Eportfolios supporting integrative learning in first-year themed learning communities

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Themed Learning Communities at IUPUI

First-Year Seminar + 2 disciplinary courses

25 freshmen co-enroll

Guided by faculty team:

❖ Explore a theme,

❖ Interdisciplinary connections,

❖ Out-of-class activities

Five attributes of a TLC at IUPUI

1. **Interdisciplinary theme** shapes each TLC course's design.

2. **Integration** of course content in each TLC course is intentional; course design encourages **integrative thinking** in students.

3. **Out-of-class activities** enhance academic content, integrative thinking, and interdisciplinary theme.

4. **Active learning** strategies are central to each TLC course.

5. **Faculty collaboration** fosters integrative approach, exploration of theme, co-curricular experiences, and student development.

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Eportfolio Grant Goals

❖ Core group of Themed Learning Communities (TLC) faculty

❖ Implement integrative eportfolio in TLC

❖ Increase integrative thinking

❖ Increase adoption of eportfolio to promote integrative thinking in TLCs

1.5 Day Summer Institute

❖ What is an eportfolio and why use it

❖ Integrative learning

❖ Reflection

❖ Signature assignments

❖ Audience / Peer feedback

❖ Taskstream

❖ Team project sharing and feedback

Team Projects

❖ Start with ePDP

❖ "Signature" artifacts from each TLC course

❖ Reflection assignments - integrative thinking

❖ Start simple

Phase I: Pilot Team Reflection

❖ Every team increased TLC quality

❖ Every team identified new ideas for next year

❖ Team feedback important for idea sharing

Phase II: Pilot Assessment

❖ Direct measures of student learning - eportfolios

❖ AAC&U Value Rubric Integrative Learning

Integrative Learning

Definition

"**Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds *across the curriculum and co-curriculum*, from making simple *connections among ideas and experiences* to *synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond campus*.**"

-AAC&U Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric

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-AAC&U Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric

"Integration and Application of Knowledge:

The ability of students to use information and concepts from studies in multiple disciplines in their intellectual, professional, and community lives."

"Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness:

The ability of students to examine and organize disciplinary ways of knowing and to apply them to specific issues and problems."

-IUPUI PUL's
https://due.iupui.edu/undergraduate-curricula/general-education/principles-of-undergraduate-learning/

Key Concepts

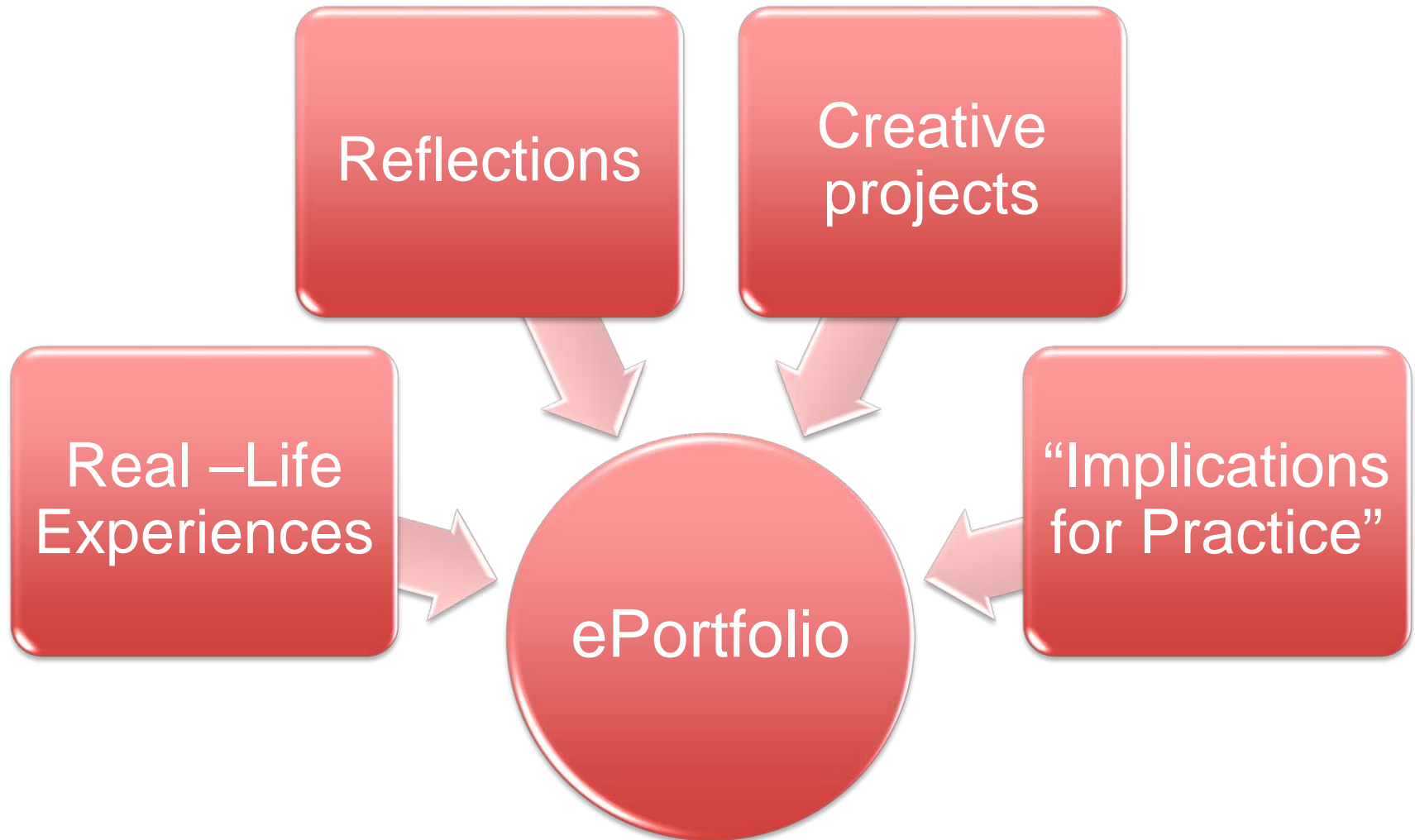| Integrative Learning	Beyond academic boundaries	Foundation = Disciplinary knowledge
		Expand beyond
	Real-world problems	Require multi-faceted knowledge
	Internal changes	Lifelong learner
		Adaptability

You won't find it in a Test!

Where you *might* find it…
when students make connections

Components

Rating Scale

- Benchmark (1)
- Milestones (2, 3)
- Capstone (4)
- Can give a 0 if not at Benchmark

Five Criteria

- Connections to experience
- Connections to discipline
- Transfer
- Integrated communication
- Reflection and self-assessment

Calibration and Scoring

Calibration session

Integrative Learning

Come to an agreement on definitions

Practice scoring

Scoring groups

3 groups

- 5 portfolios per group

Randomly Assigned

- Links kept from researchers

Met to discuss scoring

- No interrater reliability

Scores recorded via Qualtrics

Results

Overall Results

Dimension	Capstone (4)	Milestone (3)	Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)	Does not meet (0)
Connections to Experience	0 0.0%	1 3.3%	8 26.7%	17 56.7%	4 13.3%
Connections to Discipline	0 0.0%	1 3.3%	6 20.0%	14 46.7%	9 30.0%
Transfer	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	4 13.3%	16 53.3%	8 26.7%
Integrated Communication	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	13 43.3%	12 40.0%	3 10.0%
Reflection and Self-Assessment	1 3.3%	5 16.7%	12 40.0%	10 33.3%	2 6.7%

TLC #1

- The majority of students at least met the benchmark on every dimension except Transfer. Four of the six portfolios we rated did not do enough to meet the benchmark on that dimension.

- While many students were able to meet the benchmarks, Reflection and Self-Assessment was the only dimension where the majority of students exceeded the benchmark.

TLC #2 (lots of comments)

- Connections to Discipline seemed to be both the greatest area of strength and the greatest opportunity for improvement. Some students did a great job making clear connections between disciplines, while other students only focused on one discipline or discussed both disciplines without connecting them.

- The reviewers seemed to be confused in some instances over whether the connections to discipline were prompted or made independently.

- All students were at or above benchmark level on Connections to Experience, Transfer, Integrated Communication, and Reflection and Self-Assessment.

TLC #3 (very few comments)

- None of the dimensions were particularly weak, but Connections to Discipline was probably the weakest. It may be more difficult in an interdisciplinary course for students to make connections using course content.

- All but one student exceeded the benchmark in Reflection and Self-Assessment.

TLC #4

- None of the dimensions were particularly weak, but Connections to Discipline was probably the weakest. It may be more difficult in an interdisciplinary course for students to make connections using course content.

- All but one student exceeded the benchmark in Reflection and Self-Assessment.

TLC #5

- The overall scores on this portfolio were held down by one student who seemed to have submitted an incomplete portfolio. However, both Connections to Discipline and Transfer presented opportunities for improvement as well.

- The few comments from Connections to Discipline suggest that students may discuss more than one field or discipline but don't do enough to really connect ideas across disciplines.

- Digital story particularly effective

Faculty follow-up - Changes

"We decided to not include the eportfolio this semester. We are going to try using the digital story and linkedin as a reflection and outward facing tool. "

"I have rewritten many of my reflection prompts to be more specific in asking for students to make integrative connections, I have used the VALUE rubric as a guide for doing this. …"

"…I'm giving suggested topics/artifacts that students might use in each section instead of requiring certain things so that students can be a bit more creative and make it more their own. "

"Students …will discuss all portions of the TaskStream ePDP, but will focus on Career Goals and Community Connections (service)."

Our TLC has worked on improved integration.

Faculty follow-up - Impact

"We have a new team member, and so having the eportfolios from last year made it easy to see where we need to work on making better connections. …"

"I think we have a better plan for working together this semester and have tried to develop projects more closely aligned with each course. …"

"Always positive interaction, with input from the Advisor, Peer Mentor, and linked course instructors ."

"We have increased our weekly communication in an effort to improve integration."

Next Steps for the TLC program

❖ Eportfolio 2.0 - Incentivize teams to use eportfolio as integrator the first year (stipend)

❖ Professional development

  ❖ Integrative learning – activity/assignment design

  ❖ Eportfolio pedagogy

  ❖ Data and testimonials

  ❖ Signaling - add a field to the TLC team planning document regarding use of eportfolio

❖ Continued Assessment

Q&A

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