of Illinois with an MATESL and a PhD from the Institute of Communications Research, she taught at the University of Hawaii, Hilo, before accepting a position at Santa Clara University, where she teaches oral and written communication courses and carries out research on multifarious aspects of ePortfolio implementation and usage. Through her research, she hopes to help all learners reach their full potential.

References


Reflections on ePortfolio Professional Learning: Harnessing an Unconference Approach

Authors: Lisa Donaldson, Karen Buckley, Orna Farrell, Julie Úi Choistealbha
Editor: Ellen Zeman

This practitioner-led article documents the journey of a cross-institutional multidisciplinary team to support the development of practitioners’ ePortfolio professional competencies through an “Unconference.” We describe the approach used to support an ePortfolio unconference hosted in January 2018 at Dublin City University. According to Budd et al. (2015), the most meaningful professional learning at conferences tends to occur at the coffee breaks when delegates are free to engage in open dialogue. An unconference is a dynamic participant-driven conference which features discussion and collaboration at its core to support professional learning. This approach was chosen to capture, develop and document current ePortfolio practice in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

This article outlines key facets of professional learning generated as a result of the unconference including the promotion of ePortfolio competencies and the generation of collaborative research outputs. At the unconference, attendees participated in experiential learning opportunities which enhanced and extended their personal and professional ePortfolio competencies as well as developed practice-focused research outputs collaboratively in real time using a range of technological tools.

Participant feedback highlights the impact of the unconference on their professional ePortfolio learning and practice, and the critical reflections of unconference organizers inform future ePortfolio professional development.

Context
Over the last 10 years, ePortfolios have emerged as an integral element of the learning landscape in higher education. They are seen as a dynamic medium for recording and showcasing student learning as well as a powerful tool for reflection (Hosego & Parker, 2009; Dreissen et al., 2007; Eynon & Clark, 2009). Although ePortfolios are ubiquitous in American higher education, in Ireland they have seen a relatively slow pace of adoption. This lag has been due to the lack of government policy drivers, the absence of a distinct Irish ePortfolio community, and a scarcity of funding (Eynon & Gambino, 2017; Farrell, 2017). In Ireland, traditional forms of assessment still dominate in higher education. A recent study indicated that the creation of digital artefacts for assessment were one of the least used assessment methods, with 63% of respondents stating they were never used (Y1 Feedback, 2016).

There are indicators, however, that Irish institutions of higher education are beginning to engage with ePortfolio. This is evident in the emergence of an ePortfolio community of
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practice, (Lave & Wenger, 1998) initially called MahararIrl. This community currently has 92 members from 21 institutions (Donaldson, Buckley, Farrell, & Ui Choistealbha, 2018). MahararIrl, founded in 2017, was rebranded Eportfolio Ireland in 2018 to better represent the broader interests of all members. This grass-roots community with a volunteer steering group holds online and face-to-face events to support faculty professional development and ongoing collaboration between ePortfolio practitioners in Irish institutions of higher education.

There is growing evidence that ePortfolio practice can enable students to integrate their learning and make connections between modules (Buente et al., 2015; Eynon & Gambino, 2017; Morreale et al., 2017); learn in an authentic and meaningful way (Baird et al., 2016; Lambe McNair, & Smith, 2013); improve their academic writing (Desmet, 2008); learn independently (Clarke & Hornyak, 2012); and learn in a self-regulated way (Alexiou et al., 2010; Jenson, 2011; Nguyen & Ikeda, 2015; Stoten, 2016).

There is very little empirical research on ePortfolio practice in Ireland. A recent search of the ERIC database revealed only four peer-reviewed journal articles about ePortfolios in the Irish context. Two recent surveys of Irish higher education faculty found that 31% of respondents were only beginning to use ePortfolios and that 403 of 580 Irish academics surveyed stated they were not using ePortfolios in their teaching (Eportfoliohub, 2016; Harding, 2018).

It is within these contexts that the Eportfolio Ireland and the unconference team sought to support the development of Irish practitioner ePortfolio professional competencies and to grow the ePortfolio community of practice, answering Wenger and Snyder’s (2000) call to “bring the right people together and provide an infrastructure in which communities can thrive.”

Our belief is that the movement towards ePortfolio-based assessment in Ireland needs to be scaffolded. Respondents to an Irish study indicated that ePortfolio technology and process are often perceived as complex, stating a lack of appropriate resources as a reason for a lack of ePortfolio adoption (eportfoliohub.ie).

Thus, there is a need to ensure that key competencies facilitating ePortfolios are developed for higher education practitioners. Through Eportfolio Ireland we are seeking to address this need by developing a proactive and open community where expertise can be shared and resources collaboratively developed to promote and encourage impactful ePortfolio practice.

The Unconference Approach to Professional Learning
“Unconferences” are voluntary, informal learning experiences that reject traditional conference structures such as a predetermined slate of speakers and sessions (Boule, 2011).

An unconference is an informal learning experience where no topics have been predetermined, no panels or working groups have been arranged. Instead, the event is organized through the participation of its attendees. They feature timely and often primarily discussion-based sessions that are participant driven. Unconferences have been described by Greenhill and Wiebrands as “gatherings of people united by a passion (p2).”

The concept of unconference is not new, having been referenced as far back as in 1997. An unconference is a novel format for collaborative discussion. Unconferences have been used predominantly in the area of programming under the name of bar camps since 2005. The first one boasted 200 attendees who arrived for a
weekend with their sleeping bags! However, the unconference concept has experienced a surge in popularity in the last 10 years. Edcamps, which are based on this concept, have become quite common in the U.S. for educators, and Teachmeets, which are also very informal, exist in the UK and Ireland.

The prospect of organizing a learning event of great fluidity and lack of control can be daunting. It certainly was for this organizing committee. After initial planning and scheduling by the team, the onus was on the participants to come prepared, be engaged, and talk about ePortfolio topics that mattered most to them. At the unconference participants contributed their ideas for session topics. Typically, this process is paper based; however, in this instance the team introduced enabling technologies to manage the topic generation and selection. All participants voted online on the suggested topics and those that received the most votes became the agenda for the day, which in our case was posted virtually during the keynote presentation by Sam Taylor of Cranfield University. After that, the breakout sessions were self-organized and fueled by coffee and snacks. The benefits of this unconference approach to professional learning are emerging. While there is very little formal research in this area (Carpenter, 2016; Greenhill & Weibrands, 2008), anecdotal evidence and reflections from the organizing team suggest:

- A higher energy level. An unconference is an engaging and energising approach to professional learning.
- Less up-front planning. While planning is required, there is no need to call for abstracts and set up a detailed agenda ahead of time.
- Greater flexibility. The agenda is dynamic, which allows participants to spend time discussing often unexpected topics that are of particular interest to them.
- Spontaneous conversations. An unconference prioritizes informal conversations, allowing participants to exchange knowledge and build connections.
- An opportunity for collaborative development. Unconference sessions can lead to a greater level of productive collaborations, professional development opportunities, and the development of resources, in our case these included an ePortfolio eBook and rubric.

Unconference Tools for Facilitating Organization, Learning, and Sharing

Technology was the enabling factor for our unconference, and the creative use of technology was a differentiating factor for this event. The organizing committee for Eportfolio Ireland was committed to building community through collaboration, and the unconference used various technologies as the backbone to support professional learning. The flexible and open format enabled lively conversations to cultivate ePortfolio competencies of participants and supported practitioner-led outputs like a Padlet wall of session summaries and key discussion points through the use of the technological tools such as Tricider, Google Docs, Padlet, Twitter, and Zeetings.

While there is great fluidity in an event driven by attendee participation, an unconference
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still needs a coordinating mechanism. Zeetings (Zeetings.com) was the tool selected for this purpose. It allowed for an organizing session outlining the “rules” of the event and managed the topic generation process and conference schedule through embedded links that participants could access once they logged into the Zeetings presentation.

With an Unconference, active participation is expected. Attendees were asked to use Tricider (Tricider.com) and engage with the question: What presentation, conversation, or collaborative design work would you like to engage with? This approach enabled individual professional learning needs to be shared. Tricider also supported a voting mechanism, and participants then voted on all suggestions with the top 12 being given a slot on the programme agenda. This process ensured that the generation of the agenda was truly a collaborative and participant-driven event.

The areas of greatest interest from the ePortfolio community in the room can be seen in Figure 4.

The formal agenda was quickly drawn up by the organizing committee during the keynote presentation by copying the sessions with the most votes into a Google Doc. The link to the Google Doc was provided via the Zeetings presentation to give participants instant access to sessions and locations. A link to a Padlet wall (Figure 5) was also provided through Zeetings so that the key points from each session could be recorded and shared more widely to all participants, including those attending other sessions.

Some of the most productive sessions used technology to support collaboration. Two such sessions utilised Google Docs to collaboratively design ePortfolio resources. In one session, participants shared sample ePortfolio assessments with a view to developing an eBook of collective expertise which could subsequently be published and shared with all ePortfolio practitioners. This eBook (Figure 6) has been edited and was published as an Open Educational Resource (OER) in September of 2018.

Another session revolved around the design of an ePortfolio assessment rubric (Figure 7). The initial work on the rubric was conducted in this session in a Google Doc and was completed afterwards by the organizing committee. The assessment rubric has been shared with all Eportfolio Ireland members. Because it has proven to be a valuable resource, the rubric was shared more widely via the Eportfolio Ireland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight Criteria as Appropriate</th>
<th>Not Achieved</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject knowledge Relevancy Coherence of arguments and artefacts</td>
<td>Does not address concept, topic or key points. Most ideas are underdeveloped, unoriginal, or lack relevancy/critical thought. Artefacts do not support argument or are not included.</td>
<td>Content indicates thinking and reasoning applied with original thought on a few ideas. Not all key points included or fully developed. Some artefacts included which support argument.</td>
<td>Content indicates original thinking and develops ideas with sufficient evidence. Clear argument supported by appropriate, relevant artefacts.</td>
<td>Content indicates synthesis of ideas, in depth analysis and evidences original thought and support for the topic. Thoughtful artefacts selected that advance main argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity with Multimedia</td>
<td>No inclusion of audio/video, or graphics or photos, audio or video are distracting/no relevant to the content of the portfolio.</td>
<td>Audio/video/ graphics/photos are included but used without purpose or design in mind. Some artefacts may not function correctly.</td>
<td>The use of audio/video/ graphics/photos are appropriate and contribute to understanding concepts, ideas and relationship. The artefacts enhance the written material and create interest.</td>
<td>Innovative use of audio/video/ graphics/photos is integrated seamlessly into several different artefacts. They effectively enhance understanding of concepts, ideas and relationships, and create interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Academic Conventions Referencing Copyright Spelling and Grammar</td>
<td>Poor or incorrect use of required referencing scheme. Multiple spelling or grammatical errors. Copyright references not included for artefacts.</td>
<td>Inaccurate use of required referencing scheme. Some spelling or grammatical errors. Some care has been given to copyright and fair usage of images/artefacts.</td>
<td>Largely accurate use of required referencing scheme. Few spelling or grammatical errors. Copyright and fair usage of images/artefacts noted.</td>
<td>Excellent grammar, spelling, syntax and punctuation. Content fully supported by reference to relevant, up to date, and accurate referencing. Copyright and fair usage issues well considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usability and Navigation</td>
<td>Organisation and structure is confusing. The navigation links are poor or missing making navigation difficult. Many external hyperlinks do not connect to the appropriate website.</td>
<td>Some navigation links included to provide structure. Some external hyperlinks do not connect to the appropriate website.</td>
<td>Organisation, structure and flow of the portfolio page/s is clear. Navigation links function well. Most external hyperlinks link to appropriate website.</td>
<td>Well organized page/s and structure facilitates the reader’s accessibility and navigation to the content. Navigation links seamlessly to appropriate websites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. Completed ePortfolio rubric by unconference participants
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Twitter feed-- @EportfolioIRL-- and other social media channels. This Twitter feed has been used to promote ePortfolio engagement, raise interest in the unconference, and expand the Eportfolio Ireland network. Some of the various interactions on the day can be viewed on [YouTube] (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9QFOd1rZs)

Feedback from the Unconference

Formal evaluation of the conference was collected by the funding partner, the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The response was overwhelmingly positive. For research purposes and to provide additional understanding of the impact of the event, the organizing team sought ethical approval and additional feedback was garnered through an online evaluation form.

The aim of ePortfolio Ireland is to support learning and collaboration on ePortfolios across Ireland. The development of collaborative resources is fundamental to this goal, and a number of sessions at the unconference featured such co-development. The team sought to understand how successfully this aim was met. The survey results were indicative that the unconference approach is highly supportive of this goal (Figure 8).

The unconference format fostered peer-to-peer learning and collaboration

Interestingly, results also indicated that the unconference format was more impactful than a traditional conference for supporting professional development (Figure 9).

A common theme of collegiality and meaningful interaction was evident among survey respondents. When asked what were the most impactful elements of the unconference, respondents chose shared peer learning; engaged, deep and meaningful conversations; networking and sharing of ideas; and format encourages discussion. Additional unsolicited feedback via email to the unconference organizers included the following comments:

“Just a little thanks for a huge, mind-blowing unconference on Friday!” (Participant 1)
“I was very taken with the concept of the unconference and the democratic way it ran – I definitely felt that I got more out of it than the normal conference sessions.” (Participant 2)
“Superb conference. You and your team deserve to take a bow.” (Participant 3)

Reflections of the Organizing Group

As well as seeking feedback from the participants at the unconference, the organizing team created their own feedback using a reflective self-study (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001; Schön 1983). This allowed us the time and space to examine our own individual reflections and also an opportunity to share our thoughts and reflections with one another (Lassonde et al., 2009; Evans, 2002). Moon (1999) provides
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gibbs Stage</th>
<th>Key reflections from the unconference organizing team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Description** | Aim/purpose of the unconference  
Centrality of people  
Structure and format of an unconference |

**Indicative narrative:**
"An unconference is a dynamic and highly interactive participant-driven conference which features discussion and collaboration at its core. This format fosters peer-to-peer learning, collaboration and creativity. The event that I ultimately designed enabled participants to propose and facilitate discussion on the topics that were most relevant to their own context."

| **Feelings** | Cyclical nature of feelings--- excitement – anticipation--- trepidation -- enjoyment/fulfilment  
Comfort levels with the format -- need for trust, nervousness, level of risk |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Indicative narrative:**
"My initial feeling about the conference was that it was great to have something new and dynamic at a time of conference saturation in the field of education. … This soon became a sense of trepidation. … However, it was reassuring that the open nature of the unconference meant that I could contribute in a way that I felt comfortable with. … In the lead up to the conference there was a heightened sense of anticipation as the actual schedule was unknown and totally reliant on others."

| **Evaluation** | Value of conversations  
Building the ePortfolio network  
Collaboration is key  
Strength of unconference for professional learning |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Indicative narrative:**
"I think the unconference format is very effective for sharing practice, networking and growing the eportfolio community."

| **Analysis** | Cross institutional commonalities  
Technology dichotomy -- practical focus an advantage for implementing learning but at the same time the technology focus meant that it was reliant on the organizers to ensure that it worked and that conversations were more technology-based as opposed to research/theory-based |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Indicative narrative:**
"The sessions proved to be more discussion than presentation focused which contributed greatly to the vision of collaboration and community that I had originally envisaged."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Conclusion</strong></th>
<th>Unconference approach -- springboard, adapted in future, mechanism for ongoing professional learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Indicative narrative:**
In conclusion, the eportfolio unconference achieved more than it set out to do. It will be remembered as the springboard for enhanced collaboration on eportfolios in Ireland and beyond.

| **Action plan** | Need to build ePortfolio community  
Harness unconference approach  
Another conference in the future |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Indicative narrative:**
"Positive feedback… posted on Twitter highlights the desire amongst the Irish community to improve eportfolio competencies and that unconference style events may well be a highly relevant mechanism to provide ongoing professional learning."

Table 1 Unconference organizing team reflections based on Gibb’s Reflective Cycle
many justifications for reflective work such as this, but the most applicable to this paper are:
- To record experience
- To develop learning in ways that enhance other learning
- To deepen the quality of learning, in the form of critical thinking or developing a questioning attitude
- To facilitate learning from experience
- To increase active involvement in learning and personal ownership of learning
- To enhance professional practice or the professional self in practice
- To explore the self, personal constructs of meaning and one’s view of the world.
- To enhance the personal valuing of the self towards self-empowerment
- To foster reflective and creative interaction in a group

In this collaborative self-study exercise, each member of the team wrote a personal reflection on the unconference experience using the six stages of Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle (1988) as a guide:

1. Description
2. Feelings
3. Evaluation
4. Analysis
5. Conclusion
6. Action Plan

These individual reflections were then used as a data source mined for emerging common themes under each of Gibbs’ headings (Table 1: Previous page).

Key Facets of Professional Learning Generated Through the Unconference Approach
The key facets of professional learning generated by the unconference are evaluated by applying Guskey’s (1994) guidelines for successful professional learning and development:

1. An individual and organizational process
2. Think big but start small
3. Team support
4. Feedback
5. Follow-up
6. Integration

Using these six headings, the unconference approach can be described as a successful professional learning and development activity for the following reasons:

| An individual and organizational process | The unconference focused on both the individual and their organizational contexts and involved many participants from institutions across Ireland and the UK. |
| Think big but start small | The unconference is a new and innovative idea for the Irish education sector. The speed at which the event sold out and the need to move to a larger venue are indicative of the appealing nature of such a dynamic event. |
| Team support | The organizing group harnessed one another’s strengths to ensure a smooth operation, and outside bodies actively sought to be part of this unique event. |
| Feedback | Feedback was sought not only from participants but also from the organizing team by means of a self-study reflective exercise and was overwhelmingly positive. |
| Follow-up | A second unconference building on the learnings from the original unconference is planned. |
| Integration | Technology was key in integrating learning from the unconference into collaborative and openly shared resources like the eBook and the rubric. |

Table 2 Success of Unconference Based on Guskey’s Guidelines

Conclusion
This article documents the journey of a cross-institutional multidisciplinary team to support the development of practitioners’ ePortfolio professional competencies through an unconference. The organizing committees’ reflections, supported by participant feedback, indicates that the unconference approach is an effective format for professional learning and competency development with ePortfolios for practitioners across Ireland. Our experience is that an unconference can be an easily replicated and empowering event. Furthermore, the topics generated through the Tricider activity on the day of the event, specifically those related to supporting critical reflection and sharing best-practice examples of student creativity and ePortfolio-based assessment, served as the basis for ongoing discussion at subsequent events following the
unconference. Professional learning events that allow conversations to start and continue to flourish will improve ePortfolio competencies for all. The development of practitioner ePortfolio competencies through these ongoing conversations and the generation of collaborative research outputs were key elements of the professional learning generated through the unconference.

Reflecting on our first unconference experience, which was transformed by technology and powered by participant interactions, the organizing committee is confident as to the efficacy of this type of professional learning for ePortfolio practitioners that we look forward to the next scheduled unconference in September 2018 at the Marino Institute of Education, Dublin, where we propose to push beyond the boundaries of an unconference to the collaborative development of an “unpaper.” We look forward to reporting on this further foray into ePortfolio professional learning!

**About the Authors**

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Reflection to Promote and Assess Students’ Intercultural Competence: Challenges and Opportunities for Study Abroad

Author: Kristyn Muller
Editor: Jennifer Munday

“Overall, I am better equipped to deal with change and the unknown since this semester has been full of the unknown. I am more adaptable to people and situations anywhere.” (student reflection)

Student enrollment in higher education study abroad programs has risen steadily over the past two decades. In 2015-16, over 325,000 U.S. students studied abroad for academic credit (Institute of International Education, 2017). While studying abroad, students have the opportunity to engage in a variety of learning experiences beyond the content of their academic coursework. Students may encounter situations during any phase of their travel that can influence their perspectives and potentially enhance their knowledge, competencies, and skills. But do all students respond positively to these experiences and recognize their learning gains? Educators may want to find ways to encourage students’ holistic learning. Reflection, perhaps via ePortfolios, can potentially be used to promote and assess student learning in study abroad programs. However, there is limited generalizable research to support the efficacy of using reflection for these purposes in the study abroad context. Based on the findings from a larger study, Muller (2018), I argue that while reflection can be beneficial for students studying abroad, we need to have realistic expectations about its effectiveness until we gather more empirical evidence. In this article, I will first provide a brief background regarding the types and purposes of study abroad programs, and then discuss some of the challenges and opportunities of using reflection to promote and assess student learning, particularly intercultural competence, within this context.

Background: Study Abroad

There are many different types of study abroad, or education abroad, programs. In addition to the traditional academic study abroad programs, in which a student travels abroad and takes courses at a partnering institution, there are also faculty-led programs, teaching internships, and community service/volunteer abroad programs. All of these programs can occur in various lengths ranging from two weeks to an entire year. In the U.S., data from 2015-16 shows that students are more inclined to participate in short-term programs (63%), than mid-length (34%) or long-term programs (3%). The data also indicates that the majority of students studying abroad identify as White (72%) and as women (67%) (Institute of International Education, 2017). According to Hoffa and DePaul (2010), there are four primary purposes or rationales for studying abroad: to enrich the academic experience, to provide an opportunity for students to challenge their cultural viewpoints, to obtain skills beneficial for the global workforce, and to contribute to personal development. Prior research has demonstrated that living and learning abroad can enhance students’ intercultural awareness and sensitivity, disciplinary
knowledge, foreign language proficiency, and communication skills (Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, & Klute, 2012). The most commonly acknowledged outcomes of study abroad programs are “intercultural awareness, development, and sensitivity” (Sutton, Miller, & Rubin, 2007, p 47). These outcomes can be combined into one construct called “intercultural competence,” which is described further in the next section.

**Intercultural Competence**

Although there are many different definitions of the term “intercultural competence,” Deardorff (2004) determined that the definition faculty and administrators prefer most is “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (p. 171).

Several empirical studies have examined the relationship between study abroad and intercultural competence using survey methods such as: Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, the Openness to Diversity Scale, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory, the Intercultural Sensitivity Index, the Miville-Guzman Universality Diversity Scale (MGUDS), Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI™), the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI™) (Forgues, 2005; Williams, 2005; Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Braskamp, Braskamp, & Merrill, 2009; Cooper & Niu, 2010; Lombardi, 2011; Salisbury, An, & Pascarella, 2013; Grigorescu, 2015). Findings from studies using these instruments have varied though. For example, Forgues (2005) and Lombardi (2011) both found that students who studied abroad had greater gains on the survey scales than students who did not study abroad. Grigorescu (2015) found that study abroad had a positive impact on students’ global awareness and global perspective, and she was able to confirm her quantitative findings with student interviews. On the other hand, Salisbury, An, and Pascarella (2013) found that while study abroad did increase students’ amount of contact with diverse others, it had less of an impact on students’ appreciation of cultural differences or their comfort with difference. Reza (2015) examined IDI™ scores of students who traveled to different destinations and found that certain factors, such as faculty engagement, consistent reflection, and deliberate guidance, can improve students’ intercultural competence. Deardorff (2004) suggests that intercultural competence is best measured with a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. Overall, it seems that study abroad may positively influence students’ intercultural competence, but the extent of the impact may vary depending on the students’ experience and/or how intercultural competence is measured.

**Study Abroad Assessment**

Although study abroad is a well-established practice in higher education in the United States, it is becoming increasingly important for educators to produce evidence of the value of these programs on their campuses (Ogden, 2015). Colleges and universities often rely on generalizable research about study abroad programs to make claims about the benefits of their own study abroad programs; assessment of study abroad student learning outcomes is still in its infancy (Deardorff, 2015). Salisbury (2015) explains that although international educators have progressed with assessment efforts over the past decade, more work is needed. One of the main challenges is that many educators are not trained in how to conduct effective assessment (Cooper & Niu, 2010). Historically, when study abroad program assessment was conducted, if at all, it consisted of post-program satisfaction surveys. Although this data is important to collect, it does not provide evidence of student learning. As student learning outcomes assessment became more prevalent, educators began using pre- and post- surveys to measure students’ learning gains. More recently, educators have started using direct assessment methods such as observations, photos, reflections, and ePortfolios (Deardorff, 2011).

In 2010, Cooper and Niu described Michigan State University (MSU)’s ePortfolio project,
which assessed both study abroad and non-study abroad students’ intercultural learning outcomes. Their project was part of a multi-institution grant project funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and coordinated by the American Council on Education (ACE). The project, titled “Lessons Learned,” was designed to improve the assessment of international learning at U.S. colleges and universities. The team analyzed thirteen different assessment instruments to determine which type would be best to use for their identified learning outcomes; they decided to use ePortfolios with rubrics as well as a survey (Dietrich & Olson, 2010). Students were required to submit at least five artifacts, such as course papers, photographs, or personal narratives, in their ePortfolios. Students were also required to complete the Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI™), which quantitatively assessed students’ intercultural competence during their freshmen and senior years. When examining the effectiveness of this approach, their preliminary findings confirmed that ePortfolios were valuable and helped faculty and staff understand students’ BEVI™ scores (Cooper & Niu, 2010).

Reflection for Assessment in Study Abroad

In a larger study, Muller (2018) sought to understand the efficacy of using reflection via ePortfolios to promote and assess student learning in study abroad programs. Based on findings from that study, reflection can be useful for promoting and assessing students’ learning, but there are several limitations that need to be considered before we can be certain about the benefits of reflection within the study abroad context. In this section, I describe the relevant aspects of the Muller (2018) study and discuss the challenges and opportunities highlighted by the study’s findings.

Reflection Rationale

As with other curricular and co-curricular experiences, students often do not recognize all of the skills they have gained (or are gaining) nor how their experiences align with one another. It is important for educators to create an environment that encourages students to make meaning of their learning (Wawrynski & Baldwin, 2014). Mezirow’s (1991) transformative learning theory provides an excellent framework for understanding how students can make the most of their experiences. He explains that it is important for individuals to actively and critically question their beliefs and values, rather than simply accept the social realities they acquired over time. Reflective learning requires one to assess and reassess their assumptions. Reflection can then become transformative when assumptions are found to be invalid and new meaning is constructed. Study abroad is often a challenging experience that requires adjustment, so it can be an ideal opportunity for transformation (Root & Ngampornchai, 2012). With this framework in mind, one would expect study abroad to impact students’ intercultural competence, and that students who engage in reflection may be more likely to transform their perspectives.

Method

In Muller’s (2018) study, participants were enrolled in semester-length, academic-focused, direct enrollment, non-faculty led, study abroad programs. The locations of the study abroad programs varied - few students went to each location, so in order to have enough students in the study, it was not possible to group participants based on location. However, students traveling abroad for other types of education abroad programs, such as internships, service-learning, and teaching, were not included in the sample. Altogether, there were 81 students who began participation in the study. All participants were asked to complete the Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI™), a pre- and post-survey, to quantitatively measure their intercultural competence gains. The pre-survey was conducted one to three weeks prior to departure and the post-survey was conducted one to three weeks after program completion. The results were paired to calculate an estimate of each students’ intercultural competence
Reflection to Promote and Assess Students’ Intercultural Competence: Challenges and Opportunities for Study Abroad

Author: Kristyn Muller

The surveys also included demographic questions (i.e. gender, race/ethnicity, age, class year, etc.) and other items related to the students’ personal characteristics and experiences (i.e. GPA, prior travel, co-curricular involvement, faculty interactions, etc.) prior to and during study abroad (Muller, 2018). The participants were asked to respond to reflective prompts eight times throughout their time abroad. The prompts, displayed in the table below, were designed to align with specific points in the semester and to elicit responses that aligned with categories in the AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE rubric, which contains the following categories: Knowledge: Cultural Self Awareness, Knowledge: Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks, Skills: Empathy, Skills: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication, Attitudes: Curiosity, and Attitudes: Openness. Four of the reflective prompts loosely followed the “Description, Interpretation, and Evaluation” method, as described by Bennett, Bennett, and Stillings (1977). The participants’ reflective responses were rated by four educators using the AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE rubric (Muller, 2018).

Limitations
It was difficult to recruit enough students for the Muller (2018) study because of the limited number of students who met the sampling criteria and because of the number of components included in the study. Although participants were recruited from four different institutions,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reflective Prompt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1: Introductory Entry</td>
<td>Who are you? Why did you decide to study abroad? What are your goals for your study abroad experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2: Verbal Communication</td>
<td>Describe something about the spoken language of other people who you interacted with this week. What was your initial reaction to the similarities/differences between their spoken language and yours? How did the similarities/differences make you feel? What do you think now about their spoken language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3: Nonverbal Communication</td>
<td>Describe something about the nonverbal cues (i.e. body language, facial expressions, hand gestures, etc.) of other people who you interacted with this week. What was your initial reaction to the similarities/differences between their nonverbal cues and yours? How did the similarities/differences make you feel? What do you think now about their nonverbal cues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4: Goals Self-Evaluation</td>
<td>Are you on track to meet the goals you set forth for yourself this semester? Why or why not? What has influenced your ability to make progress toward your goals? What can you do to ensure that you make further progress?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5: Differences</td>
<td>Describe something you observed this week that differed from your own values, beliefs, or practices. What did you initially think about it? How did you make you feel? Why do you think this difference exists? What do you think now about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5: Understanding</td>
<td>Describe something you observed this week that you didn't initially understand. What did you initially think about it? How did it make you feel? What did you do to better understand it? How well do you think you could explain it to someone else now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7: Thoughts about Change</td>
<td>How has your study abroad experience shaped you or affected you as a person? What particular aspects of your experience have been especially meaningful and/or memorable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8 a&amp;b: Concluding Thoughts</td>
<td>How did your study abroad experience impact how you think about yourself and your relationship to others and society? What have you learned about your own cultural rules or biases? How would you describe your study abroad experience to a future employer or graduate school admissions office? Why does your study abroad experience make you a better candidate for a job or for graduate school admission?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Muller (2018) reflective response prompts
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only a relatively small portion of undergraduate students study abroad each semester. In the Muller (2018) study, the number of eligible students ranged from 30 to 125 at each participating campus. In typical online survey research, response rates are often low (Fan & Yan, 2010). In this study, participants were not just asked to take one survey; they were asked to complete ten components - a pre-survey, eight reflective prompts, and a post-survey, which could have been perceived as a lot of work to do voluntarily. Therefore, it is not surprising that the sample size was 81 in total and dwindled based on completion of the various components. Only 26 students completed the pre- and post- surveys and all the reflective prompts.

An additional limitation could have been the rubric rating procedures. All of the raters received the same instructions, but they did not have formal training or norming sessions. Some research indicates that rubric training could enhance the effectiveness of using a rubric (Rezaei & Lovorn, 2010), while other research demonstrates that rater training does not always lead to greater rater agreement (Pufpaff, Clarke, & Jones, 2015). Therefore, it is unclear whether additional instruction would have increased inter-rater reliability in this study, but it is a possibility.

Findings: Challenges

Since the final sample contained participants who completed most of the reflective prompts and others who completed only a few or none, a t-test between those two groups’ survey scores was conducted, but no statistically significant differences were found. Although this indicates that the students who completed reflective responses did not necessarily develop higher levels of intercultural competence than others, the sample size was small, so these findings should be interpreted with caution. Also, the results could have been complicated by the fact that although some study participants did not complete the reflective prompts for the study, they may have still engaged in reflection on their own. For example, the post-survey asked two items related to reflection – how often did they reflect upon their experiences abroad as part of a course requirement and how often did they share their study abroad experiences with others. Students who reported higher frequencies of these behaviors also reported greater gains in some areas of intercultural competence, as measured by the GPI™ survey (Muller, 2018).

Student reflection is considered to be useful for authentic assessment when the written content is rated using an appropriate rubric. Muller (2018) used the AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE rubric to rate the participants’ reflective responses to test this assumption. The findings highlighted potential challenges regarding validity and reliability of this approach for measuring students’ intercultural competence growth.

Validity

In the study, the quality and quantity of participants’ reflective responses varied, perhaps due to the students’ ability or willingness to articulate the experiences that influenced their attainment of intercultural competence. Some students may have had a prior experience with written reflection, had a more natural ability to articulate their thoughts, or had an easier time following the directions to answer the actual prompts assigned. There was also a large range in terms of the number of words students wrote per response (55 to 453 words). The findings indicated that the longer the post, the higher rating it tended to receive (Muller, 2018). While this relationship is not surprising, it is problematic if students are experiencing intercultural competence growth but are not explaining themselves well in their reflective responses. On the other hand, it is possible that students’ responses did accurately reflect their perspectives about their learning gains. As Salisbury and colleagues (2013) found, although students who study abroad may increase their interactions with diverse others, they do not necessarily develop a deeper appreciation of cultural difference.
Further, despite the fact that the reflective prompts were intentionally designed to elicit responses related to intercultural competence, some students, in their reflective responses, chose to focus on other goals and objectives of study abroad that did not pertain to intercultural competence. For example, many students wrote about how their autonomy in a foreign country increased their self-reliance. Others discussed outcomes such as enhancing their time-management skills, developing adaptability, or participating in activities related to their career goals. In the cases where students emphasized experiences related to outcomes other than intercultural competence, they obtained lower rubric ratings because their reflective response content was not relevant to the rubric categories (Muller, 2018).

**Many students wrote about how their autonomy in a foreign country increased their self-reliance... time-management skills, developing adaptability, or participating in activities related to their career goals.**

**Reliability**

Furthermore, two types of measures were conducted to analyze the reliability of the rubric. The first examined the degree to which the author and the three additional raters assigned ratings for each prompt to the same rubric categories. Because there were nine different reflective prompts and six categories in the rubric, there were 54 prompt and rubric category combinations. Some prompts and rubric category pairings elicited higher levels of agreement between raters than others. The rubric category that produced the highest levels of agreement for three different prompts was *Skills: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication. Attitudes: Curiosity* also produced a high-level agreement for one of the reflective prompts. In these instances, the rubric descriptions aligned well with the content received by the reflective prompts. For example, prompts #2 and #3 both specifically asked students to reflect on different aspects of communication, so it was easier for the raters to agree that the content should receive ratings in the *Skills: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication* rubric category. Although the reflective prompts were constructed to obtain responses that would align with the rubric categories, some alignment was more straightforward than others and some students answered the prompts more directly and/or fully than others. These inconsistencies made it difficult to achieve agreement between the raters (Muller, 2018). Benander et al. (2016) found similar results when testing the efficacy of using five other AAC&U VALUE rubrics to measure students’ ePortfolio content; they discovered that some rubrics aligned with ePortfolio content better than others.

The second reliability test used was an Intra-Class Coefficient (ICC), which measured the level of agreement between the exact scores given by each of the raters. The ICC for all ratings, regardless of prompt or rubric category, was good. The ICCs for each of the rubric categories, regardless of prompt varied from fair to excellent, and the ICCs for each of the 54 prompt and rubric category pairs ranged from poor to excellent. Only four pairs demonstrated excellent agreement and 13 other pairs had good levels of agreement. Low ICCs could have been due to raters interpreting the rubric differently. Regardless, it is clear that some aspects of intercultural competence may be easier to capture reliability through rating students’ reflective responses than others (Muller, 2018).

**Findings: Opportunities**

Since the reflective prompts used in the study were issued throughout the semester, the rubric ratings were broken up into first half and second half average ratings based on the prompts’ timing. The difference between these two average ratings provided an estimate of
intercultural competence growth. A paired samples t-test was conducted, and significant differences were found for all six rubric categories. Thus, despite concerns about validity and reliability, positive increases were found for all rubric categories based on students’ reflective response ratings (Muller, 2018).

The reflective response content itself, aside from the rubric ratings, provided another source of data to explore student learning outcomes. Within their responses, students exhibited evidence of intercultural competence (Muller, 2018). See the following quotes for examples:

• “I’ve realized things that I didn’t even know I didn’t know. In the back of my mind, I’ve always thought European cultures were cooler somehow, compared to culture in the States. But now I don’t see culture as being cooler or better from another, but just different.”
• “My ability to be open to practices other than my own has been challenged during my time here, but I feel very strongly that it is an important quality to have.”
• “Overall, I am better equipped to deal with change and the unknown since this semester has been full of the unknown. I am more adaptable to people and situations anywhere.”

These students were able to describe some of the growth they experienced abroad. Thus, it is certainly possible to glean insights about students’ intercultural competence gains from their reflective responses.

**Recommendations for Practice**

If educators are interested in enhancing and/or assessing students’ attainment of intercultural competence, they should be intentional about defining the construct and considering the various dimensions or aspects that comprise it. Using the AAC&U VALUE rubric showed that it may be easier for students to make progress and/or demonstrate growth in certain areas of intercultural competence than others. Some of this may depend on individual students’ goals or reasons for studying abroad, but the different aspects should be considered when intercultural competence is stated as a desired study abroad learning objective. Similarly, educators should encourage and assess other types of learning outcomes that students may achieve while studying abroad. It was evident in the reflective content that not all students regarded development of intercultural competence as their primary objective even if they were increasing their attainment as a result of their experiences (Muller, 2018).

Further, if educators have the ability to make reflection a required component of their study abroad programs, they could also require pre-study abroad training on how to effectively reflect. Providing more instruction and/or practice for reflection prior to traveling abroad could help mitigate ambiguity. In the Muller (2018) study, students were not specifically told that their reflective responses would be used to evaluate their intercultural competence, they were not shown the rubric, and they were not required to write a minimum length response. Transparency around these practices could potentially reduce the variations in responses unrelated to actual learning gains. Also, by embedding assessment processes into program completion requirements, students might view it as part of the learning experience (Dietrich & Olson, 2010).

In addition, if educators choose to use a rubric to rate students’ reflective responses, they may want to consider designing a customized rubric, providing the raters with more thorough training, and/or testing the rubric with a pilot group of students. Educators may also want to consider using certain reflective prompts for assessment purposes and others just to promote learning. As Muller (2018) found, some reflective prompts might be better suited to elicit consistent response content from students than others. It is also possible that reflective responses could be analyzed using other qualitative methods instead of a rubric.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

Future research could expand upon Muller (2018) by refining the research methods and/or addressing additional research questions to explore some of the reasons behind the
findings. In terms of the research method, it would be useful if researchers could find a larger study abroad sample and work with an institution or private company willing to require the pre-post survey and reflective assignments. As mentioned in the previous section, it may also be useful to provide pre-study abroad training on how to reflect. In future research, the AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE rubric could be used again, but additional rater training might be useful. On the other hand, researchers could use a different rubric or create one specifically designed for their study with input from scholars in the field and/or international educators. Also, there was not enough data in this study to draw conclusions about students’ perceptions of written reflection, but that may be worth examining through additional qualitative methods in future research.

**Conclusion**

In Muller’s (2018) study, the findings suggest that we should be cautiously optimistic about the use of reflection to promote and assess students’ intercultural competence in study abroad programs. What reflection can do is help students describe their experiences and perhaps their reactions to those experiences, to the best of the students’ ability to articulate them. What reflection can possibly do is enhance student learning; if students do truly engage in meaningful reflection, it can result in transformative learning. What reflection might not be able to do is provide valid and reliable data for assessment purposes.

With that said, however, the impact of reflection and the ability to use reflection for assessment may depend on specific circumstances (type of study abroad program, students’ experience with reflection, the design of the reflective prompts, the rubric categories and descriptions, the rubric training, the raters’ backgrounds and experience, etc.). The results from Muller (2018) certainly cannot be generalized to all situations in which reflection is being used for study abroad. Nevertheless, as educators, we should be more mindful of the potential limitations and implications of using reflection to promote and assess students’ learning gains if that method is utilized, especially within the study abroad context.

**About the Author**

Kristyn Muller is the Impact Analyst for Open SUNY within the State University of New York (SUNY) System Administration. In this role, she evaluates the effectiveness of Open SUNY’s services, analyzes how online learning impacts SUNY’s overall goals, and develops ways to share data to inform the continuous improvement of SUNY’s online learning practices. Kristyn was previously the Assistant Director of Residential Life for University Apartments at the University at Albany where she was involved in various assessment initiatives on campus. Kristyn has a Ph.D. in Education Policy & Leadership from the University at Albany.

**References**


Reflection to Promote and Assess Students’ Intercultural Competence: Challenges and Opportunities for Study Abroad

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In this paper the authors describe how folio thinking was incorporated into two courses: 1.) a semester-long Master of Education course and 2.) a week-long Certificate Workshop for Faculty Development. The authors discuss how activities that use folio thinking can be incorporated into a course without a formal portfolio (paper or electronic). Two activities, used in two courses, are described. These activities demonstrate how a reflective portfolio and an in-class culminating activity allowed students to reflect on their experience and self-assess personal achievement of the intended learning outcomes of the course.

The use of the folio thinking approach as a culminating in-class activity fulfilled two goals. Through this informal, but structured, oral assessment activity students provided evidence, to themselves and to the instructor of the course, that they had met the course learning outcomes. In addition, participants in both the M.Ed. course and the faculty development workshop learned a strategy that they could apply in their own context as educators in their own future courses.

The culminating, in-class activity, Putting the Pieces Together, incorporated pedagogical speed-dating with assembly of a physical, paper-based, jigsaw puzzle. The paper outlines how this activity was implemented and participant reactions. Readers are encouraged to consider how this technique could be used in other teaching contexts.

Incorporating Folio Thinking at the Course Level
This paper describes how the authors applied the concept of folio thinking at the course level to require the learners to compile and reflect upon the multiple activities completed over a single course (rather than a full program) to demonstrate their learning. This type of thinking guides the student learning experience and enables students to take responsibility for their learning (Penny Light, Chen, & Ittelson, 2012; Chen & Penny Light, 2010). The examples shared in this paper demonstrate how a folio thinking approach was integrated at the course level, without the use of a traditional digital or paper-based portfolio, to engage students in activities for reflective learning and assessment.

Background Context of EDUC 807 and the Faculty Certificate Workshop
Our institution, St. George’s University (SGU) in Grenada, West Indies, offers programs to an international cohort of students through the School of Medicine (SOM), School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM), School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) and the School of Graduate Studies. There are 6,000+ students and 500+ faculty. Our first example of folio thinking at the course level is the culminating activity used in a Masters of Education course, Curriculum Design and Instruction, EDUC 807. This was one of the final courses offered in a two-year Masters of Education program at SGU. The first author of this paper developed and taught the course Curriculum Design and Instruction to 8
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graduate students; 7 of the students were faculty at SGU in SOM, SVM and DES and one student was a teacher in a primary school in Grenada. The second example we share is the use of folio thinking as a culminating activity in a week-long workshop for faculty development. This five day workshop was offered to SGU faculty at the Northumbria Campus, Newcastle, England, and taught by the first author of this paper. Twelve faculty, including instructors and clinical tutors, participated in the workshop.

Pedagogical Design of EDUC 807 and the Faculty Development Workshop
The courses described were designed using a pedagogical approach that incorporated an Outcomes Based Approach to Student Learning (OBASL) combined with the T-5 model of course design. An image to represent the OBASL approach to course design is shown in Figure 1. The T5 model is shown in Figure 3.

Essential aspects of the OBASL approach are that the learning outcomes (LO’s), learning activities (LA’s) and assessments are aligned and clearly articulated for the students. Constructive alignment is a learning and teaching principle that states that the intended learning outcomes, the learning activities and the assessment tasks in a program or course must be properly aligned. Thus, the intended learning outcomes (what we want the students to learn) must be supported by the correct use of learning activities (how we want the students in a course to learn), and the measurement of learning, in the form of assessment tasks (how do we know what they have learned), must be appropriate for the learning outcomes (Biggs, 1996). In the syllabus created for EDUC 807 the Learning Outcomes, Learning Activities and Assessments are explicitly listed and numbered. As shown in our syllabus example (Figure 2) the M.Ed. course EDUC 807 states each learning
## Learning Outcomes

### 1 Define curriculum
1, 2
1

### 2 Distinguish between curriculum planning, curriculum development, curriculum implementation, curriculum evaluation, and curriculum improvement
1, 2, 3
1

### 3 Recognize curriculum as a product of its time and context
1, 2, 3
4, 5

### 4 Discuss historical perspectives and philosophical approaches to curriculum development
2, 4
2

### 5 Analyze their society’s needs for education, and from their analysis generate goals for education that are appropriate for their context
1, 2, 3, 6, 7
2

### 6 Generate well-structured learning outcomes for their subject(s) coupled with alignment of appropriate methods for facilitating learning and for assessing student learning
2, 3, 4, 5, 6
3, 4, 5

### 7 Discuss the roles and connections of the state, professional organizations, accrediting bodies, principals, teachers, students, parents and other citizens in curriculum development
3, 4, 7
1, 2, 5

### 8 Practice as a ‘reflective practitioner’ by seeking feedback (from students and peers), reviewing and revising approaches to curriculum design and teaching practices
3, 4, 6, 7
2, 3, 4, 5

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### The T5 Model

Laurillard (2002) describes the importance of engaging students in tasks that drive the learning process so that students are able to take an active, rather than passive, approach to learning. In order to help faculty design courses using a task-based approach to course design a team of faculty and educational developers at the University of Waterloo developed the T5 model as a framework that could be used to design face to face, online and blended courses. This approach to instructional design emphasizes the importance of Tasks (Learning Tasks with associated deliverables), Tools (for students to access tasks and submit deliverables), Tutorials/Feedback (may be online feedback or in class), Topics (content resources to support the Learning Activities and Teamwork) may be used in class or online to provide opportunities to learn through collaboration and feedback. The T5 model, promotes active learning by creating opportunities for students to engage with the course content, the instructor and colleagues (Salter, Richards, & Carey, 2004). The model guides instructors to consider how class time can be changed by incorporating online resources and tasks to engage students pre- and post-class. This guides instructors to rethink the use class time so that more time can be used to incorporate discussion and dialogue (Salter et al., 2004; Salter, Pang, & Sharma, 2009). Without a framework for course design faculty tend to focus mainly on the content to be covered and neglect the learning activities and tasks. The T5 visual is an easy framework that can be used as a reminder to incorporate tasks and feedback and consider reusability and active learning. The framework can be used in course design and in course and program
evaluation. Figure 3 shows the essential aspects to consider when designing or rethinking the design of a course using the T5 framework.

**T5 Model as Framework**

Although originally conceived for use in the design of online and blended courses the T5 model is equally relevant as a framework for courses without an online component as a way to guide instructors in designing for active learning. As shown in Figure 3, the T5 model encourages instructors to think about the active learning that students will need to do and develop appropriate learning tasks. The instructor designs both tasks and feedback activities. Other aspects, such as the topic resources used and the tools used (such as learning management systems, online tasks, in class tasks), may be incorporated by using reusable content that has already been created. These resources may be text-based or digital and may be created by the instructor or they may be sourced elsewhere.

**Incorporation of Folio Thinking into OBASL**

The approach to applying folio thinking at the course design level is shown in Figure 4. The visual shows how folio thinking was incorporated to allow reflection by the students and the faculty. Faculty can use folio thinking in the design and the implementation of the course learning activities, and students use folio thinking as they document their personal learning through task completion. Assessment is used both to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes and as a reflective activity to allow the students to reflect on their learning and make changes. Folio thinking activities are incorporated into Learning Activities and Learning Assessments. In this way, folio thinking can be a learning outcome, a learning activity and a learning assessment.

In both EDUC 807 and in the Faculty Development Certificate Workshop, a reflective paper was also required as a way for students to use folio thinking to demonstrate their learning and connect the dots across the curriculum. In EDUC 807 students were required to integrate learning from across the entire two year M.Ed. program into the reflective paper; in the Faculty development certificate workshop students were required to reflect on their learning and make changes.
Development workshop, faculty integrated their learning from across the week-long program activities.

For EDUC 807 the reflective paper was a culminating activity and submitted for assessment. For the Faculty Development course the reflective paper was completed as a post-session task, followed by a consultation. The reflective paper and consultation are important elements of the program that also incorporates folio thinking. Prior to a one-hour consultation with the Program Director, faculty complete a 1-2 page reflective paper, submit the paper digitally and bring a hard copy of the paper to the consultation.

In the one-on-one consultation, participants are invited to read their paper aloud to the course director. Faculty are rarely given this type of opportunity to read their personal reflections aloud and receive feedback; this gives a different dynamic to the meeting. Reading the paper orally allows a conversation to take place that would not have happened if the director had merely read the paper prior to the meeting and made comments on the text. During the oral reading of their paper, faculty are able to stop at any point to spontaneously expand upon ideas that they had noted in their paper; the instructor is able to probe and make comments throughout the reading. In this way, the reading of the reflection paper enabled both the faculty member (who had participated in the learning experience) and the course facilitator to deepen their knowledge and demonstrate to both parties that the learning outcomes of the program had been met.

Model of OBASL + ‘Folio’ Thinking

What you want your students to learn:
Aims and Learning Outcomes

How you want your students to learn:
Teaching and Learning Activities aligned with LO

Folio Thinking Activities

How you will judge how well your students have learned:
Assessment methods and Standards aligned with LO

Reflection, Application, Reflection

Figure 4. Folio Thinking incorporated into an OBASL framework
Pedagogical Speed-dating Jigsaw Activity

The Pedagogical Speed-dating Jigsaw Activity was also used in both EDUC 807 and the faculty development workshop. In both examples the facilitator created a jigsaw puzzle, with each puzzle piece posing a question that would be discussed in dyads. Each puzzle piece question was related to the course learning outcomes. Discussion of these questions enabled students to demonstrate to themselves, their colleagues and the instructor that the learning outcomes were met.

The Jigsaw activity incorporates all five elements of the T5 model in a face to face setting for active learning. The Task is the Jigsaw activity, the Topic consists of all of the course material and prior learning in the course, the Tools are the Jigsaw Template, the Teamwork comes from sharing in dyads and later with the full group and the Tutoring (Feedback) comes from both peers during the activity and from a debrief with the full class and the instructor at the end of the activity. The debrief and discussion upon completion of the jigsaw and pedagogical speed-dating are essential elements to provide feedback to the learning and an opportunity for further reflection as the students consider how well they were able to demonstrate the learning outcomes by responding to the questions and engaging in rich discussion.

For this in-class activity students are paired at tables. Each table has 6 envelopes, (labeled 1-6). Each envelope holds a single puzzle piece with a question for discussion. Questions in the envelopes are distributed in the same order at each table. When the pedagogical speed-dating activity begins, participants at each table are asked to open the first envelope and discuss the question. The facilitator reminds the students to be sure that both participants in each dyad have equal time to engage in the dialogue. The facilitator times the discussion based on the time allowed for the class. For a one-hour class, a two-minute period for discussion works well. At the end of the allotted time, the facilitator rings a timer that signals it is time for one person from each dyad to move to the next table; the process is repeated until all six envelopes have been opened and questions discussed and the puzzle completed. This approach allows each participant to engage with multiple other classmates as they work through the puzzle pieces and assemble the jigsaw. The puzzle pieces form an image; with completion of each piece of the puzzle, participants complete a learning jigsaw to give a completed image showing that they have put the pieces together to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes. Figure 5 shows the jigsaw template and the questions asked.

Questions for each jigsaw piece for the EDUC 807:

- How would you describe to a friend, who is not an educator, the meaning of the terms curriculum planning and constructive alignment?
- How is curriculum planning related to the accreditation of professional programs?
- A colleague asks for help. S/he shows you his/her plan for course LO’s and assessments. What advice would you give?
- Discuss your interpretation of the quote in your envelope.
- Discuss the roles and connections of the state, professional organizations, accrediting bodies, principals, teachers, students, parents and other citizens in curriculum development.
- In what ways have you demonstrated that you met the learning outcomes in this course?

The pedagogical speed dating / jigsaw activity was also incorporated into the design of a session presented by the authors at the AAEEBL conference in Vancouver, July 2018.

Figure 5. In Class Culminating Activity - Jigsaw Template
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used on the jigsaw template for the AAEEBL session follow:

• Discuss the meaning of the term folio-thinking as applied to teaching and learning. What are the challenges and opportunities for the use of activities using folio-thinking as a way to encourage student learning?
• Share examples if you have used (or might use) to incorporate folio thinking in your course as a pedagogical method.
• How might you revise the jigsaw method as an activity to use in one of your courses? How can folio thinking be incorporated into class activities without a formal portfolio (paper or electronic).
• To what extent have you demonstrated that you met the learning outcomes in this session?
• How well do you feel folio-thinking in-class can be used as evidence to demonstrate that students have achieved the learning outcomes of your course?
• To what extent have you demonstrated that you met the learning outcomes of this session? (repeat of 4)

Educational Implications and Conclusion

In this paper, two courses and two types of folio thinking activities are described. In both courses, the reflective paper activity was used to encourage folio thinking beyond the immediate course level. In the masters of education course students integrated concepts from across the complete masters of education program; in the Faculty Workshop they reflected on the activities completed during the week and considered how concepts from the sessions related to their work as an educator. The reflective paper exercise was used as an oral assessment activity in a one on one coaching/consultation setting with the course director. Participants were pleasantly surprised at the opportunity for an oral reading of the paper and commented that the one-on-one reading gave them an opportunity to expand on their ideas and demonstrate how they had met the course learning outcomes. In addition, we show how this activity was adapted for an interactive half hour conference workshop that demonstrated the activity. An important component is to allow time following the activity for a full group discussion and debrief of the activity. In this way, the instructor can allow a rich discussion to take place with guided feedback from the instructor and students to ensure that all students have had a chance to consider various responses to each question on the template and demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes.

In the examples described, ranging from a two-year master of education program, a week-long workshop and a half-hour conference presentation, the Jigsaw Activity allowed students/participants/faculty to reflect on their learning, demonstrate competence with the course/class/workshop concepts and demonstrate personal achievement of the stated learning outcomes to themselves, their peers and the teacher. The Jigsaw Activity can be easily transferred to many course contexts for use as a culminating activity by reusing the jigsaw template to incorporate questions that suit the learning outcomes of the course or program. This is an example of reusable design as described in the T5 model. Participants were highly engaged in the Jigsaw Activity during class; formal feedback from participants showed that the faculty valued this active, oral assessment activity as shown by these representative comments:

• The jigsaw puzzle discussion really helped my learning ….. (by allowing me to respond to questions and discuss ideas with colleagues)
• I really liked the pedagogical speed dating/jigsaw as a way to discuss ideas
• There were several active-learning sessions that were helpful to reflect on my learning and consider ways to use the strategies for my own classes
• The key was that peers were able to discuss and give opinions and discuss feasibility to our own classes
• At the end of the session I felt much more confident in knowing I could apply the course content.

This paper outlined how folio thinking at the course/class level can be incorporated into class activities without a formal paper or electronic portfolio. The jigsaw activity combined with pedagogical speed dating was developed as a structured, in-class activity that requires students to reflect on their experiences and self-assess their personal achievement of the
intended course learning outcomes. The conversations and feedback following the activity provided a way for students to consolidate their learning and in addition provided evidence that students had achieved the learning outcomes of the course/program or sessions. As described in this paper, by using the jigsaw template, creating appropriate course-based questions and considering the class time allowed for the discussion questions, this strategy can be adapted to a variety of courses and used as a culminating activity in small or large classes.

About the Author

Dr. Diane Salter is Director of the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) in the Department of Educational Services at St. George’s University in Grenada. Diane has over 25 years of experience in teaching, learning and leadership in higher education and over 75 publications including books, book chapters, journal articles, short stories and conference proceedings. Diane’s home base is Vancouver, Canada. Prior leadership roles include: Vice Provost Teaching and Learning, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, B.C.; Associate Professor, University of Hong Kong; Dean, Centre for Curriculum and Faculty Development, Sheridan Institute of Technology, Oakville, Ontario; Assistant Professor, University of Toronto; Assistant Research Professor, University of Waterloo. Diane’s international consultation includes invited key notes and workshops in Australia, Austria, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Macau, Hong Kong and China. With a Ph.D. in Cognitive Sciences from the University of Toronto, her research interests have focused on active learning in higher education, faculty development for institutional change, faculty development as a professional learning journey, task-based approaches to course design and delivery for face to face and online learning, approaches to teaching that impact students’ approaches to learning. (dsalter@sgu.edu)

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Salter, D., Pang, D. M. Y., & Sharma, D. P. (2009). Active tasks to change the use of class time within an outcomes based approach to curriculum design. Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 6(1), 4
Cranfield Defence and Security (CDS) has a strong reputation for providing education, research and consultancy to international armed forces, governments and industry. Based in the UK, it’s one of four schools of the exclusively postgraduate Cranfield University, and often uses the problem-based learning (PBL) method when designing group work tasks. During these activities, students are required to compile and submit a group portfolio detailing the steps they have undertaken in order to solve the problem, then reflect on the experience and apply their newly acquired knowledge in an individual assessment task. When discussing these types of activities lecturers report:

- The portfolios are too text heavy
- They don’t feel like one body of work, but individual documents with no narrative
- There is no opportunity to present digital evidence captured at key moments (e.g. videos of test phases, audio recordings of meetings etc.)
- The students’ accounts in their individual assignments sometimes conflict with others in their group
- They would like to have the opportunity to monitor the portfolios during the task, and potentially grant external stakeholders access, too.

In 2015, CDS adopted the Mahara ePortfolio platform to see whether it could improve the compilation and presentation of evidence, and therefore enhance the experience of both the staff and students. It was piloted on the MSc in Systems Engineering for Defence Capability (SEDC), laying the foundations for defining a process which all other lecturers could follow when using Mahara for their own PBL group work activities.

**students are required to compile and submit a group portfolio detailing the steps they have undertaken in order to solve the problem, then reflect on the experience and apply their newly acquired knowledge**

**CAPTURING AND PRESENTING THE JOURNEY**

Mahara as the central point for recording information

The majority of CDS students are already in employment either in the military, the defence sector or civil service. This makes group work exciting as their wealth of knowledge and experiences is so diverse, the outcomes can be unpredictable. During these PBL group work tasks students are asked to design, develop and propose resolutions to problems posed by their lecturers. These activities require them to call upon knowledge of key principles, processes and practices acquired during pre-requisite modules in order to produce their recommendations to specified audiences.

Prior to using Mahara students had to find their own ways of compiling their group portfolios,
but when it came to assessment, lecturers sometimes discovered conflicting accounts. Rebecca McKeown, Module Manager for the ‘Introduction to Human Factors’ module on the MSc in Military Aviation and Airworthiness, recalls that:

...previously, each student was responsible for ensuring they had the necessary information to write up their essay after the module and the quality of essays varied. Using Mahara made it easy for each group to share and store information. The students found it incredibly beneficial to have a digital record of their activities when it came to writing their essay. (R. McKeown, personal communication, June, 27, 2018)

Mahara as an enhanced presentation tool
The big advantage of using an ePortfolio is the ability to capture and present more than just text and images. The ‘Systems Engineering Workshop’ (SEW) module on the MSc in SEDC requires its students to design one of three autonomous sub systems that work together to perform a ‘mission.’ These sub systems are built using Lego Mindstorms™, each with its own special assignment:

1. Rover 1 to create a pathway for Rovers 2 and 3 to get over an obstacle
2. Rover 2 to create a pathway for Rover 3 by removing debris
3. Rover 3 to command Rovers 1 & 2, then navigate the course to fire a missile at a target.

Mahara gives the students the ability to evidence both the planning and design process through diagrams (sketched and eventually computer generated), but also to present the construction, testing and modification phases through a series of videos.

Conversations with SEW Module Manager Andy Duncan have indicated that the ability to include a wide variety of content may not always be a positive: “We need to make sure that Mahara isn’t driving the portfolio itself” was one of his concerns. (A. Duncan, personal communication, July, 27, 2018) To address this, Duncan is already planning ways to alter the Mahara template to ensure the portfolio-building process doesn’t become a tick-box exercise. Duncan hopes his students will then critically evaluate what has taken place and why particular results occurred, rather than just submitting a transcript of events.

Mahara as the ‘portal’ for stakeholders
In McKeown’s other module, ‘Organisational Development’ (MSc in Information Capability Management), the students are tasked with a process problem within an organization, either within Cranfield or external to the University. By using Mahara, all parties involved (students, lecturers and sponsors) can monitor the page for updates during the group work task, as described by Duncan:

The sponsors liked having access to the Mahara page as it enabled them to communicate easily with the students throughout the week and to see progress. They also felt it was good to have after the event as they will need to go back to the results as they implement change in their organisations. (R. McKeown, personal communication, June 27, 2018)

SUPPORTING THE USE OF MAHARA FOR GROUP WORK
The Cranfield Mahara Group Work Process
This process has been refined over the past three years by CDS Learning Technologists (LTs) Sam Taylor, Aurélie Soulier and Angélique Bodart. It provides a cyclical approach to ensure that Module Managers understand the work that’s involved upfront, and acts as an
agreement between them and the LTs with whom they are working. Figure 2 shows the key phases of the process with Table 1 giving an outline of what activities take place in each step:

This process is very much led by the LTs and keeps all parties informed when it comes to setting up each Mahara activity. It is planned that the LTs at CDS will present this workflow in detail at the next UK Mahara Conference. The requirement for Module Managers to complete the Cranfield Mahara Induction Activity (https://mahara.cranfield.ac.uk/induction) during the preparation stage is a recent addition; prior to this, it was just advisory. Bodart explains that:

“They don’t necessarily need the skills but it gives them an idea of how it works and the student experience. It is also a good indicator of buy-in; if they can’t make time to do the activity it suggests they also won’t be invested in the process of creating the template or supporting their students to use the tool effectively. (A. Bodart, personal communication, May, 16, 2018)"

This new requirement has meant that Module Managers are now more confident with adapting the induction instructions to make them more appropriate subject-wise for their students.

Table 1 Activities involved in each step of the process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage:</th>
<th>Activity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Preparation</td>
<td>Lecturer completes the Cranfield Mahara Induction Activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lecturer creates a list of the required elements each group should evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Planning meeting</td>
<td>Lecturer meets with a Learning Technologist (LT) to discuss how the portfolio will be used (pre-created list), accessed and assessed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: The set-up</td>
<td>The LT creates the portfolio template for the activity, sets up the groups in Mahara using the template and adds the secret URLs for each group portfolio to the VLE (hidden from students) to allow staff quick access. Cranfield Mahara Induction Activity completion tracking is linked via the SubCourse plugin in Moodle. Technical guidance for students is written and made available via the VLE for that module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Pre-module activity</td>
<td>Students undertake the Cranfield Mahara Induction Activity as part of their introductory studies. LT adds students to their group. LT creates a submission point(s) in VLE for group portfolios (if applicable).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Module activity</td>
<td>LT delivers Demo on day 1. LT visits each group’s base room mid-way through module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Submission and feedback</td>
<td>1 student per group saves the portfolio as a PDF and submits it to VLE. LT creates a submission point(s) in VLE for group portfolios (if applicable).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Evaluation and refinement</td>
<td>Lecturer and LT discuss how it went, identifying modifications to the template and process. Student feedback is reviewed for further ideas to implement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. The Cranfield Mahara Group Work Process Diagram by S. Taylor, A. Soulier, and A. Bodart.
Scaffolding the learning

As in all cases, the Learning Technologists work with the Module Managers to develop a templated Mahara page which the students use to structure their planning and record outcomes and reflections, as well as provide evidence where appropriate. Figure 3 gives an example of the Mahara page that is allocated to all groups studying the ‘Organisational Development’ module:

In each section, McKeown has given a list of suggestions to help students work their way through the PBL group work activity. All module staff and external stakeholders have access to this page and are encouraged to place comments in the designated feedback areas at the bottom of it. If necessary, they could intervene in person and give advice more efficiently as they won’t need to waste time finding out where the students had got to. McKeown and her colleagues were so impressed with how much of a difference using an ePortfolio made to the module, “… in fact, it was so effective, we found that the delivery of the module was a lot less stressful for us.” (R. McKeown, personal communication, June 27, 2018)

CONCLUSION

The word is slowly spreading about Mahara’s capabilities, and students are starting to request the use Mahara for other group work tasks in their degrees. This year, due to student insistence and feedback from the SEW module, the lecturers delivering the advanced version of the module have now formally adopted Mahara as the submission tool.

Additionally, feedback from students on the Organisational Development module commented on the shift in perspective; at first, not all were convinced:

During the feedback session at the end of the module the students were unanimously in favour of the use of Mahara. They found it easy to use and appreciating having a template to guide them. Some students were cynical before the module, thinking it would be a waste of time and were quite happy to say the experience had completely changed their minds. R. McKeown, personal communication, June 27, 2018)

We hope that now we have a number of successful case studies, and that a support process is in place, lecturers looking for ways to evidence the process and outcomes of PBL in groups can now feel confident that there is a robust tool and system in place to make for a positive outcome.

About the Author

Sam Taylor has been championing the use of ePortfolios to evidence skill acquisition and self-development for ten years. A recognised Mahara Supporter, she was one of the lead coordinators of the Mahara User Group for Southern England, and has been a keynote speaker at events in Germany, New Zealand and Ireland. She was accepted as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy in 2014 and recently became a Certified Member of the Association of Learning Technology. In September 2018 she left Cranfield University to join Catalyst IT as an eLearning Specialist, supporting the use of Open Source software in education.
This article enables readers to gain an insight into the ePortfolio experiences of 10 groups of approximately 20 adult learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) spanning five years. The language level of the students in each of the groups ranged from low- to high-intermediate, and for many, the ePortfolio was their first introduction to learning with technology.

Background
My interest in electronic portfolios, or ePortfolios, began when I first developed an ePortfolio as a terminal project, also referred to as a capstone project, during my graduate program of studies in educational technology at Central Michigan University (CMU) in 2013. Afterwards, in my capacity as an adult educator, I introduced ePortfolios to my ESL students. Although my ESL instruction was entirely face-to-face up to the mid-2010s, the development of Tim Berners-Lee’s World Wide Web (Web) made it possible for my language learners to experiment with ePortfolios, albeit entirely as an extra-curricular learning activity. The students in all 10 groups appreciated being introduced to the world of possibilities in distance learning, and welcomed the connectivity, the communication, and the interaction with one another afforded by their ePortfolios.

Technology-enabled Emerging Pedagogy
EPortfolios, also referred to as Webfolios (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005), Web-based or electronic portfolios, e-portfolios, efolios, and digital portfolios (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005; Pitts & Rugirello, 2012), were implemented primarily in writing and arts courses in the mid 1980s, and only became prominent in higher education in the mid-1990s (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2003). The ESL field began implementing portfolios in a paper-based format in the early 1990s, a time when both learners and educators were at the very early stages of learning computer technology. Educational institutions implementing the tool then were unable to foresee the impact of this pedagogy and the subsequent transformation of the learning environment that would soon follow (Danielson & Abrytyn, 1997).

Enhanced Language Learning
The students in my first and all subsequent groups welcomed their ePortfolio learning space, where they could insert audio files and submit their tasks and post-reflective thoughts. It was evident that the students experienced a tectonic shift in their language learning when they began to “understand the open connections, open conversations, open content, and open learning that come as part of a community of learners” (Richardson, 2010, p. ix). The students also experienced some challenges in relation to learning the technology and learning with it. As the students used this technology-mediated learning tool to showcase their achievements, a challenge in and of itself, they engaged in an ongoing process of thinking about their own learning. I used LiveBinders
Electronic Portfolios: Enhancing Language Learning

Author: Rita Zuba Prokopetz

during my first attempt to implement ePortfolios with my ESL students, as this platform was the one I had chosen for my individual project on innovative uses of technology for my penultimate course in my program of studies. Figure 1 displays my virtual shelf with the binders I created with instructional resources along with the 20 binders of my first group of learners.

Figure 1. LiveBinders of 20 ESL students and additional binders with resources.

Since then, the students have used other platforms available on the Web. As I used a Weebly for my own terminal project at CMU, I am more familiar with it and often introduce it to the students. However, Wordress was the platform chosen by one of the students in my last class, and her rationale was that she had used it before. Figure 2 shows a screen shot of one of the pages in her collection.

Figure 2. Screen shot of a page of the ePortfolio created by Mary Jeslyn, the student who used WordPress.

Enhancing Teaching

This emerging pedagogy also enables instructors to become better educators, as the ePortfolio enables reflection on not only what learning tasks worked but also how they were implemented and applied. As ePortfolios are not yet a part of the curriculum in the courses I teach, I assign the ePortfolio as a final individual project. As such, the students pause and think back so they can decide which tasks best demonstrate their learning to date and their achievement of the competencies developed within the course. In my very first group of ePortfolio creators in 2013, the students who opted for this extra-curricular learning activity welcomed their new learning space, where they could assemble their ideas, creations, and artifacts.

For these students, the ePortfolio became, as suggested by Eynon and Gambino (2017), a locus that enabled engagement in reflective learning experiences and ongoing group interactions. While I was experiencing the meaningful ePortfolio development journey of my students, the following thoughts came to my mind:

I consider myself an organizer of learning experiences. I used to share knowledge with my learners until I discovered the joy of observing learning (Zuba Prokopetz, 2015).

During my observations of the activities of my students, I saw first-hand that learning is, as Siemens (2006) described, diverse and messy, ongoing, co-created, and integrated, as seems to be fostered in ePortfolio Internet culture. Although initially I felt unable to articulate what my students were experiencing, I was able to visualize myself as being well positioned to one day “share the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 121). I have become a better organizer of learning events that motivate my ESL students to engage in learning. This process is evident as the students complete their terminal course projects comprised of a collection of pages with their student-selected artifacts and their reflections on them. Examples of the kinds of projects
Electronic Portfolios: Enhancing Language Learning
Author: Rita Zuba Prokopetz

students choose to include in their ePortfolios are the ones created in collaboration with peers. These projects include graphic representations of various concepts (e.g., critical thinking, leadership, and time management), which are saved as a Slideshare file that the students can download as required.

Conclusion
During the development of my first ePortfolio project in May 2013, I, too, experienced a tectonic shift in the way I was thinking, interacting, and experiencing my own learning. I became more aware of my own learning processes and even more eager to learn how to implement a terminal project with my ESL learners. Initially, this learning activity was optional, as all my classes were face-to-face at the time. However, since my first blended class in 2015, I have included the presentation of a terminal project as a final speaking assessment task. The students have time not only to complete their projects on the days that they work online but also to prepare for their presentations. In June 2018, a group of language learners presented their ePortfolios as a capstone project, which contained their chosen artifacts and the rationale behind the learning choices they made throughout the semester. As they presented, I realized that I had become a better educator as a result of the affordances provided by the ePortfolio as a technology-enabled emerging pedagogy. This five-year experience has served to solidify my views on learning with technology-enabled tools, and further strengthen the notion that “our conceptual world view of knowledge ... is in the process of being replaced by a more dynamic and multi-faceted view” (Siemens, 2006, p. 3), as is the case of the application of an electronic portfolio to enhance our learning and foster reflection.

About the Author
Rita Zuba Prokopetz is a candidate in the Doctor of Education in Distance Education (EdD) Program at Athabasca University. Her research interest includes ePortfolio as a technology-enabled emerging pedagogy. She is an instructor of English as a Second Language (ESL) at Red River College in Winnipeg, Manitoba - Canada.

References
The Association for Authentic, Experiential and Evidence-Based Learning (AAEEBL) ePortfolio Review (AePR) invites you to submit articles and reports covering the broad area of eportfolio use. We publish articles about pedagogy, research, technical, and organizational issues bi-annually. Our readership includes eportfolio practitioners, administrators, and students. AePR is an online journal serving the needs of the global eportfolio community and seeks to promote portfolio learning as a major way to transform higher education.

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- How-to articles, tutorials on specific tools or approaches (500 to 1,500 words).
- Interviews (500 to 1000 words) with key individuals directly involved with the use of eportfolios.
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Cindy is a Full Professor at Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston, MA, in the Business Management department. She received her Ph.D. in Technology Management at Indiana State University, her Masters in Technical & Professional Communication from East Carolina University and her Baccalaureate Degree in English from Hilbert College. She also just recently completed a Certificate in Facility Management. Her full biography can be found at www.cindypstevens.com. She is also the Executive Co-Editor of AePR, AAEEBL’s Online Journal.

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Barbara Ramirez is currently the Director of the Class of 1941 Studio for Student Communication as well as the Assistant Editor for the Journal of Engineering Education. As a faculty member at Clemson, Barbara has taught a variety of English courses and served as the Director of the University’s Writing Center where she worked with students and faculty across the disciplines. She also served as the Arts and Humanities faculty liaison for Clemson’s ePortfolio Initiative and has been active in AAEEBL, serving on the Conference Planning Committee and helping edit the Field Guide to Eportfolio (AAC&U, 2017).

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Her scholarship is focused on student centered pedagogy, authentic student learning assessment, the role of reflective practice in facilitating student learning, and ePortfolios. She is co-author of a book with Judy Patton entitled: Leveraging the ePortfolio for integrative learning: A guidebook of classroom practices for transforming student learning by Stylus Publishing in 2014.

Courteney Handy / Copy Editing Coordinator

Courteney Handy followed her passion of writing after spending time with her first-grade teacher, Ms. Prescott, who helped inspire her to write and develop a love for language. She graduated from the Institute for American Indian Arts (IAIA) with a bachelors in Creative Writing in the fall of 2017. Following graduation, she will be going after her Masters at IAIA and hopes to pursue a career in Editing or Writing. Her work has been featured in Orion creative writing magazine (2015), and the Santa Fe Literary Review (2016). Her poetry has also appeared all over the Santa Fe Community College (2015-2016).

Heather Caldwell

Heather Caldwell, a former ePortfolio Strategist and English Instructor at the University of Alaska Anchorage, found herself immersed in all things portfolio-related until September 2017. She is once again a full time graduate student, this time in Somatic Psychology at Naropa University. Although she is no longer steeped in portfolio-land, her work with reflective practices, metacognition, and transference continues.

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Nami Okuzono is a staff member of Institute of American Indian Arts. She is also a graphic/web designer mainly focuses on building websites and branding of artists (artistweb.online). One of her passions drives her to empower individuals by establishing an online presence.
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**Gillian Hannum**

Gillian Greenhill Hannum is Professor of Art History at Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York, where she has been on the faculty since 1987. A photohistorian with MA and PhD degrees from The Pennsylvania State University, she has written on photographic topics in publications such as the Journal of the Royal Photographic Society (of Great Britain), History of Photography and Nineteenth Century. Since 2010, she has been a member of the ePortfolio Leadership Team, participating in the FIPSE-funded Connect to Learning grant and a two-year Mellon Foundation grant around reflective learning. She has presented at AAEEBL international, national and regional conferences. Currently, she directs Manhattanville’s Atlas ePortfolio program.

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Dr. Gray is the campus ePortfolio Director. She also teaches a First Year Seminar class and a course on Contemplative Leadership for Watauga Residential College. She earned her master’s degree in Liberal Studies from Rollins College and holds a Ph.D. in Integral Studies from the California Institute of Integral Studies. Elaine is currently working towards completion of an Ed.D in the Educational Leadership doctoral program at Appalachian State University. Her publications include the textbook “Conscious Choices: a Guide to Self-directed Learning” (Pearson, 2004).

**Ellen Zeman**

Ellen Zeman (Burlington, VT) is the Learning Assessment Director at Champlain College. She has received the College’s Staff Council Innovation Award, the Elizabeth A. Durick Staff Service Award and the John Lavallee Innovation Award for her contributions to the design of systems and supports in professional development, curriculum design and assessment planning. She has been an active member of AAEEBL from its founding year.

**Sandra Stewart**

Sandra Stewart is a sessional staff member in the School of Education at Charles Sturt University, Australia. Her work and engagement with the university is wholly online due to living in a rural area. She teaches in undergraduate and postgraduate education students ICT in education. Her Master’s research project was student attitude’s to ePortfolio use. She is a member of ePortfolios Australia and a member of the planning committee for the annual ePortfolios Australia national forum. Her PhD is about Australian Native Fauna in children’s illustrated books and she uses her reflective ePortfolio to support her learning process.

**Jennifer Munday**

JENNIFER MUNDAY, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer at Charles Sturt University (CSU), Australia’s largest regional University. She has been teaching in the disciplines of Creative Arts, and Technology, for many years. Jennifer’s academic work and contribution are “focused on innovation” (CSU 2022 Strategy Refocus) and she has built a reputation within and beyond the CSU community as progressive in online, flexible, and distance education. Her contributions include publication and investigation in the scholarship of teaching in online learning, particularly in regard to the value of ePortfolios and reflective practice. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

**Connie Rothwell**

Connie Rothwell began her interest in portfolio work early in her career and continued to develop her practice and understanding of portfolios and eportfolios through her own writing courses, including the capstone Senior Portfolio in the Honors Program at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. She has taught a variety of writing intensive courses, served as eportfolio consultant to faculty, and held administrative positions as Assistant Director of Rhetoric and Writing, Director of Advantage, Director of the University Honors Program, and interim Director of Communication across the Curriculum. Recently retired from teaching, she continues to write, study, and promote eportfolio work.

**Andrew Harver**

Andrew Harver, PhD, AE-C, is a Professor of Public Health Sciences in the College of Health and Human Services at UNC Charlotte. He holds a BS in psychology from the University of Washington in Seattle, and an MS and PhD in experimental psychology from Ohio University in Athens. He completed post-doctoral work in the Department of Physiology at Dartmouth Medical School and held teaching and research positions at SUNY Stony Brook. He joined the UNC Charlotte faculty in 1991 as a member of the Department of Psychology, and served as Faculty Associate for the Provost, Interim Associate Dean of the Graduate School, and founding chair of the Department of Public Health Sciences. For over 20 years Harver has been an advocate of “writing to learn” and incorporates substantive writing activities in all courses. He is active in the institution’s Communication Across the Curriculum initiative, and an adopter of eportfolios to document integrative learning experiences. Harver served as co-editor of the Field Guide to Eportfolio (AAC&U, 2017).