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### University Honors Program ePortfolio Strategy

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## University Honors Program ePortfolio Strategy

The UHP ePortfolios are intended to promote deeper learning by creating a space in which individual students make their learning transparent for themselves, identify connections across courses, and document their accomplishments for a larger audience. The ePortfolios are a long-term endeavor that students will create in the first weeks of their freshman year and maintain through the completion of their senior project. They will, therefore, be virtual spaces in which students can curate over time a particular image of themselves as learners and skilled workers.

Students in the University Honors Program will add to their ePortfolios in each of their four years at CSUSB. The centerpiece to these efforts will be the program-level learning outcomes for the Honors Program. Students will be given a copy of these in their first year and they will receive orientation to them so that they understand what they mean. The outcomes will provide the focus for ePortfolio artifact selection and reflection throughout the four years. In some cases, students will be given assignments within the Honors curriculum that are intended to be added to the portfolios, but students will, overall, be given the opportunity to choose what examples of their work are added.

The general prompts for each of the four years will differ, due to curricular differences at each stage of the Honors Program. Each year, the students will focus on different segments of the program-level learning outcomes, though they will return to covered areas periodically so that their reflections are iterative and build.

- In the first year, students will participate in a four-course, cohort experience, taking first-year writing and critical thinking in the fall and oral communication and the foundation seminar in the spring. These courses have designated prompts that cut across classes and that are intended to help students make connections among them. These writing assignments will be collected in the ePortfolio with a reflective statement about how knowledge is constructed across disciplines. Students will have the option of including work they believe exemplifies the outcomes.
- In the second year, students do not have designated Honors courses to take, and so they will not have a curricular space in which to work on assignments specifically for their ePortfolios. Instead, they will be required to curate work from their classes that they believe reflects their continued progress in towards the outcomes that structure the Honors Program. This selection of work will be accompanied by reflective statements that address different facets of the outcomes. (These prompts have yet to be written.)
- In the third year, students will have an Honors curricular experience in which work completed specifically for classes will be designated for the ePortfolio. The interdisciplinary, team-taught, project-based learning classes will yield collaborative projects that students will include in their portfolios. Again, reflection will be encouraged with a required written statement, this time focusing on the integration of different disciplines and on collaboration.
- In the final year, students will reflect regularly as part of their senior Honors Project workshops. Here, the reflections will be of two types. First, they will consider how the research or creative capstone projects exemplify the kinds of learning described in the program-level outcomes. Second, they will reflect on how their work over four years has enabled them to work on a larger-scale project.

This plan attempts to balance two sides of artifact curation: compulsory reflection and student choice. Student choice is important for putting students in control of their ePortfolios. That emphasis on student agency also plays into the determination of what ePortfolio platform the Honors Program will use. Thibodeaux, Cummings, and Harapnuik (2017) argue that giving students choice in the selection of platforms actually contributes to continued use of the ePortfolio. Therefore, the Honors Program will introduce students to multiple possibilities, such as Word Press, Weebly, Wix, and the platform purchased by CSUSB, Portfolium.

What has not yet been determined is the means of reading and responding to student ePortfolios. During the first, third, and fourth years, when students are in Honors courses, instructors can review portfolio artifacts and potentially reflective essays. That approach would enable feedback to students, however, a strategy for collecting aggregate data for assessment purposes would still be necessary.

## Program-Level Learning Outcomes

**Collaboration:** Work collaboratively with persons from different fields of specialization in diverse, cross-disciplinary teams to analyze and/or solve applied issues and problems.

**Scholarship (breadth):** Demonstrate an understanding of the diverse nature of scholarship in the university by applying the tools (methodologies/content/skills) of multiple disciplines to analyze and/or solve complex issues and problems.

**Inquiry (depth):** Design, plan, and execute an original research or creative project in a particular discipline or interdisciplinary field that would meet professional standards in that discipline or field.

**Civic Engagement:** Demonstrate social consciousness, community building, and engaged civic responsibility through participation in campus and community activities and service.

**Personal Development:** Synthesize academic, professional, and community involvement into an action plan for post-baccalaureate aspirations, revealing personal strengths, weaknesses, and significantly changed perspectives about life experience.