

## Course E-Portfolios: If I Knew Then, What I Know Now

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One Professor and two Honors College Students (seniors) demonstrate how they created a course e-portfolio for an undergraduate methods class at a Historically Black University. A dialogue between students and professor raised an important question about the impact from exposure to e-portfolio assessment, earlier in their academic teacher education core courses.

### Introduction

Students in SED 420-01 Education and Technology are required to create an ongoing course e-portfolio that includes all assignments. The rationale for not selecting the best artifacts or documents to include in the e-portfolio was to afford students the opportunity to see their consistent growth and improvement throughout the course. During the second class meeting, the professor modeled how to create the course e-portfolio. A 20 minute video, created with Camtasia Studio, was then posted on Blackboard to reinforce the e-portfolio lesson. This video provided detailed instructions on how to create the course e-portfolio. At the end of the course, students completed their final course portfolio with a detailed reflection on each assignment. Questions included: 1. Give a brief Description of the assignment. 2. What have you learned from the assignment? **Be specific** 3. How can you use the information from the assignment to assist you as a future teacher? Be specific with your response. 4. Reread your reflections and select a one word theme that best describes your reflections and briefly describe why you selected the one word. The Honors students were also required to have a verbal dialogue with the professor. It was from this session, with both students, evolved a theme of earlier implementation of the electronic portfolio in their college matriculation.

## The Process

The prelude to hands on and modeling of how to create an e-portfolio was, the background information on portfolios and the transition to electronic portfolios. Information was provided on how the early portfolios were a collection of work placed in a folder or binder. Eventually, these folders and binders became large, bulky, and awkward. With the advent of computers, the folders and binders gradually evolved into a digital format.

During the initial session, students were shown how to create folders and how to save documents into folders. Students were then shown how to create a table of contents using cells and hyperlinking to an existing file or webpage or a place in the document. Students were then transitioned into the hands on segment where hyperlinking documents and websites became second nature. This process continued on throughout the semester until the final exam which became their E portfolio project that included a detailed reflection.

## The Dialogue

The verbal dialogue between the professor and the two honors students echoed the benefits of the electronic portfolio assessment. The students shared that this was the second time they created an electronic portfolio, with a distinct difference, where in their previous class, it was more locating information and hyperlinking the information located into a Microsoft PowerPoint electronic portfolio. They echoed the S ED 420 electronic portfolio was more detailed and allowed them to synthesize the information in the portfolio. The professor shared that he was unable to retain or recall most of the information from his undergraduate courses and some of his graduate courses. Student one connected with that train of thought as retention of information from her earlier undergraduate experience was not systematic and organized, which allowed for random or scattered recollection. Student two continued with how they created the artifacts and the electronic portfolio help them to systematically organize the data. She further shared how she wished earlier courses... Not all of them... But those she considered most important would utilize the electronic portfolio assessment system. From the previous statement caused us to think of the possibilities and the impact of early implementation of an electronic portfolio system in early undergraduate courses and high school courses. Would retention of information from earlier courses be improved?

## Conclusion

The systematic creation of the course electronic portfolio did allow students to recall information. But the question remains, with access to their course information via flash drives, computer hard drives, and external hard drives, how long could they retain and recall the information if the technological props were still available.

Students will share in this session, the steps they used to create the course electronic portfolio. The professor will provide a copy of the 20 minute detailed video instructions to all session participants. Finally, both students and professor look forward to an engaging dialogue about our topic as a catalyst for a full paper submission.

