Alternative Assessment Methods/Tools:
Developing Students' Reflective Practices - ePortfolios

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& Rose Chang (DCO)
Strategic Teaching Enhancement Programme 2007/8
My Initial Thoughts

Please brainstorm on the following questions and share in groups your thoughts.

- What is ePortfolio?
- Why are you interested in ePortfolios?
- What are the benefits of the ePortfolios?
- Criteria for defining a portfolio to be good?
Rundown

1. My initial thoughts on ePortfolios
2. Introduction
   - Learning Outcomes
   - Recent Trends: Global & Local
   - Driving Forces
   - Diverse Focuses & Interests
   - Types of Portfolio
   - Some Concerns
3. ELC - English Language ePortfolios
   - Reflective learning
   - Enhancing learning
4. Assessment of ePortfolio
   - Constructive alignment
5. Case study:
   - DCO10701 Creative Thinking for Media Design
6. My implementation plan
   - Implementation plan
   - Technologies & Tools
Learning Outcomes

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to

- Recognise the recent trend & development of ePortfolios
- Explain the importance of reflection for learning
- Identify possible approaches in assessing students’ ePortfolios
- Identify benefits and concerns of the implementation of ePortfolios
- Identify available tools and facilitation for students developing portfolios
Introduction

➢ Is a portfolio a product to market a graduate in the job market or a learning tool and approach to engage a learner to genuine learning?
Definition of ePortfolios

“A collection of authentic and diverse evidence, drawn from a larger archive, that represents what a person or organization has learned over time, on which the person or organization has reflected, designed for presentation to one or more audiences for a particular rhetorical purpose.”

Educause NLII

“Portfolios are history in the making. They are fluid, even though they can freeze a moment and make it look as if it has a clear beginning and end. They are museums of our work and thinking – displaying our successes, experiments, and dreams.”

“Capturing the Wisdom of Practice: Professional Portfolios for Educators.”
by Giselle O. Martin-Kniep
Recent Trends – Global & Local

- **UK** – National Policy
  - The Centre for Recording Achievement
  - PDP, Personal Development Planning
  - Policy on Transcripts

- **Australia** – Individual universities’ initiatives
  - in learning and teaching,
  - in preparation for employment, and
  - to emphasise the development of graduate capabilities.

- **US** – Individual universities’ initiatives
  - long history in arts related disciplines
  - a popular alternative assessment or learning tool in US since 2000 to promote reflective learning and personal development.
  - Webfolio

- **Canada – British Columbia** – Graduation Portfolio Assessment
  - What skills do students need to be successful in Life?
  - How can we encourage the development of these skills?
  - The portfolio emerged as a tool that reflects the unique learning experiences of our learners.
Recent Trends – Global & Local

- **Europe** – European Language Portfolio
  - All competence is valued, regardless whether gained inside or outside of formal education.
  - to **record their qualifications** and **other significant linguistic and cultural experiences** in an internationally transparent manner as part of an effort to extend and diversify language learning at all levels **in a lifelong perspective**.
  - **Europass** is an EU initiative to increase **transparency of qualification and mobility of citizens** in Europe by encouraging making a person's skills and qualifications clearly understood.

- **HK**
  - **Universities** - **Joint Universities Collaboration on Student English Language Portfolio** (HUCOM project)
  - **CityU** – From **English language portfolio** in 2005 to **electronic learning portfolio of diverse disciplines** in 2007
  - **Secondary schools** - **Student Learning Profile’** and ‘**Other Learning Experiences’** in the forthcoming ‘334 Reform’ leads to a research & development project on e-portfolios and profiles launched in 2005.
A number of colleagues from various departments have been actively investigating the potential of integrating e-portfolio requirement in student’s learning & development since 2006. The My Portfolio function in Blackboard system was made available to a few groups of people to pilot since late 2006 and then to all CityU members in early 2007.

- CityU e-Portfolio Pilots in 2006:
  - **ELC**: English Language Portfolio *(TDG funded)*
    Ms Fiona Williams & Hokling Cheung
  - **EDO**: Learning to Learn
    Dr Anna Kwan
  - **FB**: e-Portfolio System *(a home grown system)*
    Mr Adams Chan
  - **SA**: SA Goodies and Excellence *(SAGE)*
    Dr Joan Y.H. Leung, Dr Arthur Cheung et al
  - **CS & SDS**: E-Portfolio for CS Mentors
    Ms Florence Mong & Dr Theseus Leung
  - **BST**: Programme-based Student e-Portfolio
    Dr Jackson Kong et al
What’s happening at CityU

Continuing the enthusiasm, the ePortfolios are further investigated as either a compulsory or optional requirement of courses of different disciplines & other learning activities in 2007.

- TDG funded project: **Electronic Learning Portfolio 2007/8:**
  - **ELC:** English Language ePortfolios
    - Mr Dean Fisher et al
  - **BCH4039:** Environmental Conservation & Resources Management
    - Dr Paul Shin
  - **SA2202:** Living, Learning and Leading in the Workplace
    - Dr Arthur Cheung
  - **DCO10701:** Creative Thinking for Media Design
    - Dr Rose Chang
  - **SA Exchange:** Go Global! Think Deep! Reach High!
    - Dr Joan Y.H. Leung et al
  - **EN2862:** Spanish 2
    - Mr Angel Garralda

New tools like blogs & wikis are found to be very user friendly which allow user immediate authoring and updating of the portfolios. This tackles the common stumbling block on technical complexity of web authoring that students face. Other approach like digital story telling is also experimented.
Driving Forces

Reasons for the emergence of eportfolios:

• Student centered learning
• Integrated learning experience
• Outcomes based teaching & learning
• Authentic assessment
• Infusion of technology
• National policy
• Employment preparation
• Mobility of Citizens
• Student holistic development/ WPD
• Generic skills & knowledge for applications in a real world
• Graduate capabilities
• Institutional achievement/ improvement
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<tr>
<th>Diverse Focuses &amp; Interests</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Product</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Digital migrants</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Pedagogy</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Free form &amp; format</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Holistic development</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Lifelong learning</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Central policy &amp; commitment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Institutional improvement</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Digital natives</strong></td>
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Types of Portfolios

- Learning portfolios
- Employment portfolios
- Assessment portfolios
- Showcase portfolios
- Personal development portfolios
- Training portfolios

These different "types" of ePortfolios reflected the fact that ePortfolios are being produced and consumed (used) in many different processes, or to manage different processes.

Serge Ravet

http://www.eife-l.org/publications/eportfolio/documentation/positionpaper
Types of Portfolio


[Diagram with axes:
- Mandated use
- Voluntary use
- Selective purpose (promotion, certification)
- Learning & developmental purpose]
Types of Portfolio

Selection Purpose
(summative: promotion & certification)

For admission/evaluation

Showcase/assessment/employment portfolio
- Portfolio is the end to evidence achievement
- Predefined outcomes to attain
- Standards or predefined criteria to fulfill
- Required evidence of compliance

External motivation
Mandated use

Reflective learning/development portfolio
- Portfolio is a mean to enhance learning for oneself
- Portfolio is a mean to articulate achievement
- Self planned & claimed outcomes
- Self determined criteria of merits to assess
- Self determined selection of evidence & content

Voluntary use
Intrinsic motivation

For self assessment/enhancement

Training portfolio
- Portfolio is a tool to monitor development
- Required participation or completion of developmental activities
- Pre-set schedule for activities & reviews
- Restricted format, structure and presentation

To monitor, quality control the process, reward efforts, identify needs & to support evaluation

Personal development portfolio
- Portfolio is a record of activities, thoughts & feelings
- Self selected activities to participate
- Self planned developmental activities
- Free & flexible in format, structure & presentation

To identify strengths, weaknesses & needs, record efforts, facilitate reflection & support claims

Development purpose
(formative: learning & development)
Some Concerns

Problems or challenges?

- **Workload in creation**
  - Production: Content creation, collection & selection
  - Motivation: value, belief & urgency
  - Reflection? What is, how to and why?
  - Technical know how & rapid change of innovation
  - Long term commitments

- **Workload in review**
  - Too many details. What, how & who to assess? Lack of standards: varied structure of content, criteria ambiguity & qualitative data, claim and statement

- **Conflicts of diverse purposes**

- **Ownership of portfolio and data**

- **Trust in the validity and objectivity of the ePortfolios**

- **Reflection vs Achievement**
  - Purpose
  - Data/content collection
  - Presentation

  Who should own the data & the product? Developer, facilitator or institution?
Some Concerns

- Motivation
- Resources
- Creditability
- User friendliness/ Usability
- Interoperability
- Accessibility
- Privacy & Surveillance
- Copyright
- Service availability
- Digital identity control/ Assets and Identities Management Systems
Concepts & Importance of Reflection

Dean Fisher (ELC)
Some Definitions of Reflection

"Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends." (Dewey, 1933)

“Reflective learning is problem raising and problem solving. Fact-gathering is combined with deductive processes to construct, elaborate and test hypothesis.” (Bigge and Shermis, 1992)

“It [the cycle of inquiry] is initiated by the perception of something troubling or promising, and it is determined by the production of changes one finds on the whole satisfactory or by the discovery of new features which give the situation new meaning and change the nature of questions to be explored.” (Schön, 1983)

Methodical process
Inquiry orientation
Change or self improvement as a goal
ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT REFLECTION

A critical thinking process
It leads to learning:

We do not learn from experiences; we learn from reflecting on our experiences (Dewey).

Requirements - Effort and persistence / Place and time
Often an individual activity
Our experience has so far shown that, in general, university students in Hong Kong do not value reflection as a learning strategy.
Reflection is an important strategy for life-long learning, because it leads to the development of autonomy and self-directed professionals. It stimulates personal growth and closes the gap between theory and practice.

http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/CLT/events/documents/Ramage%20Example%202.doc.
POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

• Emphasize the importance of reflection and the benefits of recording it.
• Demonstrate reflective thinking with models.
• Ask questions to stimulate the reflective thinking process.
• Provide timely feedback on student reflection.
• Allow time for reflection and feedback in a course.
• Reward attempts to reflect and good reflection
An ePortfolio is

a) A tool to foster learning and self-development

b) A document to show others your achievements, skills, competencies, knowledge, how you have developed over time and your potential to develop and learn.

Reflection is not an ‘add-on’ to an ePortfolio, but an integral part of the learning process that drives the learning, and thus the portfolio, forward.

Reflection | Evidence
Here is an extract from a student’s reflective journal. Highlight all the examples that you see as ‘reflective’.

“In this module we had to complete a group presentation. It was an interesting experience and I learnt many things. While preparing with my group mates for the presentation I was very quiet. I realize that I really need to work on taking more risks and not be afraid of saying something wrong. The other students in my group would give their opinions freely. Back home in my own country, I don’t usually get nervous when doing group projects, so it’s not just about being confident. I think the reason I felt insecure was because of the language. I was always afraid I would say something wrong or stupid. I’m now aware that to improve my English I need to focus on speaking as much English as I can, and not worry about making mistakes”.
Reflection as ...

- An investment
- A journey
- A mirror
- A microscope
- Binoculars
- Discovery
- Powerful / deep learning

Alternative Assessment Methods/Tools: Developing Students' Reflective Practices - ePortfolios
Peddler’s Learning Cycle
Questions to encourage Reflection

- Something happens?
- So what?
- Now what?
- What happens?
How can an ePortfolio enhance the quality of teaching and learning?

- Viewing
- Communicating
- Goal Setting
- Selecting
- Connecting
- Reflecting (Critical Thinking)

Independent Learning
Assessment of Portfolios
Who, what and how to assess portfolios?
Many alternative assessment methods and tools are available to help develop students' reflective practices. One such method is the use of ePortfolios.

Assessment of Portfolios

What is the intended outcome of the use of portfolio?
- Is the portfolio itself the intended outcome?
- Is the portfolio a mean to achieve a particular outcome?

Constructive alignment

There are two parts to constructive alignment:
- Students construct meaning from what they do to learn.
- The teacher aligns the planned learning activities with the learning outcomes.

The basic premise of the whole system is that the curriculum is designed so that the learning activities and assessment tasks are aligned with the learning outcomes that are intended in the course. This means that the system is consistent.
Assessment of Portfolios

- If "being able to reflect/reflective learning" is the intended learning outcome (ILO), then focus can be put on the reflective statements & evidence of reflective learning students presented in the portfolio.

- If achievement of course’s intended learning outcomes is the objective, is the portfolio requirement
  - a teaching & learning activity (TLA) that helps students to achieve?
    - to record, reflect & self-assess
    - to collect feedback and comments from instructors & peers
  - an assessment task (TA) to give room for students to organise, claim & present the evidences of their achievement?
    - Assessment of individual coursework (via or not the portfolio)
    - Assessment of self-assessment/reflective summary of learning

- Criteria or assessment rubrics for the portfolio assessment
- Training on assessors
Assessment of Portfolios

- **ILO:** Reflect on your learning attitudes and strategies
- **TLA:**
  - **At the end of each lesson**
    - write a blog to record at least one important thing that you are inspired and another thing that you are still puzzled with.
    - write down what you plan to do for that particular query, question or problem.
  - **Reflection on each assignment**
    - Write down your own comments on the process of making and the end-product of the assignment
    - Collect and read the comments made by the instructor & peers
- **TA:**
  - **Create an ePortfolio in which you will**
    - write a **reflective summary** based on blog posts, self and others’ comments made during the course to identify strengths & weaknesses of your learning attitudes and strategies; and
    - **articulate your improvement made** in learning attitude and strategies with relevant **evidences** that you select.
Assessment of Portfolios

- **ILO:** Apply appropriate micro-counseling skills in working with individuals and families with different needs and problems

- **TLA:**
  - Learning pack – read before each class
  - Interactive & experiential learning activities like case study, role play, group discussion, video demonstration etc
  - Peer counselling & video taping the counselling sessions
  - Reflective journal after each learning & counselling sessions

- **TA:**
  - Create an ePortfolio in which you will
    - submit a reflection report to evaluate and reflect on your learning process as a counsellor; and
    - select a video recording of a counselling session that evidences your performance as a counselor and achievement of the intended outcomes
The portfolio implementation of DCO10701 Creative Thinking for Media Design

Rose Chang (DCO)
My Implementation Plan

Some suggestions
Suggestions for Implementation

- Objectives
  - Learning or assessment?
  - Employment preparation?

- Outcomes
  - Reflective learning as the outcome
  - Evidence of the achievement of course outcomes
  - Constructive alignment: ILOs + TLAs + ATs
  - Assessments: Formative, self or summative assessment, assessment rubrics/criteria

- Scale
  - Programme level
  - Course level
  - Project or learning activity
  - Number of students involved
  - Number of instructors or facilitators involved
  - Duration
Suggestions for Implementation

- Motivation/incentive
  - Compulsory or voluntary
  - Bonus
  - Engagement of the students (goal setting & action planning)

- Deliverables
  - What
  - When
  - Access control

- Resources
  - References & guidance
  - Templates
  - Sample work/portfolios

- Support & Training
  - For students, tutors, assessors
  - Conceptual training & briefing on reflection, portfolio etc
  - Technical training
  - Comments and review mechanisms to facilitate feedback collection
Common Approaches

- **Bb Portfolio: Samples & Templates**
  - A guided approach with reference
  - Freedom
  - Scaffold the reflection
  - Require some skills to edit and control release

- **Reflective Journal/ Blog**
  - A free format writing focuses on the process and progress of learning
  - Allow unorganised thoughts and feelings to express
  - Questions set to guide reflection may help

- **Wiki**
  - An individual knowledge management tool
  - Which also allows collaborations with others
  - Version control, change history logged

- **Form filling (Home grown system)**
  - A structured approach focuses on collection of pre-defined data
  - Especially convenient for central data manipulation or analysis
  - Lowest technical requirement
  - Lowest user control in the product creation

- **Digital Story Telling**
  - Owner be the narrator with audio and visual elements to help illustrate ideas and thoughts
  - Identity
  - Personality
  - Reflection
Available Technologies

- **Systems**
  - **Commercial VLE/LMS**
    - Blackboard (Content Collection + Portfolio Function)
    - WebCT Portfolio
  - **In-house solutions**
    - [http://rapid.lboro.ac.uk/](http://rapid.lboro.ac.uk/)
    - [http://www.eportfolios.ac.uk/ePET/](http://www.eportfolios.ac.uk/ePET/)
  - **Government funded system**
    - Profile.ac.uk
  - **Open source solutions**
    - Sakai
    - Moodle
  - **Commercial e-Portfolio systems**
    - [www.pebblepad.com](http://www.pebblepad.com)
    - [iWebfolio.com](http://iWebfolio.com)
Available Technologies

- **Tools**
  - **Functions available in current CityU’s Bb**
    - My Expo *(pilot)*
    - **Wiki** *(pilot)*
    - **Blog** *(pilot)*
    - Wimba voice tools
  - **Tools available on web**
    - Wiki: e.g. wetpaint.com
    - Blog: e.g. blogger.com
    - Google Docs
    - Flickr.com
    - Youtube.com
    - Web2.0 Tools - [http://electronicportfolios.org/web20portfolios.html](http://electronicportfolios.org/web20portfolios.html)
  - **Authoring Tools**
    - Web editing tools: **Dreamweaver** & **NVU.com**
    - Word processing: MS Word, Acrobat & etc
Q + A
Any question?
If you are interested in learning, assessment or employment portfolios, please leave us your contacts.
Thank you!

Project Website: https://eportal.cityu.edu.hk/bbcswebdav/orgs/L_ePortfolio2007/Website/