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Pilot E-Portfolio Project for Communication Studies Graduate Program

Ahlam Muhtaseb
CSUSB, amuhtase@csusb.edu

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E-Portfolio Institute Final Project
Pilot E-Portfolio Project for Communication Studies Graduate Program
Ahlam Muhtaseb

According to the assessment plan of Communication Studies graduate program, "In addition to experiential learning, students will also use reflections and integrative learning as part of their learning process. These will happen when students create portfolios of their work throughout the program, as well as when they build personalized reading lists and study guides as preparation for their comprehensive examinations (COMM 6088)" (p. 1).

While we do not have to offer E-portfolio as a culminating experience any time soon, it is important to start experimenting of models of integrating it into our graduate assessment plan. This proposal is to conduct an E-portfolio pilot project with all graduate students who will be semester completers (voluntarily), that would be both a formative & summative and could be composed of two parts aimed at:

1. Internal public: the Department of Communication Studies for assessment purposes, so we could link the E-portfolio to our graduate assessment plan learning outcomes.
2. External public: potential employers in terms of showcasing (summative), etc. This is especially pertinent for our GTAs in terms of having teaching e-portfolios. This will be in consultation with our current GTA coordinators. In addition, the E-portfolio, which should be a living profile, would be very helpful for our grad students pursuing doctoral degrees.

We will offer 2 sets of workshops; quarter completers and semester completers (at least one workshop for each) because the learning outcomes are different for each student group. Although the quarter-completers might not have to do the E-portfolio for their cumulative experience, it would be beneficial for them to learn about it and probably use it for their post-graduation job hunting.

One potential use of the e-portfolio is to Investigate if we would cancel comps and substitute them with the e-portfolio (because of all the conversations that have taken place at the department level), or create a combined assessment, where the e-portfolio is a requirement for comps. Comps have to be totally revamped. One model would be an essay exam, where students produce a term-paper in one week, which covers few main topics. Also, probably, every student has to do an e-portfolio, even if they were doing theses or projects. If all students do an e-portfolio: This is a better unified method of assessment for WASC accreditation, especially that we will align them with goals and objectives, but we have, as a department, to have a series of conversations about which approach would be the best.

Plan:
1. Muhtaseb to introduce the idea at the first winter department meeting in January and get feedback from the rest of faculty (done).

a. Muhtaseb to conduct at least two workshops to explain Q2S to only semester completers.
b. Decide on which courses (maybe consult with grad committee), how to link it to learning outcomes, how to organize it, what is expected, etc. In other words, create the rubric for e-portfolios.
c. Grant & other ATI technicians will lead two workshops on how to organize and put together an e-portfolio (technical aspect).
d. Which platform? It is better to use Portfolium, especially for assessment and WASC.
e. If we use Portfolium, this would link them to a lot of other universities and potential employers, which might result in head hunting.
f. One way of doing it is to ask them to include their comps good essays to showcase their masteries. For projects & theses, students could upload the links to their scholar works in the e-portfolio.
g. We could run a final workshop in May to help students with hands-on with the help of technicians. Also, we could have them do peer reviews of each other's e-e-portfolios.

2. Use ETEC (Educational Instructional Technology) e-Portfolio rubric/criterion. In their program, the instructor of the foundational class (such as our current COMM 600) will introduce the e-portfolio, the objectives of using the e-portfolio, program learning outcomes, how to organize it, including the technology, etc. This is aimed at helping them prepare. In each core class, the instructor will introduce the e-portfolio, focusing on the relevant section to the class and require the students to gradually prepare the section, then present it at the end of quarter. For elective courses, they could be combined with the core classes to showcase outcomes, etc.