Adapting to a Digital World
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The AAEEBL ePortfolio Review
Articles at a Glance

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The AAEEBL ePortfolio Review (AePR) is the magazine of the Association for Authentic, Experiential and Evidence-Based Learning with a mission to serve the needs of the global ePortfolio community and promote portfolio learning as a way to transform higher education.

AePR explores the ways in which ePortfolios shape the digital educational landscape across many fields and disciplines, broaden technological literacy amongst those working and learning within this digital space, and open the door to new methods of innovation that develop professional and personal growth in the ever-changing realm of academia. Through examination of the continued advancements in ePortfolios/ePortfolio-based learning, we continue to witness, redefine, and expand the ways in which students learn—an exciting, encouraging picture of how academia’s future experiences growth in an increasingly technology-reliant future.

AePR invites you to submit articles and reports covering the broad area of ePortfolio use. We publish articles about pedagogy, research, technical, and organizational issues bi-annually. Our readership includes ePortfolio practitioners, administrators, and students. AePR is an online journal serving the needs of the global ePortfolio community and seeks to promote portfolio learning as a major way to transform higher education.

For further details about submitting proposals to AePR, click here.

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Dear Readers,

As one of the newer board members of AAEEBL, I’m particularly delighted to welcome you to this issue of the AePR entitled *Adapting to a Digital World*—so incredibly apt for the journey we have all been on over the last eighteen months. Certainly, the Covid pandemic can be seen as a catalyst for new ways of working and collaborating, and this issue delves into some of the practices that have been initiated during this time.

In bookending the ePortfolio process, Samantha Blevins suggests how an ePortfolio planning organizer (ePo) can reduce the cognitive load on students when starting out creating an ePortfolio for the first time and streamline what can be a daunting process (this ePo is helpfully included by the author). While in what has been an increasingly solitary student learning experience over Covid, the study by Mize et al. indicates the potential for feedback through screencasting at the review stage of students’ ePortfolios to increase social presence and connection between many partners in learning. This theme is echoed by Lietzenmayer et al. as they report on practical strategies and approaches to incorporating screencasting feedback into the ePortfolio feedback loop.

A forensic review of student ePortfolios by Cindy Stevens at Wentworth Institute of Technology provides insights to current students’ capability of reflecting future skills—those identified by Whiting (2020) as the job skills of tomorrow. This is timely as the pandemic can be seen to have served as a tipping point for ePortfolio to more widely and creatively demonstrate student knowledge and skills, or as Deborah Oesch-Minor phrases it, “ePortfolios have arrived!”. In her article, she outlines how ePortfolio has grown beyond the confines of academia to support broader learning journeys. The flexibility of the learning portal developed provided a digital space which can enable all learners to thrive and co-create their learning.

While we don’t yet know when the pandemic will be in our rearview mirror, there can be no doubt that during this period we have all enhanced our technical competencies to allow us to adapt to an increasingly digital world. Read on and enjoy this issue as it explores these themes in more detail.

Take care and stay well,

Lisa Donaldson

_Dublin City University/ePortfolio Ireland_
Dear Readers,

As we emerge from the past two years, there is a renewed feeling of energy, hope, and a lot of reflection happening at every turn. Although we are still not out of the Pandemic woods yet, we can see things turning a corner as people are coming together for celebrations, work, social events, and much more. This edition of AePR, Adapting to a Digital World, certainly captures some significant trends of the past two years. We have five wonderful articles in this edition, all reflecting this adaptation in unique ways, including: social presence, design thinking, leadership, and creating self-identify through ePortfolio practices.

In the Mize et al. article, the authors present ways to humanize their learning in a digital world via tools and techniques specific to ePortfolio creation. Unique perspectives on how to achieve this are presented and a pilot program is introduced. Samantha Blevins presents an “ePortfolio Planning Organizer (EPO)” to “help guide” student process for development. Blevins offers practical advice to introduce students to this guide for creating their ePortfolios and to build an identity in the digital world. Cindy Stevens provides us with an article related to digital self-identity in relation to the Top Ten Future Skills presented from the World Economic Forum. Stevens showcases several school award-winning ePortfolios, along with an assessment to determine if these top ten skills are reflected in student ePortfolios. She wanted to determine if students understand, present, and reflect these skills and showcase these skills to the world. Deborah Oesch-Minor takes us on a journey related to how the ePortfolio was used to develop an internal training program, which includes digital storytelling and content delivery. Instead of basing the course within an LMS, an ePortfolio was utilized as a shared place to come together during the pandemic. The use of a Wiki tool allowed users to build and reflect on content via the ePortfolio. Rather than written reflections, the participants recorded video reflections on the project. You will want to read Oesch-Minor’s article as she takes you into this awesome digital world, which enhanced collaboration, development, and reflection. Finally, Lietzenmayer et al., has us revisit the idea of social presence in a digital world via “the principles of high impact practices” related to assessment of ePortfolios. Specifically, these practices include grounded ideas for the feedback process.

This issue is packed full of excellent ideas, current programs, and reflection all related to the digital world. As the world faces an uncertain end to the COVID pandemic, ePortfolio practice and tools offer productive ways to bridge the attendant isolation and disconnection.

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If You Look Here: Increasing Social Presence in ePortfolios through Multimodal Feedback

Authors: Megan Mize Ph.D., Lisa Nicole Tyson, Alison Lietzenmayer, and Kayla Davis
Review Editor: Gillian Hannum

Introduction
The recent shift to remote instruction in the wake of a pandemic prompted many instructors to consider new strategies for fostering learning and engaging with students in online spaces. At the intersection of these needs sits ePortfolio pedagogy, which allows students to humanize their learning regardless of where it occurs, while also capitalizing on the affordances of digital media (Alexiou & Paraskeva, 2020; Di Silvestro & Nadir, 2020; Watson et al., 2016; Wuetherick & Dickinson, 2015). A multimodal approach to providing ePortfolio feedback models the potential for digital media to personalize the process, strengthen the ePortfolio product, and foster an increased sense of belonging.

As more students enroll in online courses due to constraints, such as working one or more jobs while attending university, along with increasing rates in returning and/or non-traditional students, student support mechanisms must evolve to meet their needs and their particular situations. While the need for support in regards to writing and digital literacies increases, connecting the students to available resources and active learning opportunities can be difficult. Students who do not make use of peer support often cite scheduling issues as well as other barriers, such as the fear of stigma and a lack of awareness of available resources (Ciscell, Foley, Luther, Howe, & Gjsedal, 2016). An ideal asynchronous strategy would address these barriers by providing access to customized support and feedback at the student’s convenience, while also lessening the threat of personal embarrassment or perceived stigma for seeking help. At the same time, such a strategy could create an opportunity for social engagement despite the lack of face-to-face interaction.

Current scholarship suggests that digital asynchronous support may play a significant role in facilitating student learning in the coming years (Hewett, 2010; Denton, 2017). In 2013, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) released its position statement regarding online instruction, which addressed asynchronous tutoring among the principles and effective practices, arguing that online students should receive support that imitates the format of online courses: “[Online Writing Instruction] OWI students should be provided
support components through online/digital media as a primary resource; they should have access to onsite support components as a secondary set of resources” (Principle 13). Similarly, online learners engaged with digital composition practices such as ePortfolio creation benefit from receiving feedback in a manner that reflects the mode of course delivery while building the class learning community.

Social Presence and Screencasting

Online students, particularly within an asynchronous structure, often prefer additional support mechanisms to increase their sense of belonging within a course. Literature indicates that social presence is developed through “clear, cogent, and reasonably timely directions, feedback, and responses... [and] warrant equal prioritization with the social presence aspects of the online instructional environment” (Hazel et al., 2014). Kim, Song, and Luo (2016) expand on social presence “as a feeling as if someone is socially present in one’s life, although they are not physically in the same space.” One strategy for integrating a social element into the ePortfolio composition process is the use of screencasting feedback. Screencast technology allows the user to record the images and actions on their screen while simultaneously capturing audio of their narration. Notably, research suggests that students receive and retain feedback better when it is oral versus written (Fang & Wickersham-Fish, 2021; Cunningham, 2019; Brereton & Dunne, 2016; Vincelette & Bostic, 2013; Anson, 2011). Use of screencasting technology for formative feedback is a compelling means of increasing social presence in ePortfolio construction, particularly in online environments. Furthermore, these videos meet current understanding of accessibility standards due to capabilities for closed captioning, screen reading, and mobile viewing. Social presence is improved through regular instances of two-way exchange. Students who have the opportunity to receive personalized feedback in an asynchronous online course are more likely to feel seen in class.

Pilot Project

To illustrate the impact of such an approach, this work shares the results of an internally funded project at Old Dominion University (ODU), wherein a team consisting of Communication faculty and Office of Academic Success Initiatives and Support (ASIS) ePortfolio Team piloted an ePortfolio screencasting feedback project with 27 Communication students. In this effort, students received screencasting feedback from multiple audiences, including ePortfolio Assistants (peer mentors), students within their course, and from a faculty member. Participating students were asked to provide feedback regarding this experience and
comment on the changes they made throughout the semester. The initial results showed that students perceived the procedure, feedback, and engagement as high-quality and beneficial.

From the start, students demonstrated an awareness of the social nature of this feedback experience despite not having immediate access to the reviewers. Of the 27 students enrolled, 67% (18) provided further questions or concerns in their initial submission, recognizing that the reviewer would likely need more information to effectively complete the ePortfolio review. Likewise, in the submission form, many students used politeness strategies, thanking the reviewer in advance for their efforts. For instance, one student commented, “Any help would be appreciated! Thanks for your time.” Of those providing additional information to the reviewer, a significant number of students, 38% (7), expressed gratitude to their unknown reviewer. This trend demonstrates that students viewed this asynchronous exercise as an exchange and an opportunity to be seen by another individual.

Out of the 27 students enrolled in this course, 56% (15) completed a survey reflecting on the experience. Overwhelmingly, students responded positively to the process of receiving recorded feedback with 80% (12, strongly agree) and 13.3% (2, agree) of respondents reporting that the feedback met their needs. Additionally, 73.3% (11, strongly agree) and 20% (3, agree) of participants claimed they were likely to seek additional feedback. Finally, 80% (12, strongly agree) and 13.3% (2, agree) of students stated that they would recommend to others that they seek out screencasting feedback for their ePortfolios.

When invited to share any additional comments about their screencasting feedback experience, students often focused on their reviewer as an individual rather than the specifics of the feedback that was provided. This trend demonstrates that students appreciated a sense of social connection, which made the feedback feel more approachable, and thus, valuable to them. Comments included:

- “She was very professional and easy to communicate with. Suggestions made by her [have] helped me transform my [ePortfolio] from something good to something great.”
- “[ePortfolio] tutor was friendly and knowledgeable…”
- “My screencast experience was amazing! [My teacher] reviewed my webpage and [gave] me more feedback than I was expecting. She even showed me some tips and tricks to add on to my page. I took all the [advice] that she provided and used.”

**Conclusion**

Faculty also observed improved student ePortfolios, resulting in more time available to focus on disciplinary feedback instead of foundational portfolio design work. The screencasting feedback process streamlined the student learning experience and offered insight from peers that they previously would not have received.

As the data shows, this increases the likelihood of students reaching out for future feedback from peers, faculty, and institutional tutorial services. As such, a positive asynchronous feedback experience might establish behaviors that will further enmesh online learners in social networks within a campus community.
Effective feedback encourages students to actively revise rather than merely correcting errors. When done well, screencasting feedback highlights opportunities for students to revise their portfolios, note areas for growth, and identify common mistakes to avoid. This asynchronous screencasting feedback endeavor fostered active engagement with the ePortfolio designer, peers, faculty, and support services despite the lack of immediate personal interaction. While institutions were inundated with the pandemic shift to online services, this multimodal project offered a socially-present digital alternative for student engagement at a time when it was needed most. However, the value of such an approach is clear and has lasting applications for ePortfolio pedagogy.

For more information about multimodal feedback, see Hear Me Out: Increasing Social Presence in ePortfolios through Multimodal Feedback, found here.

About the Authors

Megan Mize earned her Ph.D. in English Studies from Old Dominion University where she is the Director for ePortfolios and Digital Initiatives in the Office of Academic Success Initiatives and Support (ASIS). She has over ten years of experience with developing and supporting ePortfolios and related digital exercises. Currently, her research interests include digital ethics and ePortfolio composition, extended reality (XR) use as an emerging high impact practice, and GIFs as cultural and rhetorical artifacts. Her work appears in Peitho, Field Guide, and In Media Res.

Lisa Nicole Tyson is the ePortfolio Support Coordinator at Old Dominion University’s Office of Academic Success Initiatives and Support (ASIS), overseeing the daily operations and tutor training for a digital composition tutoring center, ODU’s ePortfolio Studio. Her ePortfolio research focuses on identity construction in student ePortfolios. She is also interested in best practices for online tutoring, specifically asynchronous video/screencast feedback and exploring the online user experience for both tutors and tutees. She serves as the treasurer of the Online Writing Centers Association.

Alison Lietzenmayer is a Master Lecturer at Old Dominion University and University Distinguished Teacher, a dedicated Communication instructor currently focused in organizational communication and instructional communication scholarship and training. She has partnered with leading scholars to support research in family communication and work-life communication topics. Alison is an expert at integrating theory into practical and actionable training. She is a passionate advocate of engaged activism and accessibility in online class design.

Kayla Davis is a recent graduate of the Lifespan and Digital Communication MA program at Old Dominion University. After working as an ePortfolio Assistant for a year and a half, Kayla transitioned to the ePortfolio Studio Manager position in which she assisted undergraduate and graduate students in creating meaningful websites, hosted workshops, built engagement and outreach, and organized critical documents. Kayla's interactive thesis illustrated the significance of modding in video games to expand inclusivity in the technology industry. She is currently working as an account manager for a technology firm that specializes in designing websites for diverse institutions.
References


Abstract
Creating an ePortfolio can be a daunting task for learners, especially when balancing the exploration of the concept of ePortfolio with the process of creating an ePortfolio for the very first time. This can be especially true if the ePortfolio learner isn’t provided an example ePortfolio or a template to serve as a starting point.

An ePO can also allow creators the flexibility needed to create an expression of themselves and their best work. This article will discuss the creation and use of an ePO, focusing on lessons learned throughout the process.

Introduction
The adoption and use of ePortfolio has been supported on our campus at Radford University through our Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning for the past eight years. During that time, we have transitioned through two university-provided ePortfolio platforms, as well as several support models. As ePortfolio use on our campus continues to evolve, so does our support of this valuable high impact practice.

Given that ePortfolio platforms are not one-size-fits-all, we currently strive to support any platform selected by faculty or student users. This is especially true because, ultimately, we want our students to have an ePortfolio that can grow with them over time and support lifelong learners (Cambridge, 2010). While this is a large task to support all different platforms, it is also vital to the continued use of ePortfolios on our campus. The creation of an ePortfolio Planning Organizer (ePO) was conceived to help support students and faculty with what can be a daunting task of creating an ePortfolio that isn’t platform-bound. The ePO was designed not only to walk students through the ePortfolio design process, but also allow platform flexibility.

Creating the ePO
Students creating ePortfolios typically go through several steps, outlined by Reynolds and Patton (2014), that are vital to the successful creation of an effective ePortfolio. These steps are identified as: collect, reflect, create, communicate, and re-create, with reflection and connection occurring throughout the process (Reynolds and Patton, 2014). Drawing from knowledge regarding these essential steps, as well as the initial stages of ePortfolio planning include stating the purpose, identifying
the intended audience, describing and considering content for each page and/or subpage, and emphasizing overall reflection of their ePortfolio as a whole body of work. The ePO designer incorporated this holistic process into the organizer. Several iterations of the ePO have been created and tested, with the current version of the ePO.

Introducing the ePO to students

Ideally, the ePO is distributed to students at the beginning of their ePortfolio planning process. This helps students orient themselves to the purpose of their ePortfolio. Students are then asked to consider their target audience, specifically what their audience should know and understand about their ePortfolio. The layout of their ePortfolio is addressed after these two questions are answered, as the purpose and audience of their ePortfolio will help inform the additional decisions made in the planning process. Lastly, the identification of artifacts or evidence for each page are addressed, encouraging students to reflect on each item featured in their ePortfolio. Students should be encouraged to revisit their ePO throughout their time designing their ePortfolio, so they ensure they are keeping both the purpose and the audience of their ePortfolio in mind.

Testing out the ePO

The current version of the ePO was initially created in 2019 but the COVID-19 pandemic has hampered the ability to use the ePO with students, as most faculty were overwhelmed with the transition to emergency remote teaching in early 2020 and supporting hybrid learning at present. However, a few students were asked to use the ePO and found the tool useful in their own creation of an ePortfolio for the very first time. One faculty member recently tested the tool in their class and reported back, “The ePortfolios my students created using this tool were leaps and bounds above students from previous classes. The ePO helped orient them to the task at hand and go into creating their ePortfolio with an already laid out plan. I found I had few follow-up questions from students about their ePortfolios, as well as better-designed products for their final submission.”

Conclusion

Implementing an ePortfolio requirement within a classroom or on a campus can be a costly endeavor, especially when that cost is measured in time or resources (Blevins & Brill, 2017). The use of an ePO might be able to assist with mitigating this cost, helping students more easily orient themselves to the tasks of ePortfolio creation and assisting faculty in both creating and assessing their ePortfolio requirement. While a formal evaluation of the tool has yet to be completed, this anecdotal feedback we have received is a great sign for our campus. We can continue using and polishing the ePO to meet the growing and evolving needs of our campus ePortfolio community.

The ePortfolio Planning Organizer (ePO) Worksheet starts on page 16.

References


ePortfolio Planning Organizer (ePO) Worksheet

This planning organizer will walk you through the steps of creating your ePortfolio. As you work through each step, focus on the section of your ePortfolio you are working on and make sure you don’t lose sight of your intended audience. Answer the questions for each step as appropriate.

**P** What is the purpose of your ePortfolio?

**A** Who is the intended audience of your ePortfolio? What should viewers know and understand about you and your work?

**D** How do you want your ePortfolio divided? You should think purposefully about the pages that it will contain (no more than 6), as well as subpages.

**E** What evidence and artifacts will you upload for each of your pages and subpages?
*When selecting your evidence and artifacts, don’t forget your purpose and intended audience. When uploading that evidence, answer the questions: What? So what? Now what? for each item.*
Page 1—Landing Page: Welcome/Home/Introduction

Description: This is the initial page that your reader will land on when visiting your ePortfolio. Make sure you include who you are, the purpose of your ePortfolio and your contact information.

Subpages (if applicable):

Page 2—Title:

Description:

Subpages (if applicable):

Page 3—Title:

Description:

Subpages (if applicable):

Page 4—Title:

Description:

Subpages (if applicable):
What have you learned about yourself as you created your ePortfolio? Are there things you will need to add as your ePortfolio evolves? Are there any additional pieces missing from your ePortfolio that aren't covered in this planning organizer?

Additional Notes:
Introduction
The Business Management students at Wentworth Institute of Technology are required to submit an ePortfolio during their senior year as a graduation requirement.

The guidelines for this ePortfolio focus on research and writing, group dynamics and leadership, professional development, and communication (Stevens, 2020). However, the pandemic has changed the way we work and the skills needed for many positions. In fact, the future skills needed are much more in-depth and complicated than the basic skills listed above. The question becomes if Wentworth’s four areas help our students showcase the skills needed in the workplace of the future.

Top 10 Skills
The Future of Jobs Report 2020 from the World Economic Forum (2020) lists the top 10 skills needed for 2025 and beyond (see Table 1, labeled as Top 10 Skills). This World Economic Report (2020) lists the top 15 skills needed for 2025 and beyond, but for the purposes of this article, the top 10 will be reviewed and the remaining five are addressed later in this article.

Kate Whiting (2020) narrows these top 10 skills into the four areas of problem-solving, self-management, working with people, and technology use and development. To better understand the relationship of these 10 skills to each of Whiting’s areas (see Table 2, labeled as Whiting’s Four Categories), which cross-references the data from the World Economic Forum (2020) with Whiting’s four areas (2020). As you can see from Table 2, five of the skills fall into the problem-solving area, two in self-management, one in working with people, and two in technology areas.

Wentworth Business Management ePortfolio Analysis
To determine if our students understand and represent these skills, four award-winning Business Management ePortfolios were reviewed by this author to see if and how these students understood and reflected Whiting’s four areas (linked here). A broad-level analysis of these students’ ePortfolios related to these top 10 skills can be seen in Tables 3–6: Business Management ePortfolio Review.

As indicated in these four tables, artifacts and/or reflections can be detected in all 10 areas for each student by this reviewer. Some artifacts represent multiple areas, indicating an overlap of interconnected skills. While a broader representation of these areas with additional artifacts and reflections would further support the representation of all 10 skills for these students, all ePortfolios from this assessor’s perspective represent all 10 skills from the World Economic Forum (2020) and are also indicated in Whiting’s (2020) four areas of problem-solving, self-management, working with people, and technology use and development.
## Table 1: The Top 10 Skills Needed for 2025 and Beyond (World Economic Forum, 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>World Economic Forum Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Analytical thinking &amp; innovation</td>
<td>• analyzing information and using logic to address work-related issues and problems&lt;br&gt;• creating and alternative thinking to develop new ideas for answers to work-related problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Active learning &amp; learning strategies</td>
<td>• understanding and using new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making&lt;br&gt;• selecting and using training/instructional methods and procedures appropriate for the situation when learning or teaching new things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Complex problem-solving</td>
<td>• identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Critical thinking &amp; analysis</td>
<td>• using logic and reason to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems&lt;br&gt;• monitoring / assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Creativity, originality, &amp; initiative</td>
<td>• willing to take on responsibilities and challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Leadership &amp; social influence</td>
<td>• willing to lead, take charge, and offer opinions and direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Technology use, monitoring, &amp; control</td>
<td>• determining tools and equipment needed&lt;br&gt;• controlling operations of equipment or systems&lt;br&gt;• watching gauges, dials, or other indicators to make sure a machine is working properly&lt;br&gt;• analyzing needs and product requirements to create a design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Technology design &amp; programming</td>
<td>• writing computer programs for various purposes&lt;br&gt;• generating or adapting equipment and technology to serve user needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Technology design &amp; programming</td>
<td>• being open to change&lt;br&gt;• maintain composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger, and avoiding aggressive behavior, even under difficult situations&lt;br&gt;• accepting criticism and dealing calmly and effectively with high-stress situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Reasoning, problem-solving, &amp; ideation</td>
<td>• influencing the application and manipulation of information in problem-solving&lt;br&gt;• influencing the solutions of problems involving mathematical relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Analysis

Digital self-identity, through a review of ePortfolios, indicates that students understand and reflect all 10 World Economic (2020) skill areas. Wentworth’s Business curriculum and co-op opportunities along with student travel and student external activities are all indicated. More updates and reviews of our curriculum would offer even greater coverage in order to help students understand, incorporate, and achieve additional skills in each of these areas. The remaining five areas listed in the World Economic Forum Skills Needed for 2025 (2020) are also important. These areas—1. Emotional intelligence, 2. Persuasion and negotiation, 3. Systems analysis and evaluation, 4. Troubleshooting and user experience, and 5. Service orientation—are important skills needed for the future (World Economic Forum, 2020), and further review of these top ePortfolios may help indicate if our students represent each as well.
Future Suggestions
Suggestions for our Business Management program to help students obtain and represent more of these skills include the following:

- Review our curriculum to brainstorm additional learning skill opportunities, such as:
  - New projects
  - Group activities
  - Leadership options
  - Student travel
  - Diversity and inclusion
  - Technological design and programming
  - Certificates and licenses
- Determine ways to incorporate learning of these areas via behaviorist, cognitivist, or constructivist learning opportunities appropriate to the skill area
- Aim for higher constructivist learning opportunities within the curriculum
- Review ePortfolios to determine indications of the five additional skill areas, such as:
  - Emotional intelligence
  - Persuasion and negotiation
  - Systems analysis and evaluation
  - Troubleshooting and user experience
  - Service orientation

Future Research
The World Economic Forum (2020) includes those additional five areas to consider for assessment in addition to Whiting’s focus on the top 10 skills (2020). Clearly, these skills fall within Whiting’s four areas (2020) and can be detected in each of the four ePortfolios assessed above at various levels. However, another assessment would indicate if there is a need for additional opportunities both at the curriculum level and/or external personal student level. Additionally, the World Economic Forum (2020) breaks these skills into competencies and taxonomy clusters that include skills and knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and cognitive types. Additional assessment of these award-winning ePortfolios would highlight if Wentworth’s curriculum or external student initiatives seek to include or reflect these competencies and taxonomy clusters via the ePortfolio. Finally, an additional review of ePortfolios could also include an assessment of current learning theories to determine if the curriculum has evolved from simple behaviorist teaching styles to a more constructivist learning and teaching focus.

Conclusion
In general, the current Wentworth Business Management program is helping students gain and represent all of the areas needed for the future related to the top 10 skills. However, curriculum updates should be continuous and should always match future job/career skill sets. These top 10, along with the additional five, should continue to be reviewed to determine ways in which to ensure students are gaining these skills, reflecting each, and representing all areas in their respective ePortfolios in order to tell their digital story. In the end, competencies, taxonomy clusters, and learning focus need continuous exploration to ensure the success of our graduates.

Click to go to the Four Student Assessments and the Winners of the ePortfolio Awards (First Place and Second Place (#1), Second Place (#2) and Third Place).

References

Whiting, K. (2020). These are the top 10 job skills of tomorrow—and how long it takes to learn them. World Economic Forum. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them

### Digital Self-Identity: Reflection of Top 10 Skills Needed for 2025 and Beyond
Cindy P. Stevens, Ph.D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>Problem-Solving</th>
<th>Self-Management</th>
<th>Working with People</th>
<th>Technology Use &amp; Development</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1. Analytical thinking &amp; innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Active learning &amp; learning strategies</td>
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<td>3. Complex problem-solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Critical thinking &amp; analysis</td>
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<td>5. Creativity, originality, &amp; initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Leadership &amp; social influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Technology use, monitoring, &amp; control</td>
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<td>8. Technology design &amp; programming</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Resilience, stress tolerance, &amp; flexibility</td>
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<td>10. Reasoning, problem-solving, &amp; ideation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The Top 10 Skills in Relation to the Four Categories (Whiting, 2020)

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**Student ePortfolio: 1st Place**

Diana Solano (https://solanodfreesubdomain.weebly.com)

**Student ePortfolio: 2nd Place**

Justin Truedson (https://truedson.com)

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The AAEEBL ePortfolio Review
Digital Self-Identity: Reflection of Top 10 Skills Needed for 2025 and Beyond
Cindy P. Stevens, Ph.D.

Diana's Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>Problem-Solving</th>
<th>Self-Management</th>
<th>Working with People</th>
<th>Technology Use &amp; Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Analytical thinking &amp; innovation</td>
<td>Systems Analysis School Project</td>
<td>Course work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Active learning &amp; learning strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rock Climbing</td>
<td>Artwork</td>
<td>Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Critical thinking &amp; analysis</td>
<td>Systems Analysis School Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Creativity, originality, &amp; initiative</td>
<td>Rock Climbing</td>
<td>Artwork</td>
<td>Leadership roles</td>
<td>Course work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Leadership &amp; social influence</td>
<td>Leadership Institute</td>
<td>National Honor Society</td>
<td>Student Government</td>
<td>Student Ambassador</td>
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<td>7. Technology use, monitoring, &amp; control</td>
<td>Systems Analysis School Project</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Technology design &amp; programming</td>
<td>Systems Analysis School Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Resilience, stress tolerance, &amp; flexibility</td>
<td>CROWNS Club</td>
<td>Women at Wentworth Recipient Award</td>
<td>Leadership roles</td>
<td>Rock Climbing</td>
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<td>10. Reasoning, problem-solving, &amp; ideation</td>
<td>Negotiations Project</td>
<td>Technology Project Fundraiser</td>
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Table 3: Business Management ePortfolio Review--Diana Solano
### Justin's Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>Problem-Solving</th>
<th>Self-Management</th>
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<th>Technology Use &amp; Development</th>
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<td>• Systems Analysis School Project</td>
<td>• IT Case Analysis</td>
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<td>2. Active learning &amp; learning strategies</td>
<td>• Course Work</td>
<td>• Work Experience</td>
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<td>3. Complex problem-solving</td>
<td>• Systems Analysis School Project</td>
<td>• IT Case Analysis</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Critical thinking &amp; analysis</td>
<td>• Systems Analysis School Project</td>
<td>• IT Case Analysis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Creativity, originality, &amp; initiative</td>
<td>• Assistant Property Manager Position</td>
<td>• Other Co-op Positions</td>
<td>• Student Club President</td>
<td>• Volunteer with Special Olympics</td>
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<td>6. Leadership &amp; social influence</td>
<td>• Assistant Property Manager Position</td>
<td>• Other Co-op Positions</td>
<td>• Student Club President</td>
<td>• Volunteer with Special Olympics</td>
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<td>7. Technology use, monitoring, &amp; control</td>
<td>• Systems Analysis School Project</td>
<td>• Completed Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Technology design &amp; programming</td>
<td>• Systems Analysis School Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Resilience, stress tolerance, &amp; flexibility</td>
<td>• Volunteer Work</td>
<td>• Work Experience</td>
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<td>10. Reasoning, problem-solving, &amp; ideation</td>
<td>• Volunteer Work</td>
<td>• Work Experience</td>
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Table 4: Business Management ePortfolio Review--Justin Truedson
# Shanan’s Assessment

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<th>Self-Management</th>
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<td></td>
<td>School Project</td>
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<td>• Work Experience</td>
<td>• Co-ops</td>
<td>• Travel</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Work Experience</td>
<td>• Co-ops</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Travel</td>
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<td>3. Complex problem-solving</td>
<td>• Technology Acquisition Project</td>
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<td>4. Critical thinking &amp; analysis</td>
<td>• Decision Analysis Case Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Co-op 1</td>
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<td>• Co-op 2</td>
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</table>

Table 5: Business Management ePortfolio Review—Shanan McGraw

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More Winners!
There were two 2nd Place winners.

Student ePortfolio: 2nd Place

Student ePortfolio: 3rd Place
Emma Manning (https://truechon.com)
### Emma's Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>Problem-Solving</th>
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<td>• Marketing Project</td>
<td>• Electric Supply Center Co-op</td>
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<tr>
<td>&amp; innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Active learning</td>
<td>• PDB Foundation Co-Op</td>
<td>• Electric Supply Center Co-op</td>
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<tr>
<td>&amp; learning strategies</td>
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<td>3. Complex problem-solving</td>
<td>• PDB Foundation Co-Op</td>
<td>• Electric Supply Center Co-op</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Critical thinking</td>
<td>• Research Methods in Business Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>&amp; analysis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Creativity, originality</td>
<td>• Logo Redesign Consultation for Kairoi Health</td>
<td>• Principles of Marketing Project</td>
<td>• Electric Supply Center Co-op</td>
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<td>&amp; initiative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Drawing</td>
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<td>6. Leadership &amp; social</td>
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<td>• Electric Supply Center Co-op</td>
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<td>influence</td>
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<td>7. Technology use, monitoring</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Technology Entrepreneurship Project</td>
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<td>&amp; control</td>
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<td>8. Technology design &amp;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Technology Entrepreneurship Project</td>
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<td>programming</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Resilience, stress</td>
<td>• Running</td>
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<td>tolerance, &amp; flexibility</td>
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<td>• Research Methods in Business Final Project</td>
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<td>&amp; ideation</td>
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Table 6: Business Management ePortfolio Review--Emma Manning
ePortfolios as Vital Tools for Grassroots Leadership Training Initiatives

Author: Deborah J. Oesch-Minor
Review Editor: Russel Stolins

ePortfolios have arrived. In 2013, Dahlstrom, Walker, and Dziuban documented that over 50% of universities made use of ePortfolios and 50% of post-secondary students reported engaging with ePortfolios in at least one of their courses. Susan Khan reported on the state of ePortfolios in her 2014 review “E-Portfolios: A Look at Where We’ve Been, Where We Are Now, and Where We’re (Possibly) Going.” While she hesitated to predict the future of ePortfolios, she did envision a future where ePortfolio use blossomed. She was right. Course-based ePortfolios, degree-oriented ePortfolios, and professional ePortfolios are staples at most US universities. Adaptations of ePortfolios are now trending in academic advising (Douglas et al., 2019; Al-Nassar & Gharib, 2020), and ePortfolios have emerged as innovative assessment tools, even for clinical training (Elshami et al., 2018). While the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and other organizations publish studies about the use and benefits of ePortfolios at the university level, there is little exploration of the ways ePortfolios could be adapted and used in settings beyond universities and personal-professional ePortfolios. In one attempt that moved beyond university-professional ePortfolio genres, an Advanced Grassroots Maternal Child Health Leadership Training Program used a shared ePortfolio to support learning and document participants’ journeys. This innovative training program blended an instructional Wiki and ePortfolio with grassroots leaders’ stories and projects to create a digital record of the curriculum, document big ideas from Zoom meetings, and share materials developed by training program participants. These pioneering modifications in both scope and purpose expand the ways ePortfolios can be used to support grassroots leadership training programs.

Grassroots Maternal Child Health Initiatives

Grassroots maternal child health initiatives support community organizers who work tirelessly to help their communities address social, economic, and political inequities that range from safe housing and access to quality health care to reentry programs for women who were once incarcerated. With minimal funding and little, if any, access to learning management systems, grassroots leadership training programs often use free, open-source materials. Two leading providers of free grassroots training materials included:

• W. K. Kellogg Foundation’s online workbook, “Grassroots Leadership Development: A Guide for Grassroots Leaders, Support Organizations, and Funders,” and

• Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas’s website “Community Tool Box.”

Markum et al. (2020) “NEEDED: Grassroots Leaders to Lead Systems Change Efforts That Reduce Infant
Mortality” documented advancements in grassroots programming for Maternal Child Health (MCH) initiatives and highlighted grassroots training programs around the globe. This groundbreaking documentation provided clear evidence that grassroots MCH work saves the lives of mothers and babies and that there is a need to expand grassroots MCH training. Markum et al. (2020) did not uncover any programs that provided advanced leadership training. The research revealed a need for ongoing grassroots training opportunities to support and encourage grassroots leaders as they persevere in their work.

Grassroots leaders are familiar with their community’s needs and have access to networks within their communities which support people who are often underserved by governmental and social outreach programs.

Jack Turman Jr. of Indiana University's (IU) Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health and Interim Chair of Social and Behavioral Sciences, works with Grassroots MCH Initiatives and proposed an advanced curriculum for grassroots leaders who previously completed a one-year training program through IU’s unique grassroots community programming. The goal was an Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training Program with 15 in-person sessions that would include open-source leadership materials. The spread of Covid-19 posed challenges for sharing reading materials, keeping up with training goals, personalizing information for participants, and providing convenient ways for the coordinator and grassroots’ leaders to exchange documents.

Indianapolis-based grassroots leaders applied to be part of the Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training Program and embarked on the six-month, fifteen-session journey. Several of the leaders included: Deborah Fisher, Nina Porter, and LaToya Tahirou.

- Deborah Fisher is a mother, grandmother, and grassroots advocate dedicated to reducing maternal mortality rates in Indiana. She is the Family Interview Coordinator with an initiative to interview families who experienced the death of a mother during pregnancy, labor, and delivery, or the first year of her infant’s life. This important work is part of the Indiana State Department of Health, Maternal Mortality Review (MMR) Committee.

- Nina Porter is a mother and advocate for women leaving incarceration through the Mothers on the Rise (MOR) initiative. Many Indiana mothers leaving incarceration step out of a facility with no options for safe housing, no diapers for their child/children, and no idea where their next meal will come from. With support from IU Fairbanks School of Public Health Grassroots MCH initiatives, AmeriCorps, and the Indiana Department of Corrections, MOR provides training and assistance for women and their children during re-entry.

- LaToya Tahirou is a mother, community health worker, and grassroots advocate for safe housing. As part of her work with IUPUI’s Grassroots MCH Initiatives, LaToya hosts community baby showers to promote healthy pregnancies, safe sleep, and safe housing.

These and other grassroots leaders share their stories of loss and grief as testimony of the need for community intervention to reduce infant mortality rates. U.S. News and World Report (2020) stated, “Indiana has historically had one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country. From 2013 to 2017, Indiana’s average infant mortality rate was 7.3 per 1,000 compared to the national average of 5.9.” IU’s Grassroots MCH supports the work
of grassroots leaders fighting to save the lives of moms and babies.

A Shared ePortfolio Showcase and Revising the Curriculum

As the instructor for the Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training Program, I worked with Jack Turman, Jr.’s curricular concepts and added Project-Based Learning components, including a shared ePortfolio Showcase. WIX was selected for the instructional areas and shared ePortfolio because it is user-friendly and free. The Advanced Grassroots WIX instructional Wiki and ePortfolio linked directly to the IUPUI Grassroots Maternal Child Health Initiatives webpages to anchor our work to open-source materials available through IU Fairbanks School of Public Health. One of the major benefits of using a website platform outside of the IU’s system was that participants could access and navigate the webpages even though they did not have IU usernames or student status. Because the advanced leadership training participants were not IU students, this work-around ensured that participants and invited guests could gain access to course materials without dual authentication and university identifications required to use IU’s course management system, Canvas.

Using the Curriculum Wiki and ePortfolio website hybrid in place of a learning management system was essential to the success of the program. The persistence of the pandemic made it impossible to meet in person, so the training program moved online with sessions hosted through Zoom. The Curriculum-ePortfolio hybrid gave participants easy access to readings, session goals, and other information with a simple click on an email hyperlink or session tab. For participants who opted not to build an external ePortfolio of their own, the shared ePortfolio Showcase provided space to share the materials they created as part of the Project-Based Learning curriculum. The materials participants created—we called these artifacts—supported the planning, implementation, and assessment of their grassroots initiatives. For transparency and to cultivate a sense of program ownership, participants had access to edit and add materials to the shared training curriculum Wiki and ePortfolio.

**ePortfolio? Learning Management System? Wiki? A Hybrid that Challenged ePortfolio Definitions**

The University of Waterloo, Center for Teaching and Learning website “ePortfolios Explained: Theory and Practice” (n.d.) explains the ways ePortfolios are and are not like a Learning Management System (LMS).

With an ePortfolio, the student is in charge: the student decides who can view the ePortfolio, what artifacts get added, how it is designed, and so on. Typically, a student loses access to the LMS when courses end; in contrast, ePortfolios remain the student’s property after finishing university.

The Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training website bridged this divide. The grassroots leaders were given the WIX username and password to make additions, changes, and updates. Because the leaders were reluctant to modify the curriculum-sessions pages, I built a separate Participants area. The grassroots leaders could access their own Participant areas without feeling like they would “mess up” our session materials.

When participants continued to show reluctance to modify the website, I made changes as they asked for updates. They served as reviewers, editors, and content creators. I was the typist and website geek. I could easily add and move materials in response to their requests.

For example, LaToya said that it helped her to read some materials two or more times, but that she knew herself well enough to know that she would not go back and click on a previous session after we moved to the next one. I asked if she would like me to copy-paste ideas she told me
were important onto the next session—to repeat the materials. She said, “yes.” Other participants agreed that this would help them review materials and become more familiar with important concepts if they appeared on more than one Session page.

During the Zooms, we would reflect on readings and what the leaders wanted to revisit or update for the next session. I would copy-paste those materials into the next session and add comments, which they said would add clarity. Because of this give and take, some materials, like the nine components of a good TED Talk, appear several times on the website.

The shared ePortfolio-Curriculum website did much more than provide an overview of what participants read and valued; the pages documented their ideas and contributions. The TEDTalk segment is a wonderful example of collective content and demonstrates one way the website functioned like a Wiki. After watching a series of TEDTalks on how to give a good TEDTalk, analyzing Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream,” and discussing his “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” the participants created their own list of strategies to optimize presentations and TEDTalks.

I served as scribe and coach. The leaders fused concepts from Nancy Duerte’s “The Secret Structure of Great Talks,” Simon Sinek’s “How Great Leaders Inspire Action,” and techniques they noticed in MLK’s work to develop nine important steps they would take as they composed their own TEDTalks.

Our work together during Zoom sessions helped each of us see the value of constructing and documenting knowledge together on our session pages. We used the share screen Zoom function, and I would type as they discussed additions and suggested tweaks to our materials. Participating in these conversations, sharing ideas in the chat function, meeting with me individually, and building materials live—during Zooms—made learning visible and pulled back the veil between content creator and audience. We were working together to build the tools that they would re-read for the next week. They were building pieces of their own curriculum and taking control of their own leadership training journey.

As we built materials together, participants commented that they could never build a website like we were constructing. So, I pulled back the veil a little further. I showed them blank pages ahead and revealed that I built the pages one to two weeks ahead of our schedule. This gave me much-needed time. More importantly, this gave me the flexibility to build materials that were responsive to Zoom dialogue across the six-month program. LaToya noticed, “Rome wasn’t built in a day.” She recognized that content building takes time.
She asked, “Do you know how to eat an elephant?” I didn’t. “One bite at a time,” she said with a smile. We were learning together that big projects take time and that the way to tackle an ambitious initiative was through planning, small steps, and consistent progress. This process-oriented approach is also at the heart of grassroots change. Participants made the connection. “You’re breaking it into little pieces, then putting it together,” Nina observed. Groundbreaking initiatives that included Nina’s work with Mothers on the Rise would take years to initiate and implement. Likewise, we were working together in the pilot program to build a curriculum for future grassroots leaders.

Our work together posed a different issue for me as an ePortfolio user: What part of the curriculum and website had I created? What role did the participants play in this creation? What was an educational website? Was the Showcase the only ePortfolio area? While initially, I was seeing the shared webpages as a way to use WIX as a LMS, our work together revealed that giving stakeholders voice and choice mattered. The website was more than a curriculum, lists of assignments, or lecture notes; our shared pages evolved as spaces to reflect on Zoom conversations, course readings, and learning objectives. Symbiosis.

My willingness to toss all sorts of digital material under the term “ePortfolio” and suggest that ePortfolio is a big tent for a wide range of web-based materials does not mesh with the ideas that there are three types of ePortfolios: Showcase/Professional ePortfolios, Learning ePortfolios, and Assessment/General Education ePortfolios (“The What, Why, and How of ePortfolio,” n.d.). I’m arguing for a bigger tent with more room for hybrids and experimental mash-ups. I recognize that ePortfolio may not be a one-size-fits-all container, but I want to advocate bigger tent. A tent for the idea of both-and rather than either-or. At what point does shared content function more like an ePortfolio and less like a content page? Or can a page do both?

**Reflections Through Formal Presentations**

Reflection in the Advanced Grassroots MCH program also moved in a different direction: formal presentations. Because we placed emphasis on oral traditions and telling individual stories, we opted to host formal, spoken reflections in addition to informal reflections on a Google planning document [not available on the ePortfolio Showcase]. These presentation-reflections replaced the traditional written ePortfolio reflections on learning. Prior to the presentations, the grassroots leader-participants had access to a shared Google Doc to outline and comment on what they learned through the training program, how this learning changed them, and why it mattered. Participants prepared visuals to support their 20-minute presentations and included comments on their readings and learning artifacts. Jack Turman, Jr., local advocacy affiliates, and program participants attended the May 6th, 2021 Zoom Showcase. The presentation format included time for questions and comments after each leader reflected on her growth as a grassroots advocate. The leaders presented a second time on May 10th, 2021 at the Grassroots MCH Family Meeting Zoom attended by other Grassroots MCH leaders, staff, and faculty.

The pilot program diverged from typical ePortfolio practices when we moved away from publicly accessible written reflections. We opted for oral presentations as the primary metacognitive component. There is precedent for using oral exchanges to reinforce and assess learning. Singh (2008) studied the use of oral assessments in an undergraduate dentistry program to address faculty complaints that facilitators heavy-handedly influenced students’ written reflections. In the second phase of this study, Singh writes, “[W]e decided to assess the learners orally so that their reflections could come alive and so that we could learn from the assessment and restructure or revise where necessary” (p. 180). Singh reports that this approach was anchored in social-constructivism.

**QR: The Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training Showcase: Shared ePortfolio**

(Scan this QR Code with your smartphone to visit the website.)
Lambert, Sorenson, and Elliott (2014) likewise validate oral interviews as a practical tool for reflection and assessment. Their study examined written and oral reflections from pre-service teachers over three reflection cycles. Their research suggests that a blend of written and oral reflections is better than only written reflections or only oral reflections. The Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training Program provided opportunities for written reflections. One participant actively engaged through reflective writing. The other participants were more comfortable writing informally in the shared Google Doc to prepare for the May 6th Presentation Showcase and talking about what they learned. Providing options for informal and formal written reflections as well as informal and formal oral reflections gave participants multiple opportunities to reflect in private and public spaces.

Creating More Opportunities for Typed Reflections in Future Programs

In future advanced leadership training programs, I will build-in more time for typed reflections during the Zoom sessions. The previous program allotted time for reflection during Zooms. However, most participants wrote reflections by hand rather than typing during these reflective exercises, which made it difficult to capture the energy and insights in their ePortfolio pages.

In addition to typed reflections, we will continue to talk about these reflections during the Zoom so that we participate in the ebb and flow of dialogue as a valuable component of reflection. We can and should use both the written and oral reflections for assessment and analysis in leadership training ePortfolios. Applying what we are learning in higher education to leadership training, especially with the use of ePortfolio and reflection, can help us build more effective leadership training programs.

The Digital Divide: Access, Technologies, and Digital Literacies

Our work in the Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training Program was no Nirvana. Problems arose. The most profound challenge we faced with the shared ePortfolio was that participants continued to feel uncomfortable editing the Wiki or adding their own work on the Participants area of the shared ePortfolio. They had lingering concerns that they might accidentally delete or displace other materials, even after we worked on and edited pages together. When we talked more about their reluctance, participants said they were uncomfortable with web-building tools. As we discussed technological literacy, it became clear that participants wanted to develop their technological skills and that they had a range of experiences with formal digital instruction. There was a digital divide.

Discussions of the digital divide have waned as more rural areas gain Internet access and as mobile phone use penetrates 95% of the world population (Pursel, 2015). However, experts suggest that the digital divide is as much about who knows how to use digital technologies as it is about who has access to broadband and computers. Pursel, Associate Director of Teaching and Learning with Technology, Penn State University, argues that the new digital divide is about the “relative inequality between those who have more and less bandwidth and more or less skills” (para. 2) Addressing this divide became a point of emphasis when participants said they were not familiar with technologies like PowerPoint or Google Docs. In addition to providing supplemental tech instruction during individual meetings, we worked together during Zoom sessions to share materials on
Google Docs, WIX, and Survey Monkey. Participants became more familiar with a variety of digital platforms because we embedded technology instruction into the curriculum as part of several Zoom sessions—this included practicing with Zoom’s chat function, audio/video settings, and screen share.

I also learned that some participants were not familiar with email management, attachments, organizing saved files, and/or presentation platforms. I asked what skills they wanted to learn and provided support. In one-on-one meetings, the participant and I shared screens on Zoom as she designed file folders to manage documents, became more comfortable searching for and uploading email attachments, selected PowerPoint templates to design presentation visuals, built surveys using Survey Monkey, and/or created their WIX ePortfolios.

Providing support at intersections with missional interests was an essential part of embedding Project-Based Learning (PBL) within the curriculum. PBL helped participants recognize how they could transfer what they were learning in the training program and use their newly-developed skills to support their grassroots initiatives. Deborah Fisher workshopped her interview questions for a Maternal Mortality Review survey. Nina Porter built a website for Mothers on the Rise. LaToya Tahirou built a PowerPoint to support her TEDTalk-style presentation: “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Critical Conversations” at the 2021 Prosperity Indiana conference. Providing technology training was part of responding to and supporting participant needs. Bridging the digital training divide contributed to the overall success of the program.

As we discuss ePortfolios in higher education, we often emphasize folio-thinking, high impact practices, reflection, assessment/rubrics, or scaling ePortfolio use. We typically gloss over the value of expanding users’ digital literacies. This may be shortsighted on our part. Many college students, much like the grassroots leaders, have limited experiences with website building platforms for ePortfolios. In 2019, half of IUPUI students across two sections of a second-year Professional Writing Skills course reported that they had no previous experience with website building technologies. After one semester and a team project which included micro-ePortfolios, 100% reported that they were familiar or somewhat familiar with a web-building platform.

Deborah Fisher, Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training participant, previously earned both an undergraduate and graduate degree. She reported that the advanced training program ePortfolio was her first introduction to a website building platform and that she valued learning new technologies as part of the curriculum. In an email, Deborah added, “I was given many tools that are useful in the work that I must do to assist in bringing about changes in our community settings” (personal communication, September 10, 2021). Digital user know-how and flexibility are essential in most professional settings, and ePortfolios are one way to expand digital know-how and familiarity.

The Advanced Grassroots MCH Leadership Training exit survey verified the value of technology training as part of the overall program. 100% of the respondents said that technologies and technological support were essential parts of their training. Participants pointed to WIX (as a web-based ePortfolio tool), Google Docs, Zoom, and the TEDTalk format (which included PowerPoint
visuals), as technologies they experimented with and will continue to use in their grassroots work. On the exit survey, one respondent typed: “All of these skills were crucial to me remaining a [Grassroots Maternal Child Health Leader].” In the exit interviews with Jack Turman, Jr. [participant names were kept confidential on the interview report], a respondent stated: “The technology skills were so valuable.”

In a personal interview, Deborah Fisher said, “The training program gave me opportunities to try new technologies. I enjoyed working with WIX to build an ePortfolio of my grassroots work and personal journey” (2021). The overwhelmingly positive response to learning and using new technologies echoes other digital divide research. Dutton et al. (2004) reported that closing the digital divide helps people “gain the knowhow and proficiency to use the technology to make changes to improve their relationships with each other, and with government, business…and the other resources with which they would not otherwise be able to interact.” The real-world value of learning new technologies in context raises other points that may be under-developed in ePortfolio research, like: What are the benefits of teaching ePortfolio as part of expanding technological skills to help support digital literacy?

Next Time Around: Ideas for Improving Wiki Participation and ePortfolio Development

The exit survey also explored the idea of learning transfer: transferring skills learned during the training program to other areas of life. The responses verified that the skills learned and implemented through real-world artifacts and the ePortfolio made it clear how these technologies, leadership strategies, and tools would benefit the leaders’ lives, including their professional work, public speaking, promotion of grassroots initiatives, and personal life.

Overall, the shared instructional Wiki and ePortfolio played a vital role in the success of the first Advanced Grassroots Maternal Child Health Leadership Training Program. In addition to serving as an open-source learning management system, these resources helped participants learn vital technological skills because they were embedded into sessions, activities, and artifacts. The May 6th, 2021 end of program Showcase Zoom gave participants the opportunity to reflect on their leadership training experiences as they presented their work to peers, IUPUI faculty, and local professionals who share their passion to support mothers and babies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'll apply these strategies in my professional life.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll apply these strategies in public speaking.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll apply these strategies in my work talking with community members as a grassroots leader.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll apply these strategies in personal life situations with technology, planning, and being strategic.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Survey Responses

Central to supporting leaders as they edit the Wiki will be defining our three digital spaces: the training program website, the curriculum/instructional Wiki, and the shared ePortfolio Showcase. Identifying these as three distinct, hyperlinked workUnivspaces may help participants better understand areas that are static, areas that we build...
together, and areas that they build independently. I will dedicate Zoom time to discussion about the scope of what we can do in our shared instructional Wiki, and we will make updates in real time during Zooms to the Session tabs. To encourage after-Zoom contributions, I will dedicate space for leaders to develop within the Sessions tabs by typing placeholder notes, like “LaToya’s comments here.” Participants may feel more freedom to make Wiki updates once they know there is a space reserved for them. We will make developing the curricular Wiki together part of the culture of our leadership training program.

I will make ePortfolio-building a central part of our meetings by adding it to the syllabus. Our ePortfolio-building meetings will be listed in two places: on the syllabus and under Session goals. Adding ePortfolio updates as a part of the curriculum may help participants better understand the ways their artifacts and reflections can live side-by-side in conversation with other materials in the ePortfolio Showcase. My hope is that these strategic changes will help participants feel ownership of the instructional Wiki and give them more support as they build and share artifacts related to their grassroots initiatives in their ePortfolios.

**Leadership Training: an Opportunity to Expand ePortfolio Use**

Corporations invested over $357 billion in training initiatives in 2020, about $18 billion less than they spent on training in 2019 (2020, Training Industry). As billions are spent on corporate initiatives, other organizations are exploring ways to use ePortfolios in training programs that are not as well-funded. Shrestha and Joshi (2021) documented their successful implementation of professional ePortfolios in workforce development programs for highly-skilled immigrants and refugees. Our Advanced Grassroots Maternal Child Health Initiatives at IUPUI also used ePortfolios curricularly and to showcase participant work. As educators and researchers continue their efforts to assess the benefits of ePortfolios as a meta-high impact practice, there is room to expand our work to include the ways ePortfolios can benefit grassroots leadership training programs.

**Acknowledgement**

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**About the Author**

Deborah J. Oesch-Minor integrates ePortfolios into her writing and literature classes at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. Her students explore their passions and work with community partners, then build dynamic project-based ePortfolios. Inspired by her students’ work, she started working with IU Fairbanks School of Public Health, Grassroots Maternal Child Health Initiatives in 2019 to support grassroots leaders as they advocate for mothers and babies in Indianapolis. Debbie also serves as a Faculty Fellow at the IUPUI Institute for Engaged Learning where she supports Project-Based Learning initiatives.
ePortfolios as Vital Tools for Grassroots Leadership Training Initiatives
Author: Deborah J. Oesch-Minor

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Hear Me Out: Increasing Social Presence in ePortfolios through Multimodal Feedback

Authors: Alison M. Lietzenmayer, Megan Mize, Ph.D., Lisa Nicole Tyson, and Kayla Davis
Review Editor: Diane Holtzman

While ePortfolio scholarship embraces the form’s multimodal possibilities (Bourelle et al., 2017; Brown, 2015; Tulley, 2013; Clark, 2010), the field has only begun to explore effective multimodal strategies for providing formative feedback during the ePortfolio composition process (Marriott & Teoh, 2012; Thompson & Lee, 2012). As part of an internally funded grant, a team at Old Dominion University (ODU) consisting of Communication faculty and the Office of Academic Success Initiatives and Support (ASIS) ePortfolio team, piloted an asynchronous ePortfolio Screencast Feedback program for COMM 305: Professional Communication (Department of Communication & Theatre Arts).

The pilot set the stage for scale-up efforts, allowing ASIS’s ePortfolio team to offer this style of repeated, in-depth support to the wider university population while also allowing the Department of Communication & Theatre Arts to evolve how they internally support ePortfolio development. As a result of this effort, the grant team generated the following tutorial on strategies for incorporating screencasting feedback into the ePortfolio composition and revision process.

The ePortfolio Screencast Feedback tutorial offers an alternative strategy, in which ePortfolio student designers and various audiences provide feedback using screencasting technology. ePortfolio designers receive suggestions in a way that models the impact of multimodal content as well as provides information in an immediate manner. ePortfolio practitioners recognize that formative feedback is particularly effective for this genre (Rasi & Vuojärvi, 2018; Tulley, 2013; Gardner & Aleksejuniene, 2008). The tutorial outlines a general strategy for incorporating screencasting feedback, providing suggestions for gathering the designers’ needs first, scripting potential responses, and sharing the resulting screencasts with the designers. Likewise, the tutorial addresses widely available and low cost screencast technologies, emphasizing that the user must consider issues of access, privacy, and ease of use.
The screencast approach seeks to address students’ feedback needs in a targeted fashion while fostering a sense of social presence and encouraging revision. This strategy considers various obstacles students might face in soliciting feedback, such as being distance learners or non-traditional students. This tutorial incorporates principles for effective high impact practices (HIPs), (Kuh, O’Donnell, & Reed, 2013):

- High expectations for performance
- Significant investment of time/effort of extended period
- Interaction with peers about substantive matters
- Diverse experiences
- Frequent, timely, constructive feedback
- Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning
- Opportunities to discover relevance through real-world application
- Public demonstrations of competence

As such, the grant team established multiple points of feedback from a variety of audiences. For each round of feedback, the reviewers (whether peers or the instructor) analyzed the ePortfolios from their respective roles, using guidelines the grant team provided. Each review produced one to two videos for students to watch asynchronously. These screencast videos were stored on institutional Google Drive accounts, which were protected by ODU’s security mechanisms, such as the single sign-on system. When the review process was done, the peer mentor or instructor contacted the student, sharing links to the feedback. Students’ engagement with the feedback and their multiple reflections on the process provided insight into the efficacy of the asynchronous feedback process for online students.

As a result of this pilot and student input, the team recommends integrating a screencast feedback activity into a course or program with the following elements:

1. Provide a digital form gathering a student’s name, email, and ePortfolio link.
   - Incorporate formative reflection in which the student indicates particular concerns regarding their ePortfolio.
   - Click here for a similar form: https://odu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5tPrO2EeKMrGUuf

2. Introduce the concept of screencasting feedback and train students to use the screencasting technology in a short, low-stakes activity prior to the peer review.
   - Share a video demonstration of screencasting in action. Examples of screencasting programs include Screencast-o-matic, Screencastify, and Camtasia.
   - Discuss the elements that make a video walk-through effective (such as limiting rapid movement, ensuring the content on the screen reflects what the speaker is discussing, etc).
   - Encourage the students to determine shared criteria for effective video feedback, creating a crowd-sourced course guide.
   - Provide time in-class or assign as homework that allows students to engage with the screencasting technology and share questions prior to the peer review.

3. Assign peers to review submitted ePortfolio links.
   - Assign each reviewer 2–3 ePortfolios, ensuring focus and in-depth responses. This also ensures each ePortfolio designer receives feedback from multiple viewers.
   - Provide a sample worksheet and script to model the type of feedback
reviewers might provide and use course guidelines for required criteria.

- Collaborate with composition or digital literacy services (such as a Writing Center) if possible to provide additional video feedback from peer mentors.

4. Set clear deadlines for peer review and feedback video production.
   - Allow a significant period of time for students to engage in this process (ex. 1–2 weeks).
   - Allow for and encourage ongoing responses and engagement. Archive and safely share videos in an institutional-sponsored digital repository.
   - Explore requirements for storing and sharing student content based on institutional requirements and FERPA guidelines.

- Use safe practices that might include: password protecting video links or limiting access to the video so that only the ePortfolio designer and the reviewer can view it.

- Utilize tools for storing and sharing that might include: potential tools for storing and sharing include cloud storage options such as Google Drive, Dropbox, or screen-cast program specific database.

5. Conclude with reflection from the student regarding the ePortfolio feedback as well as the feedback process.
   - Create reflections that can be facilitated by activities such as a post-feedback survey, discussion boards, a blog within the ePortfolio itself, and so on.

6. Provide faculty feedback to the student repeating the screencasting process outlined above.

In the project that piloted this effort, participating faculty noted immediate benefits of the design process, including an increase in student participation and achieving objectives within the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Integrative & Applied Learning rubric. Students also responded favorably to the multimodal feedback experience, appreciating the clarity and immediacy of content and personalized nature of the suggestions. As ePortfolio composition prompts students’ engagement with digital media in new and compelling ways, practitioners’ strategies for providing feedback and support should draw on those same affordances accordingly. This tutorial provides practical guidance and suggestions for one means of transforming the ePortfolio process, embracing the conversational nature of feedback in order to humanize the experience.

For more information about multimodal feedback, see If You Look Here: Increasing Social Presence in ePortfolios through Multimodal Feedback found here.
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The AAEEBL ePortfolio Review (AePR) invites you to submit articles and reports covering the broad area of ePortfolio use. We publish articles about pedagogy, research, technical, and organizational issues bi-annually. Our readership includes ePortfolio practitioners, administrators, and students. AePR is an online journal serving the needs of the global ePortfolio community and seeks to promote portfolio learning as a major way to transform higher education.

The AePR is a theme-based journal; therefore, acceptance is competitive. After a paper proposal has been accepted for a specific issue, the authors are paired with one of our peer reviewers. Paper proposals submitted for a current issue may be considered for a subsequent issue if it fits the upcoming theme.

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We’re particularly interested in the following types of articles:

- Longer articles (3,000 to 5,000 words) about practical research, administrative reports, or case studies with generalizable results — again, not as peer-reviewed research but as reports.
- Short articles (1,000 to 1,500 words) discussing a case study at an institution/course, offering advice and opinions to other ePortfolio practitioners.
- How-to articles, tutorials on specific tools or approaches (500 to 1,500 words).
- Interviews (500 to 1,000 words) with key individuals directly involved with the use of ePortfolios.
- Announcements (up to 300 words) of items regarding the use of ePortfolios in the field.