Reflection on the Process of Building a Portfolio for the MSEd:IT at WOU
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Overview
Creating this digital portfolio brought together all the skill and learning acquired through my work in the MSEd:IT program. It also forced me to learn new skills. I had to learn a lot more than I previously knew about webpage building in Dreamweaver. My Photoshop skills improved dramatically because all the graphic elements were created in Photoshop. I spent at least a hundred hours trying out different layouts and designs. Creating a site-map on paper enabled me to create digital portfolios with clear and simple navigation.

Going through the process of creating this digital portfolio helped integrate my understanding of previously unrelated learning in the MSEd:IT program. I was also able to see where my gaps in understanding were, and I was able to fill in many such gaps as I built this portfolio.

Creating a digital portfolio as an exit option for a master’s degree is an excellent alternative to the traditional thesis. For my first master’s degree I wrote a thesis, so I was able to compare the two alternatives. The thesis forces the student to refine research and writing skills, and helps the student to build deep understanding of the topic of the thesis. However, the digital portfolio option forces the student to refine technology, organization, design, and presentation skills. Furthermore, it breaks with the tradition of increasing specialization at the graduate level by pushing the student to synthesize, analyze, and develop a wide array of aspects of their own learning throughout the coursework during their study in the program.

The steps below present the process I went through in the creation of this digital portfolio.

Step 1
I searched all academic databases at WOU library for information about portfolios and digital portfolios and saved and read all the the PDFs for the articles listed in Appendix A. Before I started reading I had an extremely vague idea of what a portfolio is. I had guessed that it was simply a collection of essays and things I made during my classes in the MSEd:IT program. Through this reading I came to develop a better understanding of what a digital portfolio should be and the reasons for creating a digital portfolio.

Step 2
I installed Adobe Acrobat 9 and started learning how to use it.

Step 3
I watched a lot of YouTube videos about Adobe Acrobat to further my understanding of various functions.
Step 4
I searched the internet and YouTube videos to develop a definition of “Digital Portfolio”. The definition I came up was: "A digital portfolio is a carefully-constructed collection of artifacts in easily-transferrable digital format with the purpose of demonstrating mastery of skills, concepts, and knowledge, created for a specific audience and presented in a logical structure accompanied by artifact introductions and/or reflections."

Step 5
I bought and read all the books listed in Appendix B on Amazon. I realized that digital portfolios are a fairly recent phenomenon and therefore there are no standards or common practices. I hope this digital portfolio will add to the body of examples and therefore help future digital portfolio builders.

Step 6
I discussed portfolios and digital portfolios with colleagues.

Step 7
I printed every major assignment I did for my MSEd:IT program and started analyzing them for portfolio value.

Step 8
I wrote a draft of an outline for my digital portfolio.

Step 9
I made portfolio shells (portfolios with place-holders instead of artifacts) with full navigation in PowerPoint and Dreamweaver.

Step 10
I created and taught CSE 689 Digital Portfolios. By teaching this class I had the opportunity to help students with issues and technical problems. I also was able to observe new techniques and practices I had not previously considered.

Step 11
I re-worked the outline (Appendix C).

Step 12
I collected all the artifacts in appropriately-labeled folders.
Step 13
I converted all artifacts into appropriate formats. I also tried to get them into the smallest possible size without sacrificing quality.

Step 14
I wrote a site map for the portfolio. A site map is different from an outline in that it contains a box for each page (web page, PowerPoint slide) needed in the portfolio and shows the navigation pathways. A site map is similar to a flow chart.

Step 15
I made a web-based portfolio using Dreamweaver with the aid of Photoshop, Adobe Acrobat, Prezi, Slideshare, YouTube, and a few other tools.

Step 16
I made an Adobe Acrobat 9 portfolio.

Step 17
I made a PowerPoint portfolio
APPENDIX A: Articles Collected for Initial Research on Electronic Portfolios


Britten, JS. 2006. Developing Contextualized Faculty Training: Faculty Development to Support University-Wide Digital Portfolio Initiatives. *College quarterly. 9*.


APPENDIX B: Books on Portfolios

The Career Portfolio Workbook: Using the Newest Tool in Your Job-Hunting Arsenal to Impress Employers and Land a great Job!
Frank Satterthwaite, Gary D'Orsi

Designing a Digital Portfolio (2nd Edition) (Voices That Matter)
Cynthia L. Baro

Guide to Portfolios: Creating and Using Portfolios for Academic, Career, and Personal Success
by Mary Robins

The Academic Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Documenting Teaching, Research, and Service (Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education)
by Peter Seldin, J. Elizabeth Miller

Digital Portfolios: Powerful Tools for Promoting Professional Growth and Reflection
by Elizabeth Hartnell-Young, Maureen P. Morriss

The Standards-Based Digital School Leader Portfolio: A Handbook for Preparation and Practice
by Gregory M. Hauser
APPENDIX C: Draft Outline for my Electronic Portfolio

Table of Contents
1) Introduction: Purpose

2) Part I: Familiarity with the Literature
   a) Introduction
   b) Issue 1: Digital Natives vs. Digital Immigrants OR Digital Literacies vs. Traditional Literacy
   c) Issue 2: Copyright in the Digital World
   d) Issue 3: Digital World Problems and Questions
      i) Multitasking
      ii) Attention Problems
      iii) Anonymity
      iv) Polarization
      v) Isolation
      vi) Extended Childhood
      vii) Computers becoming like people
   e) Concept Maps
      i) Amusing Ourselves to Death by Neil Postman
      ii) Being Digital by Nicholas Negroponte
      iii) The Dumbest Generation by Mark Baurlein
      iv) Interface Culture by Steven Johnson
      v) You are Not a Gadget by Jaron Lanier
      vi) Free Culture by Lawrence Lessig
      vii) The Big Switch by Nicholas Carr

3) Part II: Mastery of the National Educational Standards and MSEd Proficiencies
   a) Introduction
   b) ISTE Standard 1: Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity
      i) Slo-motion videos for pronunciation
      ii) IEP class homework in Moodle - high-tech
      iii) Moodle forums for IEP and CSE classes
      iv) Blogs for all classes (students can post by emailing)
      v) Student-made blogs (Chemeketa)
   c) ISTE Standard 2: Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments
      i) Blogs for all classes with web 2.0 tools encorporated
      ii) Technology-rich homework menus for IEP classes
   d) ISTE Standard 3: Model Digital-Age Work and Learning
      i) Web 2.0 Tools for ESOL teachers website (jonan.net)
ii) Communicate with students through moodle, blogs, and screencasts
iii) Web 2.0 Tools online class

e) ISTE Standard 4: Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility
   i) Promotion of creative commons licensed work in all classes
   ii) Presentation at SWALLT/NWALLT
   iii) APA in IEP

f) ISTE Standard 5: Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership
   i) Presentation at SWALLT/NWALLT
   ii) Web 2.0 Tools for ESOL teachers website (jonan.net)
   iii) Lead Instructor work in IEP

g) MSEd Proficiencies

4) Part III: Portfolio of Best Work
   a) Introduction
   b) Research Writing (paper)
   c) Designing Information (Presentation)
   d) Interactive Video (video)
   e) Media Literacy (paper)
   f) Internet for Educators (website)

5) Reflection
   a) MSEd:IT Program
   b) Digital Portfolio