Title of Session: e-Portfolios
Moderator: Joseph Urgoretz
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Room: ePortfolios Group

BjB : welcome to today's ePortfolio discussion

BjB : as Joseph suggested, let's start with introductions. Please tell us where you are located and what brings you to the discussion.

LaurieAD : Hello. My name is Laurie Duncan and I am a University of Houston pre-service teacher interested in learning about e portfolios for future use in my classroom.

YoslenyG : Hi! I'm Yosleny. I'm a student teacher from the University of Houston.

BjB : I teach remedial communication in Pennsylvania

BjB . o O (portfolios are a wonderful way to communicate information)

JosephU : I'm Joe Ugoretz. I'm Director of Teaching and Learning with Technology at a large Community College in NYC.

NoraO : Hi, my name is Nora Batley and I am in the University of CAl State San Marcos.

JosephU : Does anyone have a specific question to begin? Or a general direction?

JosephU : I see Laurie is interested in classroom use

YoslenyG : Me too!

BjB : me three!

NoraO : Same here

LaurieAD : No general questions. I am quite unfamiliar with e portfolios as a whole, although we are required to keep one as College of Education students at UH.

JosephU : Well, great! Let's start with a basic picture--

JosephU : Whatever subject you teach, students do work in your class--

JosephU : they do a bunch of assignments throughout the semester (or projects, problem sets, whatever)

NoraO: elementary

LaurieAD: So, I do have my own 'website' that I update with assignments and information, but it has not been something that I could use in my classroom. We use it more as a reference for part of my resume

YoslenyG: Like Laurie I have my own portfolio online but I have not seen a student portfolio

JosephU: the idea of the student portfolio is similar--but it's student work, not professional work

JosephU: and (in my opinion) it's more important to focus on reflection

JosephU: not just a box (or website)

JosephU: full of stuff...

YoslenyG: yeap!

JosephU: instead a collection that students think about

JosephU: and write about (or talk about)

JosephU: "What does this piece of work say about me and my learning?"

JosephU: "Why do I want to put it in my portfolio for others to see?"

YoslenyG: what each group or grade to you think is ready for a portfolio

YoslenyG: ?

BonnieSh: I love classroom portfolios

JosephU: Yosleny, I think it's great at any grade!

JosephU: Kindergarten is perfect

BonnieSh: I think middle school and up are ready for online portfolios

YoslenyG: yes! I meant what age...

JosephU: In the lower grades you need more support from teacher/technologist

JosephU: but the concept (collecting work, picking examples, and reflecting on what you're showing and learning)

BonnieSh: I agree, they can't do as much by themselves at that age

JosephU: is perfect even for little kids

JosephU: have to do interviewing rather than ask them to write reflections

YoslenyG: That's true! They get so happy when they publish their work

JosephU: Yea! Exactly, Yosleny.

JosephU: And that happiness adds to sense of ownership--very important!

NoraO: and they are fast learners

YoslenyG: yes!!

JosephU: yes--sometimes even younger kids are more experienced with the tech than we might expect!

BonnieSh: plus, I like how they get to see the progression they've made

BonnieSh: so even the students that maybe still aren't doing well can see that they are at least improving

JosephU: I always believe that seeing (and talking about) that progression helps to cement it

YoslenyG: So how can we introduce this? what could be the first step? I'm in Elementary (1st grade). Do you have some ideas?

JosephU: Yosleny, it might be good to start without the "e" part--just do portfolios with paper

BonnieSh: I like it!

BonnieSh: I did that in an art class

YoslenyG: exactly!

BonnieSh: I didn't think I could draw or be artistic at all

JosephU: yes--the idea begins with art and artists, I think.

JosephU: just keep a folder,

BonnieSh: but by the end of the class I did some pretty awesome stuff

JosephU: and at certain times of the year, have them look at the folder

JosephU: pull out a piece (or two)

JosephU: that represent something they've learned

JosephU: then talk/write about what that piece demonstrates

JosephU: how they've progressed

LaurieAD: I teach English, we already have a writing portfolio that we keep, but turning it into the 'e' portfolio is a bit confusing to me.

JosephU: compare the piece from October to the piece from November,

JosephU: Ah, Laurie--for writing, is easy!

JosephU: can scan, or just type right into computer

JosephU: (scan the rough drafts)

JosephU: type the final drafts

BonnieSh: cool

JosephU: (I teach English, too).

LaurieAD: do you have to post the information to make it available on the inter/intranet?

CorinneW: and me

JosephU: That's an important question

BjB: show evidence of editing and re-writing

YoslenyG: a scan of a before and after writing sample will be great!

JosephU: and something to discuss with students

JosephU: (whether to make public or private)

LaurieAD: or does "e" simply mean electronic, as in on the computer

JosephU: e means electronic, that's right--(sometimes we call them d-portfolio)

JosephU: for digital

CorinneW: This would actually be great for Business English students because it would encourage them to bring correspondence to the learning environment rather than waiting for the teacher to spoon feed

LaurieAD: I guess I was thinking like "e mail" which made me think over the internet.

JosephU: Ah, I see!

JosephU: good point, Corinne

CorinneW blushes

JosephU: Laurie, I wouldn't be quick to dismiss the public/private issue

JosephU: it's a good question--

CorinneW: the public private issue is key for me too, my suits would die if their mistakes were globally available

LaurieAD: I think it would be quite difficult to make the portfolios public.

JosephU: the best portfolio tools (my opinion)

YoslenyG: so will it be good to create a folder for each student where they can save their work?

JosephU: have both options available

JosephU: students can decide what to make public, and what to make private

JosephU: and think about why they're making those decisions--

CorinneW: sounds like a good approach Yosleny, encourages good organisation too

LaurieAD: I have thought about public journaling, such as blogger, but my district doesn't allow it. I would assume making student work public in such a way wouldn't be approved either

BonnieSh: good point

JosephU: if you have that policy, Laurie, you would need a "closed garden"

JosephU: but that's not hard to do

JosephU: wordpress.com gives free blogs

CorinneW: public makes things a bit too formal I find, if you want to inspire them I think start private and get them to dedicate pieces for publication if you want to go down that route later

CorinneW makes a note of closed garden

JosephU: closed garden is not my invention!

CorinneW: nice though

JosephU: but if you think about it, is a good metaphor

JosephU: some things grow better that way

JosephU: other things are good to have in public park

JosephU: or florist shop or something

CorinneW: I have a one to one student that I coach online and off, we are doing a series of interviews, that he is putting into his own portfolio, but you could theoretically do the same with English students, where they get to interview each other about a conversation topic?????

YoslenyG: What about if you publish them for parent night by using a powerpoint or PhotoStory?

LaurieAD: I think most students would be more comfortable in a private setting, and the work created would be less restricted. I find that when I am the only one seeing their work, they are much more creative and open to trying new things

BonnieSh: I like that idea Yosleny

CorinneW: fine I would have thought, get the children to present it themselves even

JosephU: here's the drawback of online chat!

JosephU: too many good ideas coming at once!

LaurieAD: back to the 'closed garden'... it sounds great, but how do you go about doing that?

CorinneW listens to Laurie's valid point

JosephU: Laurie, you would have to have some tech support if you're not skilled yourself

JosephU: but it doesn't take much

JosephU: you can use wordpress blogs, for example, and password protect them

JosephU: only give the teacher the password

JosephU: that's free--and pretty easy

JosephU: can also install a CMS, or maybe your district already has one

YoslenyG: good idea!

JosephU: Blackboard for example

LaurieAD: is wordpress different from livejournal or blogger? those are also password and 'friend' protected.

NoraO: where can go to obtain more info

JosephU: wordpress is a bit more full-featured and customizable

LaurieAD: we have an intranet dropbox where they can place things for public viewing

JosephU: if you have that, Laurie, it's halfway there.

YoslenyG: I have to check it out! Sounds good!

JosephU: http://www.wordpress.com

JosephU: easy to set up a blog, keep it out of search engines and directories

JosephU: can choose look and feel simply

CorinneW: like the dropbox idea

LaurieAD: I will have to check with the administration, but it sounds wonderful! I have been stopped from 'online journaling' before.

CorinneW: what is the youngest that this would be feasible

CorinneW: got a rebel on our hands here guys and girls

CorinneW: was that a security issue Laurie?

LaurieAD: I think without a doubt it would work with my middle schoolers!

CorinneW: which age group has it worked particularly well with, what about 12-15 year olds?

LaurieAD: they deemed it a student confidentiality issue, even though I explained that it was blocked and that only certain people could access the information.

CorinneW: not business people, thinking of setting up a young learning programme for Business

LaurieAD: I checked BEFORE I started... no worries!

CorinneW: grrrrrr

CorinneW hands Laurie a chocolate

LaurieAD: hey, I am only a student teacher.. can't step on anyone's toes YET!

CorinneW: this is true

JosephU: in that case, Laurie, you might be best suited with a CMS tool--can be totally secure and private

LaurieAD: I am unsure about what you mean by "CMS tool"

BonnieSh: mee too

JosephU: Ah, sorry! CMS=Course Management System

JosephU: Blackboard is most famous-

LaurieAD: I am familiar with that

JosephU: But there are free ones, too-

CorinneW waggles a finger at Joseph for not explaining the abbreviations with a cheeky grin

JosephU: Joomla, Moodle are most popular free ones--also Drupal

JosephU: funny names!

JosephU: These might be more common in higher ed?

LaurieAD: can't they make them a bit easier to remember? geez,,,

CorinneW: Moodle is pretty complicated though I have heard

JosephU: I sometimes get acronym-itis

YoslenyG: I believe portfolio is great specially for middle school! They have a lot to say! And I know what you are talking about ---privacy is a big issue!

JosephU sheepishly blushes

YoslenyG: lol

YoslenyG: they are funny!

JosephU: you can just google any of those names

JosephU: (and you will get a transcript of this chat by email!)

YoslenyG: I don't know about CMS either... What is it?

LaurieAD: I will look into it. thanks so much! you may have just solved my only issue with e portfolios!

JosephU: ah--like I said, Yosleny, a problem with chats--they go too fast

CorinneW: anyway, I have to up again in seven hours so I had better get to bed, thanks for sharing and speak to you all again soon

JosephU: good night, Corinne!

LaurieAD: goodnight!

JosephU: Yosleny--CMS=Course Management System

YoslenyG: thanks

YoslenyG: Is that provided by the school?

CorinneW left the room (signed off).

JosephU: aka virtual learning environment

JosephU: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Course_management_system

JosephU: it is usually provided by the school

JosephU: lots of k-12 schools are using moodle

YoslenyG: ohh ok... I'll check out the names you gave earlier

JosephU: because it's free and easy to install

JosephU: but has to be installed on a server

YoslenyG: I see

JosephU: and someone has to be knowledgeable to install and administer

JosephU: BJ--do we have a Moodle group here at tappedin?

JosephU: or a CMS group more generally?

BjB : no moodle group

JosephU: hmmm....

BjB : I take that back

BjB : Mastering Moodle. Bob Zwick owns the group

JosephU: oh cool! I have to join that one!

JosephU: everyone, we have 15-20 minutes left. There are some good links on our group page, if you want to have more info or look at good examples

JosephU: I won't go over them--but anymore questions/ideas to discuss?

LaurieAD : it seems simple enough, but I can see an issue with accessibility to computers. We have 4 in a classroom, but lab time isn't always available.

YoslenyG: In the case that you can't use a CMS or Moodle, What will be good to use for a digital portfolio?

LaurieAD : I assume you don't publish every work, but only a select few?

LaurieAD : it's not like they need to be in front of a computer on a daily basis, right?

YoslenyG: I wouldn't think so Laurie

YoslenyG: For the lower grades is not that easy to do

LaurieAD : oh wow I just peeked at all of the information about e portfolios on the featured page of tapped in.. seems like a lot of great resources!

LaurieAD : even how to avoid abuse! I can use that to convince the administration that we can do this

JosephU: we collect those links from chats like this! People bring great resources (I think the avoiding abuse one came from BJ)

YoslenyG : That's great ... I'll check it

BjB : that's one of the great reasons to join the group...

JosephU: Yosleny, I've had good luck with courseforum

BjB : members of the group can add resources

BjB : as well as subscribe to the discussion board

JosephU: http://www.projectforum.com/courseforum/index.html

YoslenyG : thanks!

BjB : that collaboration is the heart and soul of Tapped In

BjB : A reminder before we lose anyone that the next ePortfolios discussion will take place on April 18

LaurieAD : BjB, I think you should hold a discussion on time management! Every time I log on you are here helping people, and then teaching on top of that! I don't know how you do it all!

BonnieSh: yeah, I just looked at some of those things too and they are cool

JosephU: (my theory is that there are dozens of cloned BJ's, each one with superhuman powers)

BonnieSh: haha I agree

LaurieAD : I would believe it!

BjB nods solemnly...more of me to get more work done

BjB . o O (wouldn't that be nice!)

YoslenyG: Yes!

YoslenyG: Thanks for what you do ... lot of patience!

LaurieAD: Joseph, thank you very much. I thought before that I might have to let go of my desire to try e portfolios.. but now I refuse to give up! I will look at those that you referenced. Thanks again!

JosephU: where there's a will there's a way, Laurie. Come back next month and tell us what you find

LaurieAD: will do! Thanks! April 18th?

JosephU: sometimes you have to kludge together a solution...but that's how great innovation happens

BjB: thanks, Joseph, for leading the discussion. Give your wife our best wishes

YoslenyG: I found resource on getting started with digital portfolio...on "The Digital Portfolio: A Richer Picture of Student Performance"

JosephU: Thanks again--I'm going to sign off now.

BjB waves bye

YoslenyG: Thanks for the resources!!

JosephU: good night everyone

LaurieAD: goodnight!

BonnieSh: bye

JosephU waves and bows

NoraO: bye

YoslenyG: Good night!!

YoslenyG: bye!!

YoslenyG: bye everyone!!