Minnesota eLearning Summit

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Using WordPress Web Portfolios to Demonstrate Learning: From First Year to Capstone

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Using WordPress Web Portfolios to Demonstrate Learning

From First-Year Seminar to Senior Capstone

Caroline Hilk, Valerie Chepp, Nicole Nelson
Why are we here?

Who you are?
What is your experience with web portfolios?
What interests you about this session?
Agenda

● Introductions
● Case Studies
● Intersection of Pedagogy and Technology
● Perspectives of and from Students
● Lessons Learned, Challenges, & Considerations
● Open Forum Discussion
Introductions

Caroline Hilk - Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
Valerie Chepp - Assistant Professor, Sociology & Social Justice
Nicole Nelson - Academic Technology Consultant
Case Study One - First Year Seminar

- 16 first-year students
- “Ideas Imagined: Creativity for Innovation & Everyday Life”
- Weekly prompts: 1 creative + 1 reflective
- 30% of grade
- All portfolios hosted in WordPress
Purpose of Ideas Notebook Web Portfolios

Provide students with an opportunity to:

- practice being creative,
- reflect on their learning,
- learn to use technology for expression and professional communication,
- share their work with a broader audience.
Examples of Student Portfolios

Jake’s Ideas Notebook

Jasmine’s Ideas Notebook
Case Study Two - Capstone Portfolio

- Justification/Rationale
  - Pedagogical, personal, professional
  - Narrating their experience and expertise to others and to themselves.

Diagram:
- Interdisciplinary Area of Concentration
- Web Portfolio
- Community Involvement
- Co/Extracurricular
Examples of Student Capstone Portfolios

Examples
- Olivia’s Web Portfolio
- Kayla’s Web Portfolio
- Annie’s Web Portfolio
- Joseph’s Web Portfolio
- Ehtalow’s Web Portfolio
Intersection of Pedagogy and Technology

- Determine pedagogical needs first
  - What were the goals/outcomes

- Based on the goals/outcomes, determine what technology best fit the needs of each project

- Articulate my role as Academic Technologist
  - Where can I assist in this process?
    - Researched options-best solution
    - Developed resources on an as-needed basis
    - Conducted in-class workshops around the technology
    - Enlisted a student worker with website experience to help
    - Documented the process of the pilot project
# Hamline’s Options and Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscription-Based Tool: Weebly</th>
<th>Hamline Enterprise Tool: Google Sites</th>
<th>Free Tool: Wordpress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pros we considered:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pros we considered:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pros we considered:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Easy to Use and Learn</td>
<td>• Fully supported by Hamline ITS</td>
<td>• Customization and make it their own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Drag and Drop features</td>
<td>• Easy to create</td>
<td>• Free version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Simplicity</td>
<td>• Some templates available</td>
<td>• Students could acquire some tech skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Customization</td>
<td>• Google platform</td>
<td>• Could upgrade, change and evolve over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cons we considered:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cons we considered:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cons we considered:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cost to students if using the paid version</td>
<td>• Tied to Hamline email which students loose when they graduate</td>
<td>• Not our enterprise tool at Hamline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Free version displays a Weebly advertisement on the webpages</td>
<td>• Limitations with design, file formats, customization</td>
<td>• Free version has limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not easy to move site from the free version to a paid or different platform</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning curve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How valuable did you find each of the following portfolio components:
Perspective of and from the students

“I think that it is essential for all students to have this type of experience before they leave Hamline!”

“I think that website building in general is an extremely valuable skill in today's job market. Additionally, I think that creating the web portfolio helped us to consolidate what we have learned in our major, and think about how we wanted to portray ourselves in the world after college.”

“It made me think about how I want to present myself in public, to people I work with, and employers. In this sense, I see the portfolio as the beginning of an ongoing process of having an online and/or public presence that will evolve and improve over time.”
Lessons Learned, Challenges, & Considerations

- Need for frequent deadlines and feedback
- Defining a process for students
- Technology learning curve
- Archiving: what do we do after they leave?
- Integration with other tools
- Institutional subscriptions (costs, access)
- Learning to communicate in the digital environment
- Feasible in flipped and online courses
- Finding answers to problems (taking ownership)
- Pride, investment, and value associated with project
Open Forum Discussion

- How might you consider using web portfolios?
- What challenges or considerations would you have on your campus to using web portfolios?
Helpful Resources

Wordpress
https://en.support.wordpress.com/

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