Making the Case: Creating a Learning-Focused Mission for an ePortfolio Initiative

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IUPUI Background

• Partnership between IU and Purdue
• Large urban research institution
• 18 schools offering more than 350 degree programs at all levels—some IU, some Purdue
• History of and reputation for academic innovation, but
• Very difficult to develop or impose a single model for adoption of any initiative
IUPUI ePortfolio Strategy

• Small grants to academic programs to address self-identified needs
• Extensive faculty development support
• Users shared successes
• Faculty/programs’ identified needs fed back to IT organization to improve Portfolio capabilities
• Aligned initiative with strategic plan
• Took advantage of national developments
Trajectory of Adoption

IUPUI ePortfolio Adoption

- 2007-08: 11
- 2009-10: 14
- 2011-12: 25
- 2013-14: 42
- 2016-17: 64
Task Force Membership

Power users:
- Experienced (often in multiple contexts) ePortfolio users
- Leadership roles in school or program
- Distributed across university

Representatives of key constituencies:
- Faculty governance
- Center for Teaching and Learning
- IT organization
- Academic Affairs
- Planning and Institutional Improvement
- First-year experience
Charge to Task Force

• Craft a mission and vision statement for the ePortfolio Initiative that succinctly states why ePortfolios are important to IUPUI; that is aligned with the campus mission, vision, and current strategic priorities; and that can guide the initiative in planning, defining priorities, and shaping programs.
Meetings and Activities

• Met monthly for six months

• Seminar structure for early meetings: readings, brief presentations, facilitated discussions, mostly focused on implications of ePortfolios for pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, resources

• Months 4, 5, 6: discussions of draft vision, mission, values, and strategies
Questions and Themes

• How can we use ePs to support deeper, more engaged, and integrated learning?

• What are the implications of ePs for transforming curriculum and pedagogy?
  o Is identity development part of the curriculum?
  o What is ePortfolio pedagogy?
ePortfolio pedagogy

• Reflection and metacognition
• Constructivist approach to knowledge
• Integrative approach to learning and experience
• Identity representation and development
• Student engagement, agency, purpose
• Social pedagogy
More Questions and Themes

• How can ePs help faculty and students develop integrated, coherent, guided pathways through programs?

• What advantages does the “e” confer?

• What can we learn from ePs about our students, programs, institution?
  o ePortfolios also illuminate program, institutional identity
  o How do ePortfolios change our relationships with our students?

• How does the reward system encourage (or not) eP experimentation?
Focuses of IUPUI ePortfolio Initiative Mission Statement

• Empowering and developing students
• Supporting student learning and success
• Clarify and support distinctive urban education experience at IUPUI
• Connects with campus strategic plan
• Professional development to help faculty and staff make the most of ePortfolios’ potential to advance the above
Follow-Up

Meetings with major governance committees across campus:

• Faculty Council Executive Committee
• Undergraduate Affairs Committee
• Program Review and Assessment Committee
• Council on Retention and Graduation
• Faculty Affairs Leadership Council
Institute for Engaged Learning

- “In an effort to further enhance student academic achievement, identity development, retention, and persistence to timely degree completion—key elements that support IUPUI's strategic plan—the Chancellor's Cabinet recently endorsed the creation of the Institute for Engaged Learning in the Division of Undergraduate Education.”
Closing Observations

- Useful to ePortfolio Initiative at any stage of development (revisit periodically)
- Balance representatives of key constituencies with ePortfolio expertise
- Include senior and newer people
- Work collegially—avoid turf wars
- Don’t be prescriptive—let group own the process to ensure that they own the product
- Have a defined end-point
Contact me:

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Your thoughts and questions?