ePortfolios: Good for the Student, Good for the Institution

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Brrrrrlington, Vermont

- Founded 1878
  - 2000 students
  - NEASC Accreditation

- Professional Focus
  - Multimedia Graphics
  - E-gaming
  - Digital Forensics
  - Business

- New Interdisciplinary Core
  - Roll-out began Fall 2007
Champlain’s Core Curriculum

Apple Core (1992) by Claes Oldenberg (1929- ), Billy Rose Sculpture Garden, Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

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Gen Ed’s Before the Core

- Fit basic requirements set by NEASC
- Course sequence determined by professional majors
- Disciplinary or skills based courses

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Library Instruction before the Core

- Stand alone
- Dependent on faculty requests
- Repetitive
- Static
- Unmeasurable and unmeasured

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What did we envision?

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What did we envision?

In terms of the library...
- All students, all four years
- Incremental
- Required
- Embedded
- Inquiry based
- Assessable: the ability to measure student learning.

In terms of Gen Eds
- Interdisciplinary
- Linked courses
- Inquiry based
- Threads through all four years
- Increasing difficulty in terms of skills and concepts
- Interconnectedness
- Cohesive, comprehensive
Today, “linked”, theme-based courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1: Self &amp; Community</th>
<th>Year 2: The Western Tradition</th>
<th>Year 3: Global Awareness</th>
<th>Year 4: Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concepts of Self &amp; Rhetoric 1</td>
<td>Scientific Revolutions &amp; Aesthetic Expressions</td>
<td>Technology and Development &amp; Human Rights and Responsibilities</td>
<td>Integrated Capstone (Core &amp; Major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts of Community &amp; Rhetoric 2</td>
<td>The Secular and the Sacred &amp; Capitalism and Democracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Common, master syllabi

- Provides course learning outcomes and competencies
- Texts to be used with each course
- ‘Course method’
  - Inquiry-based
  - Project-based
- Guidelines for ‘common’ assignments
  - Project-based
  - Interdisciplinary research

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How do we know if our vision is working?
ePort

- Evidence that students are learning the skills and the concepts we are teaching.
- All students’ assignments in one place.
- Measures any learning outcome and opportunity to break the data down.

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Mapping IL outcomes to Core rubrics

- IL outcomes are taught in Core classes and directly related to commons assignments
- Track instruction and assessment of outcomes in a matrix
- What is taught is based on what we learn from the data.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE 310 Common Assignment</th>
<th>Does not meet</th>
<th>Nearly meets</th>
<th>Meets</th>
<th>Exceeds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project description and intent</td>
<td>No clear description or intent.</td>
<td>Description is vague. Intent lacks focus and thoughtfulness.</td>
<td>Clear description of project and project's intent is present and easily identifiable.</td>
<td>Description and Intent goes beyond straightforward clarity and is compelling and thoughtful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addresses technology in Human Rights &amp; World Cultures</td>
<td>Does not address technology’s role HR or WC.</td>
<td>Proposal addresses technology’s role in both human rights (HR) &amp; world cultures (WC).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Connection</td>
<td>Incorrectly describes the connection between technology’s role in HR &amp; WC. &quot;Inappropriately innovative&quot;.</td>
<td>Underdeveloped description of technology’s role in HR &amp; WC</td>
<td>Proposal makes an expected–fully developed connection between technology’s role in both human rights (HR) &amp; world cultures (WC).</td>
<td>Proposal topic innovatively and uniquely links technology’s role with both HR and WC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiences</td>
<td>Proposal does not address both audiences.</td>
<td>Proposal addresses both the recipient of the proposal and the project’s target population.</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project’s Relevance</td>
<td>Not relevant to one or the other.</td>
<td>Marginally relevant to one or the other audience.</td>
<td>Relates the proposed project to both the recipient of the proposal and the project’s target population.</td>
<td>The benefits or potential outcomes of the project extend beyond either audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multidisciplinary Perspectives</td>
<td>Missing key positions or disciplines.</td>
<td>Identifies key positions but from a limited disciplinary perspective, or, explores multiple disciplines but misses key positions. NOTE: Please use comments to specify in which area students were incomplete.</td>
<td>Uses multiple disciplines to identify and discuss key positions in the literature.</td>
<td>Complexity and depth to their exploration of the literature. Unexpected disciplinary perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situated within the literature</td>
<td>Student does not integrate their ideas with the literature.</td>
<td>Connections between the student’s ideas and the literature are limited or clumsy.</td>
<td>Students integrates ideas for their project with the literature in a meaningful way.</td>
<td>Seamlessly integrated. Connections between student’s ideas and the literature are sophisticated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>Student does not effectively communicate their ideas. NOTE: Specify why in the comments.</td>
<td>Difficult to follow. Reader was frustrated. NOTE: Specify why in the comments.</td>
<td>Effectively communicates his/her ideas. Consider: grammar, organization, documentation, word choice, coherence, etc.</td>
<td>Eloquent. A pleasure to read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Plan</td>
<td>Does not present a practical plan. Plan is problematic, or, incomplete. NOTE: Specify in the comments.</td>
<td>Presents a practical plan for implementing, troubleshooting, and assessing the project.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presents an especially thoughtful and comprehensive plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Valuable to us as an institution

- Key to consistency in a common curriculum.
- Identify discrepancies among majors, gender.
- Opportunity to learn about ourselves and improve teaching.
- Compare our data with other institutions.

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IS THAT APPARENT TO FACULTY? TO STUDENTS?
Student Possibilities in ePort

- Advantages
  - Solidifies commonality among sections
  - Solidifies connectivity within the entire curriculum
  - Opportunity for retrospection
  - Chance to customize a portfolio for future employers, graduate schools, etc.

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Student Perceptions of ePort

- Disadvantages
  - Poor choice of software.
  - Irrelevant to grading and feedback.
  - Unrelated to majors.
  - Expensive and expires.

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Faculty Possibilities in ePort

- **Advantages**
  - Opportunity to improve your teaching
  - **Proving** that we are teaching something (IL, writing, oral communication)
  - Creating a more collaborative environment among faculty.

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Faculty Perceptions of ePort

- Disadvantages
  - “It’s not my course anymore.”
  - Vague and general rubrics.
  - Student follow through.
  - “It’s only for the institution.”

INTER-RATER RELIABILITY AS ANOTHER ISSUE
How are we getting together?

- Workshops.
- Rewriting rubrics.
- Making allies.
- Sharing stories.
- Developing shared expectations.

http://www.flickr.com/photos/carbonated/2314399157/
Other Strategies to Overcome Pitfalls

- Throwing others a bone.
- Rewriting rubrics with other faculty
- Student tutors
- Sharing the vision for what it CAN do
- Improvements in purchasing and preparation

http://www.flickr.com/photos/bullcitydogs/4049075034/in/photostream/
To Improve Faculty Buy In

- Enlist the ranks
- Give voice to those affected
- Let them be the agents of change

http://www.flickr.com/photos/thevoicewithin/1017469906
WHAT WOULD WE DO DIFFERENTLY?
What about the data we are gathering from ePort?

- Not yet perfect but....
- Noticing trends
- “Mucking around”
- Willingness to experiment
- Good data over time

http://www.flickr.com/photos/thedepartment/110775600/
Possible improvements?

- Improve the look
- Increased use across campus
- Faculty provide feedback in ePort.
- Link to LMS: integrating all our tools.

http://www.flickr.com/photos/wv/3515931964/
Thoughts on implementation

http://www.flickr.com/photos/9308488@N05/2085775961/
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

Feel free to contact us:

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