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Use of ePortfolios as a high-impact learning practice for the B.A. in Arabic program at CSUSB

The semester-based [Arabic Language, Literature and Culture Program](#) at [California State University, San Bernardino \(CSUSB\)](#) guides students toward linguistic competence and intercultural understanding necessary to interact in respectful and responsive ways with diverse Arabic speaking communities. A thread of social justice focus connects courses throughout the program starting from beginning-level courses and ending with the capstone Signature Work course as students build their language proficiency and engage in reflection, critical thinking and problem solving (see below for the [Program Learning Outcomes](#) and how they relate to the [CSUSB Institutional Learning Outcomes](#) as well as [General Education Learning Outcomes](#)).

ePortfolios provide a valuable tool and [high-impact educational practice](#) (HIP) that can have transformative effects on student learning experiences ([Association of American Colleges & Universities \(AAC&U\)](#)), They facilitate student engagement in reflection, inquiry and integration (Eynon & Gambino, 2018)

The outline below is a proposal of how ePortfolios could be used in the Signature Work capstone in the Arabic B.A program not only to assess the success of the program but also to provide students with a platform for setting goals, engaging with and reflecting upon their learning as they document and track their paths along language proficiency and intercultural competence. Their capstone project builds upon their course experiences throughout the program. ePortfolios allow students to make sense of their educational experiences in an integrative learning fashion; students are able to make connections within and across curricular, co-curricular as well as personal and professional experiences.

Use of ePortfolios in the BA in Arabic Language, Literature and Culture

Students start a formative progress and reflective portfolio starting their first year by using Portfolium which can be accessed through their MyCoyote accounts on Blackboard. The portfolio includes three sections which can be created using Adobe Spark.

Section 1: Students post a personal narrative as well as explore and develop their language learning goals (linguistic as well as cultural) and reflect upon and review their language goals at the beginning and end of each semester.

Section 2: Students post the course learning outcomes for each course at the beginning of the semester. At the end of each course, students post two artifacts that document their speaking and writing skills and how they align with the course learning outcomes and [ACTFL proficiency guidelines](#) as indicated for each course (artifacts can be selected from course work/assignments) .

Section 3: Students brainstorm and develop seed ideas for a capstone project (issue related to social justice within Arab communities or in a specific region or country). Students continue to develop, review and track these ideas throughout the courses.

More details about requirements for student Portfolios and how they relate to program learning outcomes (PLOs) are included below.

Year 1

- Personal narrative and preliminary goals
- Presentational speaking sample at the Novice Mid- Novice High level and connect with course learning outcomes (CLOs)
- Presentational writing sample at the Novice Mid-High level and connect with CLOs
- By the end of the second semester, identify a problem/issue/topic of interest: Find an online resource and link to it on Portfolio (English or Arabic)

(PLO-1, PLO-3)

Year 2

- Presentational speaking sample at the Novice High-Intermediate Low level- Reflect upon the sample comparing it with the one from the first year and connect with your goals and CLOs.
- Presentational writing sample at the Novice High-Intermediate Low level- Reflect upon the sample comparing it with the one from the first year and connect with your goals and CLOs.
- Document your skills at text analysis- demonstrate how texts (in any form) are socially and ideologically constructed (link to a text; song/show/article in Arabic at the NH-IL level or in English -related to courses covered in year 2- may use an assignment from year 2; Media/culture/literature/health....)
- Revise the problem/issue/topic of interest for your final project. Develop an argument and preliminary description of the issue and why it is an important social justice issue (English and/or Arabic).

(PLO-1, PLO-2, PLO-3)

Year 3

- Presentational speaking sample corresponding to the CLOs. Reflect upon the sample comparing it with previous ones and reflect upon your progress. Connect with your goals.
- Presentational writing sample corresponding to the CLOs. Reflect upon the sample comparing it with previous ones and reflect upon your progress. Connect with your goals.
- Document skills at text analysis- demonstrate how texts (in any form) are socially and ideologically constructed (link to a text; song/show/article in Arabic related to themes and courses covered in year 3; Media/culture/literature/health....)
- More work and analysis of the problem/issue/topic of interest. Connect the issue with what you have been learning throughout the year and across courses as well as with your personal and professional experiences. Compare with similar issues in local communities.
(PLO-1, PLO-2, PLO-3)

Year 4

- Presentational speaking sample corresponding to the CLOs. Reflect upon the sample review previous samples and reflect upon your progress. Connect with your goals.
- Presentational writing sample corresponding to the CLOs. Reflect upon the sample comparing it with previous ones and reflect upon your progress. Connect with your goals.
- Document skills at text analysis- demonstrate how texts (in any form) are socially and ideologically constructed (link to a text; song/show/article in Arabic related to courses covered in year 4; Media/culture/literature/health....)
- Finalize your project; a product in Arabic related to the project (e.g., flyer raising awareness or suggesting solutions, a video, an infographic, an essay, blog, web page, etc.)
(PLO-1, PLO-2, PLO-3, PLO-4, PLO-5)

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for the Arabic Language, Literature and Culture Program at CSUSB

(Between parentheses are the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) as well as GE learning outcomes (GLOs) that correspond to the PLOs of the Arabic Program)

Students will be able to

1- Communicate effectively in three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational with speakers of Arabic in order to understand the dynamics of global communities ([ILO-8](#), [GLO-8](#))

2- Comprehend and analyze oral and written texts effectively and critically as socially and ideologically constructed and shaped by context so students can contribute to enriching their local communities and beyond ([ILOs- 3, 4, 5](#); [GLOs- 1, 3, 6](#))

3- Think critically, pose questions and solve problems responsibly using their communication skills and knowledge/awareness of the language and culture within a social justice framework; students are able to make connections with their local and global communities ([ILOs- 4, 5, 6, 7](#); [GLOs- 2, 5, 7](#))

4- Practically apply their knowledge and skills in new settings and contexts

5- Develop understanding of multiple perspectives and are able to respectfully interact, collaborate and solve problems across communities and cultures, respect other cultures and become aware of stereotypes in the target community as well as the local one. ([ILOs- 6, 7, 8](#); [GLOs 4, 5, 6, 7, 8](#))

References

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

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Eynon, B., & Gambino, L. (2018). Catalyst in action: Case studies of high-impact ePortfolio practice (First ed.).