

## **Working Concept Paper**

### **Engagement for Academic and Professional Success**

The Engagement for Academic and Professional Success QEP involves students in active learning and critical reflection. This is accomplished by creating a culture of engagement emphasizing within the classroom (WTC) and beyond the classroom (BTC) experiences and reflecting on these experiences within an ePortfolio which showcases the knowledge, skills and abilities achieved.

Freshman will be recruited during CUSTOMS to take part in an Academic Engagement Academy which will include registering for two to three Academic Engagement courses each semester in the freshman and sophomore year and constructing an ePortfolio. Students will receive assistance with their ePortfolios from the AE faculty and ePortfolio coaches (full-time Career Center staff and peer career advisors). At the end of the sophomore year, ePortfolios could be reviewed and awards given for the exemplary Academic Engagement Academy Scholar. These awards may include a scholarship for the Junior and Senior year.

The ePortfolio concept could be introduced in UNIV 1010 and/or a freshman-level introduction course in the major such as Introduction to Theater. A foundation course could 1) introduce the ePortfolio concept; 2) discuss skills needed for success in academics and profession; 3) help students plan for MTSU BTC opportunities to build these skills and require attendance in at least one BTC experience; and 4) require critical reflection ePortfolio assignments regarding career exploration and academic and career goals. Professional advisors can refer to the academic and career goals during regular advising sessions. Sections could be designed for majors/colleges as well as undeclared students.

Freshman and Sophomore-level courses will be enhanced through incorporating WTC and BTC engagement strategies and critical reflection products which will be completed within the ePortfolio. Faculty will receive incentives for participating in the enhancement of courses. Some examples of engagement (active learning) strategies would be problem-based learning, collaborative learning, project-based learning, simulations, etc. Beyond the classroom experiences could include service-learning, cocurricular activities, attending related campus events, etc. Select sections will include linked course learning communities.

Majors will be recruited to utilize the ePortfolio to help students reflect on their experiences, make connections, and think critically about their experiences in order to decide how to best present their knowledge, skills and abilities to others, including potential employers. In addition to faculty in the major, ePortfolio coaches (a full-time Career Center staff and peer career advisors) would also assist students in designing their final ePortfolio.

Students would be asked to complete an ePortfolio that could include the items below.

- About Me
- Academic and Career Objectives
  - Include academic commitments
  - Short-term and long-term career objectives
- Knowledge/Skills/Abilities
  - evidence required from within the classroom and beyond the classroom learning as well as reflection
- Resume

Faculty will be asked to

- Teach and assist in UNIV 1010 and/or freshman-level introduction course in major
- Participate in enhancement of General Education courses by incorporating **engagement (active learning) strategies and critical reflection** ePortfolio assignments
- Participate in Professional Development/Training on engagement (active learning) strategies and critical reflection using ePortfolios best practices
- Create faculty learning communities around critical reflection using ePortfolios and engagement (active learning) topics
- Utilize the ePortfolio for their major

### **Student Touch Points for ePortfolio Development**

- Summer Reading/CUSTOMS
- Professional Advisors (ongoing)
- UNIV 1010
- General Education Instructors
- Major
- Career Center ePortfolio coaches (ongoing)

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

This project enriches MTSU's commitment to engagement and enhancing students' abilities to communicate and think critically. The ePortfolio will encourage more attention to reflection, deeper thinking, and synthesis and assist students in understanding and communicating their experiences and knowledge to others. The following student learning outcome measures could be assessed:

- Existing General Education Student Learning Outcomes for Oral Communication, Mathematics, Writing and Critical Thinking.
- Critical Reflection Student Learning Outcome for ePortfolio: Students will engage in systematic reflection and demonstrate the ability to critically examine their experiences and to create connections between those experiences and disciplinary knowledge.

**Assessment Measures Taken:**

- At the completion of UNIV 1010 (currently only required for undeclared and prescribed students) or freshman-level introduction course in major, review critical reflections in ePortfolios
- At the end of academic year through review and comparison of General Education Outcomes
- At the end of Sophomore year through review of critical reflections in ePortfolios.
- At the completion of Major review of students' critical reflections in ePortfolios (opt-in)
- Could also review selected questions/outcomes on NSSE, Graduating Senior survey, and/or California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST)

## Resources

### E-portfolio Examples

- Samples of MTSU Theater student's work  
Chelsea Fleet <http://clfleet.wix.com/portfolio>  
Stephanie Bottum <http://smb7w4.wix.com/stephanie-bottum>  
Cera Salman <http://toolmmm.wix.com/cera-salman-lighting>  
Michelle Benson <http://love217302.wix.com/michellebenson>
- LaGuardia Community College gallery  
<http://eportfolio.laguardia.edu/gallery/>
- Virginia Tech gallery  
[http://eportfolio.vt.edu/gallery/Gallery\\_Presentation/presentationgallery.html](http://eportfolio.vt.edu/gallery/Gallery_Presentation/presentationgallery.html)

### Sample QEPs with E-portfolio Component

#### Auburn

<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2013trackbqeps/AuburnUniversityQEPExecutiveSummary.pdf>

<https://fp.auburn.edu/writing/files/ePortfolioFinalImplementation.pdf>

#### St. Petersburg College

<http://www.spcollege.edu/criticalthinking/about/QEP.htm>

Engagement with an portfolio. (Link to the document in the 2nd paragraph.)

#### Radford University

<http://www.radford.edu/content/dam/departments/administrative/QEP/Plan%20Drafts/QEP-report.pdf>

Engagement with an eportfolio

### **Selected Topic References:**

- Cambridge, D. (2012, March 12). EPortfolios: Go big or go home. EDUCAUSE Review Online. Retrieved November 25 from <http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/e-portfolios-go-big-or-go-home>
- Chen, H. L., & Light, T. P. (2010). *Electronic portfolios and student success: Effectiveness, efficiency, and learning*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities
- Eynon, B., Gambino, L.M., Torok, J. (2014, Winter). Completion, quality, and change: The difference e-Portfolios make. *Peer Review*, 16 (1).
- Eynon, B., Gambino, L. M., & Török, J. (2014). "Inquiry, Reflection and Integration: Catalyst Design Principles" Retrieved from <http://c2l.mcnrc.org/framework/>
- Kuh, G. (2008). High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter. Washington, DC: AAC&U. Retrieved [http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/hip\\_tables.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/hip_tables.pdf)
- McCormick, A. C., Kinzie, J., & Gonyea, R. M. (2013). Student engagement: Bridging research and practice to improve the quality of undergraduate education. In M. B. Paulsen (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research (Vol. 28)*. 47-92. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- National Survey of Student Engagement. (2008). *Promoting Engagement for All Students: The Imperative to Look Within*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Center for Postsecondary Research.
- Peet, M., Lonn, S., Gurin, P., Boyer, K.P., Matney, M., Marra, T., Taylor, S.H., Daley, A. (2011). Fostering integrative knowledge through ePortfolios. *International Journal of ePortfolio*, 1(1), 11-31.
- Rafeldt, L.A., Bader, H.J., Czarzasty, N.L., Freeman, E., Quellet, E., Snayd, J.M. (2014, Winter). Reflection builds twenty-first century professionals. *Peer Review*, 16 (1).
- Rhodes, T. L. (2011). Making learning visible and meaningful through electronic portfolios. *Change*, 43(1), 6-13. doi:10.1080/00091383.2011.538636