Title of Session: e-Portfolios
Moderator: David Weksler
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Room: ePortfolio Group

DavidWe: Do you teach, David?

DavidEL: Busy time of the year.

DavidWe nods

DavidEL: Yes. I'm a secondary teacher.

DavidWe: what subject(s)?

DavidEL: Online for the past 3 of 13 years.

DavidEL: My training was in Computer Science and French Lit

BjB: you've been to the ePortfolio discussions before, right, David?

DavidWe: Tres bien!

DavidEL: Yes. I actually host another related group.

DavidWe: Cool

DavidEL: Hang on and I'll grab the URL.

DavidWe: You know about the software program, Geometer's Sketchpad?

DavidEL: http://togetherapart.com/course/view.php?id=91

DavidEL: I've never used the sketchpad program but have heard others speak well of it.

DavidEL: Do you use it?

DavidWe: I started working with a project (at Swarthmore College) which is now the Math Forum - www.mathforum.org - US National Science Foundation funds supported the development of that web site

DavidWe . o O (and Tapped In)

DavidWe: and also was the funding source for the project, at Swarthmore, that developed Sketchpad

DavidWe: Yes, I've taught teachers how to use it

DavidEL: I've also heard about mathforum. I'll have to have a closer look.

DavidWe smiles

BjB: please tell me more about Learning Together Apart, David

DavidWe: Big web site - new look in the last 24 hours

DavidEL: I'm a Ph.D. candidate in Instructional Design/Educational Technology.

DavidEL: Learning Together Apart

DavidEL: is a project of mine.

DavidWe: Sounds cool

DavidWe listens

BjB: I see Knowplace ...is that the same Knowplace with Sylvia Curry?

JeffC: David EL has *MANY* cool ideas about eportfolios

DavidEL: It's a Web site I put together to assist colleagues who want to host their own online learning courses/communities.

DavidWe: Well, he's Canadian. They're smarter

DavidEL: Yes I know Sylvia.

BjB nods

DavidEL: How do you know her? Through her SCOPE site?

DavidEL:

JeffC: Knowplace is known around here.

BjB: She's a member of Tapped In. I've presented at some KnowTips events and given tours of Tapped In

DavidEL: ic

DavidEL: It's a great community.

DavidEL: This is too!

DavidEL: Hello Jeff.

DavidEL: Was there a specific topic for today's session or just eportfolios in general?

BjB: I see Dafne has posted some messages about Moodle...Daf is also a TI member

DavidEL: Daf's amazing. I

DavidWe: very dedicated

DavidEL: Such an enthusiastic participant in any learning event.

BjB: I think that Joseph is always looking for ideas about creating ePortfolios and how to sustain them

DavidEL: She has lots of great ideas.

BjB agrees about Daf

DavidEL: Who's Joseph?

BjB: Joseph Ugoretz is the owner of this group

DavidWe . o O (leader for the scheduled presentation)

DavidEL: ic

DavidEL: Do you know what the topic is for today?

BjB: I think that he's still in the group building process and is interested in any and all input on the topic at this point

BjB: do you think that's what Joe is doing, Jeff?

BjB . o O (Jeff is a moderator for the group)

DavidEL: These things are always so difficult to gain momentum.

DavidWe agrees

BjB agrees...lots of interest but apparently not a lot of common information

BjB: usually each session starts with a definition of what an eportfolio is

JeffC: I don't know what Joe is doing.

DavidEL: Is there anyone here using eportfolios in higher ed?

JeffC: He's not here though.

BjB: and the more I read, the more I realize that each situation had different needs

DavidWe: I have a colleague, David Niguadula, who has been associated with Brown University in the past...but I think he's a consultant these days

DavidEL: I like the idea of an eportfolio as an evolving personal project carried over many years.

BjB: at the university level, it seems that the students need an ePortfolio that they can take with them and use as a credential for job hunting

DavidWe: exactly - he's been working mostly with K-12 schools

DavidEL: I'm sort of bridging the both levels.

DavidWe: That's VERY important

BjB: yes, David E...that is another idea and a different approach because it puts ownership on the student, not on the educational institution

DavidWe: Something the Math Forum tried to do as well

DavidWe . o O (K-16, K-20)

JenniferSc joined the room.

DavidWe: Hi, Jennifer. Welcome

BjB: are you here for ePortfolios, Jennifer?

DavidWe: Anything we can help you with, Jennifer?

JenniferSc: Hello, sorry I am late. I had just remembered this event was today.

BjB . o O (apparently Joe forgot!   )

DavidEL: What level of learners do you work with Jennifer?

JenniferSc: Undergraduate, graduate, and faculty of the college of ed at the University of New Mexico.

DavidEL: I work with high school and higher ed. I'm developing the eportfolio as part of a new instructional design model that I'm working with.

DavidEL: Are portfolios an integrated part of your institutions?

JenniferSc: Unfortunately, no. I am trying to get an initiative going here in my college.

DavidEL: I think that the US is probably ahead of Canada in the use of portfolios in general education.

DavidEL: At least that's my perception.

DavidEL: I see a lot happening in Europe. Especially the Netherlands.

BjB: portfolios in general, but I'm not sure that is true about ePortfolios, David

JeffC: One would think that NCLB would be strong in its support of eportfolos... does anyone find that to be true in fact?

DavidEL: NCLB?

DavidWe . o O (No Child Left Behind)

DavidWe: President Bush's education policy - testing, testing, testing

JenniferSc: I've seen that you can qualify under NCLB for alternative certification with a portfolio...

DavidEL: Yikes! High stakes assessment. Right?

DavidWe: bingo

DavidWe: It's co-opted much of educational attention since 2002

DavidWe . o O (in the USA)

DavidEL: There is a trend toward that model here as well.

BjB: portfolios are big in special ed (IDEA)

DavidWe: State of Connecticut is proceeding with a law suit against the Federal Government

DavidEL: It's what happens when education tries to administer standards rather than quality.

DavidWe: Jennifer, have you met or come across the name, Ferdi Serim?

JenniferSc: No, cannot say I have.

DavidWe: He's currently working in Santa Fe for the State Dept. of Ed.

DavidWe . o O (former middle school teacher in NJ, started getting very involved with the Internet)

BjB . o O (IDEA = Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act)

DavidWe: http://oii.org/ferdi/Ferdi.html

JenniferSc: Aha, well I do know that NM has a new initiative for teachers -- submission of a public dossier.

JenniferSc: Wonder if he's behind it. I'll have to look him up.

DavidWe: He has been a presenter in Tapped In for a number of years

BjB: if you find him, tell him we've been looking for him, Jennifer!

DavidWe . o O (I drove to Santa Fe in the summer of 1999 with his family)

DavidWe smiles at Bj

DavidWe: Yes, we have been looking for him

BjB . o O (he can run, but he can't hide   )

DavidWe: He's had an interesting "career" with the coming of the Internet and K-12 education

DavidWe: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/netlearn/noframes.html

BjB: most of the ePortfolios we've looked at are password protected type systems...

DavidWe: That's a link to a book he wrote (in 1996) about teachers using the Net

BjB: David E, there are a few links to systems under featured links on the welcome screen

DavidEL: Thanks Bj. I'll definitely have a look.

BjB: I've added your learning together apart, but don't have permission to feature it

DavidEL: I'm somewhat hesitant to adopt institutionally controlled systems.

BjB . o O (so it's under links, just not in featured items)

DavidEL: I advocate learners managing, designing and controlling their eportfolios as their own product/process.

DavidEL: When learners leave the institution then their ePortfolio can travel with them.

BjB agrees with David E

BjB: then that brings up another concern...

BjB: exactly what information is included in the portfolio?

DavidEL: When these are in the control of the institution they tend to be more assessment driven than process driven.

BjB: does it have IEP information, testing results, etc?

DavidEL: I think that an eportfolio can be whatever it needs to be at a given point in time...

DavidEL: For instance, it can be a collection of various artifacts for one audience and then...

BjB listens

DavidEL: something quite different for a different audience.

DavidEL: In other words..

DavidEL: The owner can share certain artifacts, reflections, etc..

DavidEL: with an institution for evaluation.

DavidWe . o O (slicing the cake in different ways)

BjB nods

JenniferSc: This is what my portfolio experience was like at JHU.

BjB: so, how would this be done?

BjB . o O (or how is this done?)

DavidEL: but use it as a personal blog-like thingy (excuse the technical language)

DavidWe . o O (database, essentially)

BjB laughs...and excuses David E

DavidEL: Yes. most often it will involve tools such as databases, etc.

DavidEL: The database model is more for the institution's benefit (management) than for the learners'.

DavidEL: Of course the learner is responsible to cast the presentation of materials to befit the institution's assessment criteria.

BjB: artifacts could include scanned writing samples, recorded voice/oratory, interviews, etc?

DavidWe . o O (anything digital)

DavidEL: Yes. I think that how the owner/learners expresses their evidence should be up to the individual.

JenniferSc: If you are going to sell portfolios, you have to include the assessment piece...

DavidWe: There should be assessment as part of any educational endeavor, don't you think?

DavidEL: Yes. I agree.

BjB: but assessment can be project based

DavidEL: I do think that the assessment should be part of a presentation model rather than shape the total eportfolio.

JenniferSc: Indeed it can. But somehow we haven't been able to get our kids past the grade on to the process.

DavidWe: Experience and expectations change slowly

DavidEL: If assessment commands the total look and feel of the eportfolio then it really is an assessment rubric.

JenniferSc: So is anyone not doing it this way? Any process instead of assessment models?

DavidEL: I'm working on this with my learners but have a hard time getting them to view it as something for themselves rather than for me.

DavidEL: Even my colleagues are obsessed with the assessment piece rather than as a living reflective collection of artifacts that the learners can share with others to open up dialogue.

BjB: I think that blogs are starting to put a dent in that armor

BjB . o O (talk to Daf about that)

DavidEL: Yes. I have to look more at blogs. They've really been wholly adopted by learners.

BjB: exactly...the kids take ownership of their learning

BjB: and are engaged in the process

DavidEL: That's what I like about allowing enough flexibility for learners to use tools such as blogs in their eportfolios.

JenniferSc: Sorry, I have to run...take care all.

JenniferSc left the room (signed off).

DavidEL: When the institution insists on a particular product/presentation model, it stifles the learners expression and ownership of the process.

BjB: well, we managed to have a reasonably successful discussion, even if Joe wasn't here.

BjB: David, keep that attitude.

BjB: Jeff can tell you...

BjB: I think that this group should collaborate with the preservice teachers group

DavidEL: Any way, that hour went fast.

DavidEL: Are the preservice teachers group using eportfolios?

BjB: because we're not going to make much difference in education until the next generation of teachers brings in the new ideas

BjB: if they're not, they should be!

BjB: Jeff, are you here?

DavidEL: Yes. I quite agree.

BjB: you're right about the hour flying! I apologize for Joe not being here, but I've enjoyed the discussion.

DavidEL: Well thanks for the discussion. I enjoyed it too. I've got a little dog beside me with four crossed legs.

DavidEL: I'd better get him out.

DavidEL: Thanks again.