

Annotated Bibliography

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Communication and Collaboration

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Ross Miller, W. M. (2009, Winter). The Benefits of E-portfolios for Students and Faculty in Their Own Words. *PeerReview*, pp. 8-12.

Summary

This article seeks to establish the value of e-portfolios from the user's perspective. The introduction of the reading presents benefits of a "well run e-portfolio programs" (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 8), and "good portfolio practice". (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 8) The first portion of the article falls under the category of "Student Voices". (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 9) This section consists of a compilation of student experiences working with e-portfolios. The student's response examines initial reactions, lessons learned, and reflections on the process of their completed portfolios.

The next section embraces "Faculty Voices" (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 10). "Faculty Voices" (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 10). seeks to validate the "same kinds of learning that students claim". (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 10) The last section discusses "E portfolios as a guide for teaching and learning". (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 12) This presents the types of learning that can come from utilizing e portfolios.

Critique

I am glad that this is the first of my series of articles I am reviewing. The "student voices" (Ross Miller, 2009, p. 9) section I found inspirational. While we may theorize on the benefits of technology and learning, this type of learning reflection I found to be a most desired outcome for any student. I truly wish I had some specific way of documenting my college learning experience. While I enjoyed the student's perspective it was lacking any critiques, implementation problems, or negatives of any kind. This reading could not be considered a holistic evaluation nor a guide to implementation. This could best be described as a presentation of ideal outcomes.

Takayama, K. (2014, Winter). A Metacognitive Approach to Mapping Collaborative Inquiry through E-Portfolios. *Association of American Colleges & Universities - Peer Review*, pp. 1-7.

Summary

The article by Kathy Takayama illustrates, "a habit of mind that are more metacognitive than cognitive" (Takayama, 2014, p. 1) as skills that can be gained through the use of e portfolios. The author stresses that education is a collective process and that integration of knowledge is essential. "We are preparing our students for careers that are increasingly dependent upon the integration of knowledge." (Takayama, 2014, p. 1)

Takayama presents a case study and describes her implementation process of “group folio thinking”. (Takayama, 2014, p. 2) Takayama shares student’s observations and quotes on “group folio thinking”. (Takayama, 2014, p. 5)

The author concludes by reasserting the benefits of e portfolios and expanding the boundaries beyond the traditional disciplinary segmentation of higher education.

Critique

This article was novel in that it not only spoke of the reflective attributes of e-portfolios but breaking down boundaries of the traditional disciplinary structure of higher learning. Takayama also incorporated more of a collaborative approach to the creation of e-portfolios. The reading does evaluate the pedagogical aspects of portfolios, and presents specifics on implementation. The strength of the article lies in her ability to establish her assertion of breaking down disciplinary barriers.

While the author does provide details on implementation, I believe that the article is a bit weak on demonstrating the student’s collaborative efforts.

Glenn Johnson, D. D. (2004, Number 4). Keeping the Horse Before the Cart: Penn State's E-Portfolio Initiative. *Educause Quarterly* , pp. 18-26.

Summary

In this Educause article Johnson and DiBiase document the adaptation and implementation of e-portfolios for faculty and students at Penn State University. The article presents the use of student portfolios as a step to a learning centered community or “culture”. (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 18) “Guiding this effort is the vision of a university culture centered on students evidence of reflection upon, their curricular and cocurricular achievements”. (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 18) The article was published in 2004 and examines the growth of e-portfolios between “December 2001 and 2003”. (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 25) The authors provide background on building necessary infrastructure and guidance to faculty and students.

Penn State uses the form of personal web pages as the base structure for portfolio development. The article presents survey results on “personal web space use” (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 20) and “survey methodology”. (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 20) The Penn State project is examined through the “Pros and Cons of Web Publishing Approach”. (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 22) The evaluation did include “feedback from students” (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 22), and examples of student’s e-portfolios.

The authors' conclusion stresses a need for analysis and consensus prior to the rush to implementation. They reiterate that "fostering an e-portfolio culture" (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 25) is a distant goal. The purpose of the article is to demonstrate that this is an achievable goal and can be replicated without high monetary costs and without significant technological barriers.

Critique

This is for all practical purposes a scientific survey based on the experimentation of web page portfolios. I did appreciate the inclusion of necessary infrastructure and support details. I also believe that the inclusion of technical skills gained and evaluated was an important factor for inclusion.

The presented article does reveal the authors disciplinary backgrounds utilizing scientific methodology and inclusion of necessary HTML skills. I particularly liked the comparison of open web based portfolios to pre-structured LMS systems. The authors also include the "Cons of Web Publishing Approach", (Glenn Johnson, 2004, p. 22) which is essential to a holistic appraisal of any system of learning.

I believe on the whole the article is well balanced. I would have appreciated a wider evaluation of resources beyond personal web pages and learning management systems.

Helfand, D. J. (2013, July 8). Watering the Roots of Knowledge Through Collaborative Learning. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. 1-5.

Summary

David Helfand's article is a commentary and comical look at the stagnate state of higher education. Helfand excludes no one including himself from a harsh critique of reality as he evaluates the state of technology used to an academia's entrenched mindset. He illustrates "misplaced pillars of educational practice" (Helfand, 2013, p. 2), as well as the "fault of the current educational model". (Helfand, 2013, p. 2) He advocates collaboration, "no boundaries between disciplines", (Helfand, 2013, p. 3) and the creation of education that "partly mirror the society" (Helfand, 2013, p. 3), and "partly challenge societies basic assumption". (Helfand, 2013, p. 3)

The primary focus is changing higher education in to a collaborative, communicative, peer mentoring environment. Helfand concludes that only through thesis reforms will we be able to provide students, "with an informed prospective on the problems of the 21st century and the integrative abilities to solve them". (Helfand, 2013, p. 5)

Critique

I enjoyed Helfand's article and found his cynical evaluation of academia partially correct. This is a broad article calling for educational reform. It is a provocative article with a specific purpose, to awaken academia and better serve students entering the workforce in a new era. The article is very light on

specifics and instruments for implementation. Helfand cites some experimentation but examples are very brief.

While it serves its purpose as a call for reform, it falls short in ways and means of achieving these reforms.

William E. Knight, M. D. (2008). *The Relationship Between Electronic Portfolio Participation and Student Success*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University.

Summary

This particular reading is a report authored by a professor of Psychology, and two college administrators. They are analyzing the relationship between creation of e-portfolios and student success. They use the tool for collaboration but not within a peer to peer context. Bowling Green sought to achieve greater student success using e-portfolios for improving feedback “and actively involving students in the assessment process”. (William E. Knight, 2008, p. 1) The project sought to facilitate greater feedback from students to increase student performance and “improve curricula and pedagogy as well”. (William E. Knight, 2008, p. 2)

The authors cite the role of e-portfolios as transforming students “from a passive research subject to active participants” (William E. Knight, 2008, p. 2) The report goes on to cite how different universities experimented with e-portfolios and what documents and tools were used. The reading narrowed down five questions the study sought to answer, the methods, and the results. Data was taken from “2004-2005 student portfolio accounts” (William E. Knight, 2008, p. 4) , and compared with students with no portfolios.

The results illustrated a significant difference in retention rates, “higher grade point averages” (William E. Knight, 2008, p. 5), and “greater credits earned” (William E. Knight, 2008, p. 5) for undergraduates. There seemed to be less of an impact on the graduate student population. Graduate students did not see the same correlation patterns as demonstrated by their undergraduate counterparts. Although the report showed mixed results, the success for undergraduates seemed to hold promise.

The report is depicted as phase one of the implementation and evaluation of e-portfolios. Bowling Green's report concludes with detailing the “next phase of our research efforts”. (William E. Knight, 2008, p. 6)

Critique

While I am happy to see the adoption of relatively new technologies facilitating increased student success. The exploration of e-portfolios seems to be very narrow in scope. I appreciated the concept of fostering greater dialogue between students and faculty for greater learning outcomes. The teacher

learning from the student seemed quite valuable, as it is difficult to view teaching material with fresh new eyes.

Unfortunately I feel they underutilized the concept of e-portfolios. The most obviously missed component is the collaborative role they play in active learning environments. Even with the documentation of further research and implementation to come, the collaboration aspect seemed limited.

Zubizarreta, J. (2008). The Learning Portfolio: A Powerful Idea for Significant Learning. *The Idea*, pp. 1-7.

Summary

The initial portion of the article presents various ways e-portfolios have been used within an academic setting. Zubizarreta presents the case that e-portfolios have not reached their full potential in higher education, and still have not reached full fruition in reference to implementation. Zubizarreta presents "A Learning Portfolio Model" (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 1), where "Reflection, Documentation, and Collaboration/Mentoring" (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 1) overlap. The author embraces collaboration of "Collaboration/Mentoring". (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 2) Zubizarreta asserts "connections including those between mentor and student are indispensable to significant learning" (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 2) Preceding establishment of "Collaboration/Mentoring" (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 2) there are significant questions presented as who should be designated as a mentor. The remainder of the article is devoted to the "Learning Portfolio" (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 3). The author seeks to define, denote purpose, suggest content, and presents samples. The conclusion illustrates the many goals to be achieved via the learning portfolio.

Critique

I have to say initially upon seeing the outlined model presented within the first portion of the article; I had high expectations for a broader use and interpretation of e-portfolios. I was disappointed by the article as the collaborative model appeared weak. The author simply presented ideas on mentors with very little attention to peer to peer mentoring. He mentions students only in the capacity of "Should trained students be enlisted as peer mentors?" (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 2) Yet later in conclusion he states "engage the benefits of mentors and collaboration is the spirit of a genuine community of learners." (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 5) There seems to be a contradiction in the conclusion he asserts and the model he promotes.

The primary focus seems to be "The Learning Portfolio". (Zubizarreta, 2008, p. 3) Unfortunately despite the citing of the benefits of said portfolio his formulation or directions present more of a document depository. This document depository contrasts greatly with the potential of an ever evolving outlet for creativity, collaboration, and reflection.

Lana Zinger, A. S. (2014, Fourth Quarter). Starting An ePortfolio: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach. *Contemporary Issues In Education Research*, pp. 249-252.

Summary

Sinclair and Zinger write a short but concise article on methods of designing e-portfolios directly connecting to the educational objectives of the college. They also describe how they implemented e-portfolios within two selected classes. The conclusion outline “recommendations”, “what worked” and “what did not work”. (Lana Zinger, 2014, p. 251) It seems that collaboration, communication, and “camaraderie” (Lana Zinger, 2014, p. 251), were listed among the things that did work. The weakness of the program appeared to be technical issues, and some students dropping out weakening the collaboration aspect.

Critique

This journal article appealed to me as the backdrop for the study was a community college. Sometimes there is a great divide between what can be implemented by a large university and a lesser funded community college.

I enjoyed the short and direct nature of the article. The simple “What Worked” (Lana Zinger, 2014, p. 251) and “What did not work” (Lana Zinger, 2014, p. 251) I applauded. It conveyed the message that they were not hesitant to be self-critical. They portrayed the process as not only a learning exercise for their students but one for themselves as well. The authors seemed to embrace the true nature of the ever evolving educational process.

Tubaishat, A. (2014). E-Portfolio Assessment for Learning: Ten Years Later - an Experience from an Outcome-Based University. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Information Technology*, pp. 368-378.

Summary

The stated purpose of this journal article “is to analyze student’s perceptions of using EAMS to support learning and assessment in an outcome-based institution after ten years of implementation”. (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 368) “EAMS” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 368) stands for “E portfolio Assessment Management System”. (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 368) The introduction defines through a variance of sources what an e-portfolio is and its goals. Tubaishat breaks down goals on three levels, “student level”

course level” and “program level”. (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 370) “The Purpose of Study Section” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 370) not only states it seeks to evaluate e-portfolios by students but possibly used as a tool for “accreditation” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 370). “The Institution under Study” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 370) introduces a United Arab Emirates University and describes the backdrop and infrastructure in which the study takes place. The article’s main thrust is that e-portfolios are to be directly linked to an “outcome based curriculum”. (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 372) The study discusses the “E-Portfolio Assessment for Learning” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 373). Readers are provided graphics to illustrate the “Management System Interface” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 374), which is broken down in segments by class.

The remainder of the article focuses on the specifics of the study, student surveys, conclusions, and future enhancement. The overall conclusion of the study is that “students had positive opinions”, (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 377) and that “e-portfolios is a better way to assess knowledge” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 377) compared to more traditional methods. The last “Future Enhancement” (Tubaishat, 2014, p. 377) section states the university seeks to garner faculty input and seeks to extend access to e-portfolios beyond graduation.

Critique

While I applaud the documentation of the experiment the conclusions seem weak. For a university that states they are outcome driven, they provide little evidence of specific outcomes. The only measurement of outcomes consisted of student surveys. The author suggests that e-portfolios were to replace many exams, yet does not correlate it to better grades averages or student retention rates. The article is well structured and uses a wealth of resources yet misses the mark entirely as a case study.

Tubaishat, A. (2014). E-Portfolio Assessment for Learning: Ten Years Later - an Experience from an Outcome-Based University. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Information Technology*, pp. 368-378.

Summary

This article intends to give a look back over a decade use of e-portfolios. In the “What we know” (Yancey, 2009, p. 28) section Yancey explores the crucial role of student’s engagement and cites “e-portfolios work to increase student engagement”. (Yancey, 2009, p. 28) The author examines e-portfolios as a tool for the college selection process and promotes its use as a possible vehicle to select potential leaders and diversification.

Yancey states that studies have not yet demonstrated why e-portfolios have achieved particular outcomes. The author promotes more studies to be done particularly more “evidentiary base” (Yancey, 2009, p. 29) studies. The reflection found frequently in e-portfolios is cited as resulting in “increased levels of engagement and retention”. (Yancey, 2009, p. 29) The article also examines specific platforms and their usability as a key component in increasing student engagement. The tools used for portfolios are explored for limiting or promoting creativity.

Yancey provides an overview of e-portfolios “reflection process” (Yancey, 2009, p. 32) and a “contextualizing device”. (Yancey, 2009, p. 32) Her conclusion is that e-portfolios provide desired results but need further specific scientific studies to learn more for the evolvement of the technology.

Critique

Yancey’s article contains much of the reflective qualities she is hoping to promote through the use of e-portfolios. She does effectively demonstrate with recent references the reflective, conceptualizing, and engaging qualities of e-portfolio use. Her main objective is to call for more evidence based research. The weakness of the article is she seems to contain e-portfolios as an internal learning mechanism. She does not explore cross disciplinary functions or the collaborative aspect of e-portfolios.

Kevin Fahey, J. L. (2007). Using electronic portfolios to make learning public. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literact*, pp. 1-13.

Summary

This journal article centers primarily on the use of e-portfolios as a collaborative and public tool. The authors describe their as “a plan for using electronic portfolios as a forum for establishing collaborative learning environments”. (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 2) The authors represent an unlikely combination of one professor, and two middle school teachers. The initial portion of the article documents the brainstorming done prior to the creation of the project. The authors were putting together diverse groups “peer conscious” (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 3) teens, undergraduate college students, and graduate students.

“The Timilty Community Forum” (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 5) project launched in “six homerooms” (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 5) of middle schools students. The site was tracked “during the 2003-2004 school year” (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 5) and “averaged 124,000 hits per month”. (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 5) The author cites critical components were; “providing a safe environment”, “good classroom management”, and reinforcement of “respectful discussion”. (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 6) The college experiment took the form of an “electronic portfolio” (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 7) and averaged “more than 43,900 hits a month”. (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 9) The project was also extended to a “Graduate Leadership Program”. (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 9) The results seem to indicate that the graduate students were eager to explore others work but were slow to start sharing and providing feedback.

All classes reported “higher levels of motivation and engagement” (Kevin Fahey, 2007, p. 10). It appears that creating the goal of a classroom as a community was successful.

Critique

The article was a fun article to read as the personality of the authors seems to penetrate the writing. It seems that at every level of implementation they were entirely open to learning more about the process and students engagement. I did appreciate the trial of e-portfolios on many educational levels. While I believe the experiment was a success in terms of communication and collaboration more specific data could have been presented.