BEST PRACTICES FOR INTEGRATING ePORTFOLIOS

ALIGH WITH LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As with any activity or assessment you include in your course, your ePortfolio assignment should be carefully aligned with your course learning outcomes.

CLEARLY COMMUNICATE THE PURPOSE:

Be clear about the purpose of the ePortfolio assignment and its intended learning outcomes. Is it a showcase portfolio? A learning portfolio? Discuss the benefits for students in building an ePortfolio to improve motivation and engagement.

CONSIDER THE IMPACT ON THE COURSE:

Before deciding to integrate an ePortfolio assignment, it's important to consider the impact on the course, on your students, and on you as the instructor. How will this assignment effect other assignments? How much time are your students expected to spend on this assignment? How much time will it take you to implement it? How easy is it to use the ePortfolio tool? How reliable is the tool? How will you grade the ePortfolios? Who is the intended audience for the ePortfolio, and what is the process for sharing the presentation?

DETERMINE REQUIRED SUPPORT/RESOURCES:

Determine the required support and resources for yourself and your students. Is there an institutional support for the ePortfolio building tool? Has anyone at your institution/department used the tool before? Who will provide technical support?

SCAFFOLD THE EPORTFOLIO EXPERIENCE:

An ePortfolio should be built over the duration of a course. Start small and ask your students to reflect on how they expect to benefit from building an ePortfolio, or to simply spend time in the ePortfolio platform and reflect on technology challenges. Provide lots of formative feedback, especially in the beginning.

FOCUS ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

The artifacts students choose to include in their ePortfolios should demonstrate the skills they are developing as they work through their courses and their program. Ask students to reflect on and articulate the transferable skills they are developing so they are later able to articulate this to potential employers, capstone courses or applications for further education. This could include leadership skills, project-management skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and the ability to work well as part of a team.

HAVE AN ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:

It's critical to outline your assessment strategy, and to share this with your students so they know exactly what is expected of them with this ePortfolio assignment. Use grading rubrics, provide opportunities for self and peer assessment, and give regular formative feedback.

SHARE EXAMPLES OF GOOD EPORTFOLIOS:

Ask permission to share examples of other students' ePortfolios, or consider creating and sharing your own ePortfolio. This will help familiarize you with the technology, give you a clear idea of what your students will experience when doing the assignment, and communicate to students that you are highly invested in the assignment and that the technology is not too difficult to use.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEER AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:

Build in lots of opportunities for your students to review each other's work and provide feedback. Recent research shows that "students are more likely to engage in deep, integrative learning when faculty and other students look at the portfolio and comment on them" ([Evidence 2 – Catalyst for Learning](#)).

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