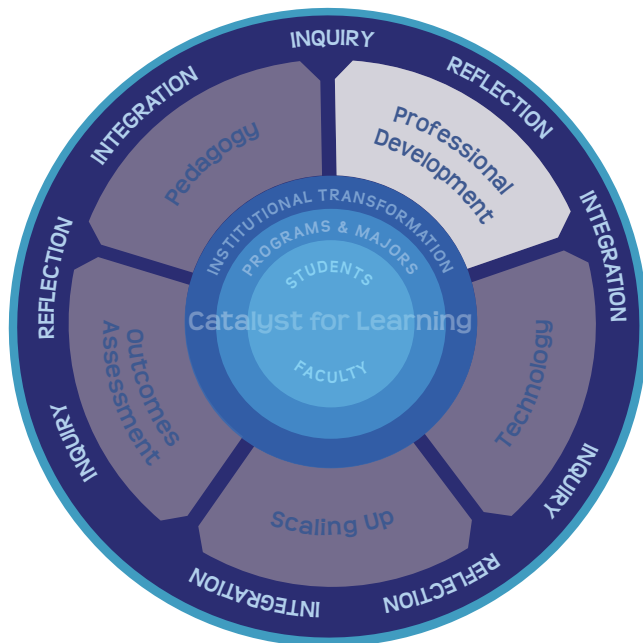


## Professional Development: Effective Strategies in the C2L Network

Bret Eynon, Laura M. Gambino & Judit Török



Using ePortfolio pedagogy and technology to advance student learning can be challenging. As faculty and staff learn about and integrate ePortfolio into their curricula and co-curricula at the course, program, or department levels, the process pushes faculty and staff to shift from focusing mainly on teaching to focusing on both teaching and learning.<sup>1</sup> Exploring the use of ePortfolio as both a pedagogy and a technology is often done in the context of professional development. As a result, professional development is a central component of C2L campus ePortfolio projects and one of the five sectors of the Catalyst framework key to effective classroom use and broader Scaling Up processes.

Many campuses in the C2L network, such as [LaGuardia](#), [Virginia Tech](#), [Guttman Community College](#), [IUPUI](#), and [CUNY's School of Professional Studies](#), offer ongoing ePortfolio-related professional development activities.

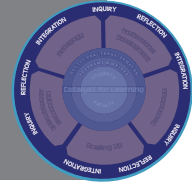
On C2L campuses where ePortfolio project leaders create and nurture a strong connection with professional development leaders or their campus Center for Teaching and Learning, we see not only the growth of those projects but movement towards campus-wide cultures of learning.

During a 2012 Jam (an online conversation) on professional development, we asked campus teams to share examples of successful ePortfolio-related professional development practices on their campuses. Reviewing these practices, we identified seven common strategies that campus teams used and reported as successful. This essay provides brief descriptions of these strategies and links to sample practices.

We found that the design principles of inquiry, reflection, and integration shaped the planning and implementation of these strategies. In some cases, ePortfolio leaders intentionally created professional development structures that facilitated the integration of the I-R-I design principles; in others, the I-R-I principles were more implicit.

- **Grow Faculty and Staff Peer Leadership (Integration):** By placing them in professional development leadership positions, involve experienced faculty and staff in working with their peers at the college.
- **Build a Culture of Evidence-Based Learning (Inquiry, Reflection, and Integration):** Gathering evidence on the effectiveness of ePortfolio-related professional development offerings helps stakeholders recognize the importance of and need for these efforts and models what it means to develop a culture of learning.

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- **Meet the Needs of Programs and Departments (Integration):** Develop professional development activities to meet the specific needs of programs or departments.
- **Build Faculty Portfolios (Reflection & Integration):** Guide faculty in creating their own teaching and learning or professional ePortfolios.
- **Strengthen Connections (Integration):** Successful ePortfolio-related professional development offerings engage interdisciplinary groups of faculty and staff, intentionally connecting integrative ePortfolio pedagogy with assessment, advisement, and/or technology
- **Showcase Faculty Work (Reflection and Integration):** Organize campus-wide or cross-campus conferences that encourage faculty to present and share their ePortfolio work.
- **Encourage the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (Inquiry, Reflection, and Integration):** Connect ePortfolio with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, in which faculty inquire into their own practices, gather, analyze, and assess evidence, reflect on the implications of their research, and publish their work for broader review.

## **Grow Faculty and Staff Peer Leadership (Integration)**

Involving faculty and staff as peer leaders in professional development activities was cited as a particularly useful strategy by multiple campuses in the C2L network. When experienced faculty and staff members lead professional programs for other faculty and staff, it encourages increased collaboration, communication, and professional learning about ePortfolio pedagogy.

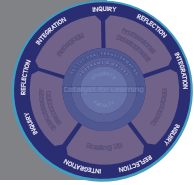
Moreover, as faculty and staff move into leadership roles, they build on and deepen the insights generated from their own work with students. Applying and sharing that knowledge, listening to and guiding the work of colleagues, leaders develop new strengths, integrating and transferring what they have learned from particular experiences to the broader questions related to ePortfolio teaching and learning. These leaders can become valuable spokespersons for the ePortfolio initiative in a range of formal (e.g., departmental, programmatic, and governance ) and informal settings.

Many campuses in the C2L network have faculty and staff members lead ePortfolio-related professional development. On campuses including Manhattanville College, Salt Lake Community College, Pace University, and LaGuardia Community College, members of the ePortfolio project teams serve as professional development leaders. These faculty leaders guide collective reflection and link inquiry to pedagogy, helping their colleagues transfer their knowledge of teaching and learning to classroom practice. Leaders are often faculty who have participated in other professional development activities.

## **Build a Culture of Evidence-Based Learning (Inquiry, Reflection, and Integration)**

Building a culture of learning through the use of evidence is an important strategy for all aspects of an ePortfolio project, including professional development. Demonstrating the effectiveness of professional development efforts helps ePortfolio projects and Centers for Teaching and Learning obtain internal or external funding for

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programs. Evidence also makes professional development efforts more visible to administrators and other key stakeholders at an institution. And, it helps faculty and staff focus on the impact of their work on student learning.

The design principles of inquiry, reflection, and integration help professional development leaders build a culture of evidence. Individual faculty and staff can pose questions, experiment with their practices, and share their evolving insights through collective reflection and written documentation. Campus projects can contextualize and deepen this process with additional evidence gathering and examination. Some C2L campuses administer surveys or collect informal reflections from participants. Others, such as [IUPUI](#) and [LaGuardia](#), document the effectiveness of their ePortfolio-related professional development by gathering and analyzing multiple types of evidence: faculty, staff, and student surveys; structured interviews; reflections; and data on engagement, pass rates, and retention of students in targeted courses. On these campuses, professional development leaders collect and reflect on qualitative and quantitative data and share findings with faculty and administrators to identify improvements for future professional development programs.

## **Meet the Needs of Programs and Departments (Integration)**

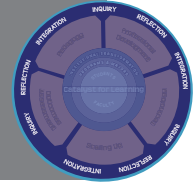
Programs and departments are key nodes for organizing the educational experience. C2L teams noted in their professional development practices that it was important for ePortfolio-related professional development activities to be designed to meet specific requirements of programs or departments. For example, at [Lehman College](#), a professional development series was developed specifically for their School of Education faculty. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation process required the use of portfolios; it was therefore essential for their faculty to learn about integrative portfolios. Through this professional development, education faculty at Lehman learned to integrate ePortfolio pedagogy into their courses. Through integration, faculty were able to apply their ePortfolio learning and knowledge to their courses, helping “students cultivate their own skills, knowledge and disposition through reflection and use ePortfolios to support and develop a professional identity.”

Similarly, at [Boston University](#), ePortfolio-related professional development is offered on a broader scale with faculty in their College of General Studies where students are required to create and maintain an ePortfolio. These workshops focused on training faculty and staff, discussing integrating assessment with our pedagogical and advising goals, and stimulating team teaching and projects in the coming academic year. We aimed to improve faculty technological fluency, engage in sustained and focused discussions on both disciplinary and interdisciplinary assessment... ”

## **Build Faculty Portfolios (Reflection and Integration)**

A widely-used approach for professional learning about the use of ePortfolio, reported by C2L campuses such as [CUNY’s School for Professional Studies](#), [Pace University](#), and [Guttman](#) and [LaGuardia](#) Community Colleges, is to have faculty and staff create their own teaching and learning or professional ePortfolios. As part of ePortfolio-related workshops or seminars, faculty and staff engage in building their portfolios, showcasing

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best teaching practices, listing their research presentations and publications, and using the portfolios to reflect challenges and successes of their classroom pedagogies. Professional portfolios are then linked to or shared with colleagues; they serve as spaces for feedback and conversation. Building an ePortfolio helps faculty and staff recognize the importance of making learning visible for students by engaging with the process themselves.

The following are sample faculty and staff ePortfolios from across the C2L network:

Sarah Morgano – The CUNY School of Professional Studies

[https://cunyonline.digication.com/sarahmorgano/About\\_Me](https://cunyonline.digication.com/sarahmorgano/About_Me)

Laurie Poklop – Northeastern University

<https://sites.google.com/site/lpokeport/>

Chet Jordan – Guttman Community College

<https://guttman-cuny.digication.com/chetjordan>

## Strengthen Connections (Integration)

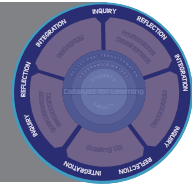
Many successful ePortfolio-related professional development offerings intentionally connect integrative ePortfolio pedagogy with assessment, advisement, and/or technology. In addition, professional development brings interdisciplinary groups of faculty and staff together, engaging them in an integrative learning process. As our hypothesis suggests, successful ePortfolio projects focus on issues of implementation on a broad level, addressing multiple aspects and dimensions of campus structure. Strengthening such connections through professional development supports broader dimensions of implementation. Professional development activities then serve to link different aspects of an ePortfolio project through interdisciplinary and cross-divisional formats.

One example of ePortfolio-related professional development that strengthens connections through integration takes place at [Guttman Community College](#). There, ongoing professional development that focuses on the First-Year Experience program through discussions about student learning and outcomes assessment involves both faculty and student success advocates (advisors) at the college. At regularly scheduled times throughout the academic year, faculty and staff engage in conversation and an examination of student work and ePortfolios. The Guttman team reports that “[a]t the midpoint of the fall semester, the entire faculty/staff participated in [Guttman’s] Assessment Days, two days devoted to assessment of student learning. The overarching goal of the days’ activities was to create a culture of evidence and assessment to introduce the ePortfolio as a catalyst for change.”

At [LaGuardia Community College](#), the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) connects many different areas of the college through professional development. For example, the Art of Advisement Seminar builds connections across the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Services. In this seminar, an integrative community of practice focuses on institutional learning and change.

The CTL also functions as a liaison between faculty and the office of the Provost in the college’s outcomes assessment initiative, incorporating both process instruction and pedagogical training on assessment into

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professional development seminars. Finally, in accordance with a recent directive from LaGuardia's President to better align the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Services, professional development activities such as the Art of Advising now involve more members of the college's advising staff.

### **Showcase Faculty Work (Reflection and Integration)**

Many C2L campus teams build on ePortfolio-related professional development to provide opportunities for faculty to showcase their pedagogical innovations to broader audiences on their campuses. The showcasing and sharing of faculty work supports collective reflection and integration, advances Scaling Up processes, and helps to build a learning culture across an institution. On some campuses, faculty and staff share and showcase their work in professional seminars or workshops; other schools offer larger department-wide or college-wide events.

In addition to sharing faculty work within an institution, some C2L campuses organize and host cross-campus conferences and workshops. These larger professional development opportunities help make each campus ePortfolio project more visible, allowing faculty and staff to present their work with ePortfolios. In addition, they introduce participants to ways in which ePortfolio is used in other programs, departments, and schools. In this way, members of the larger college community can discern patterns, directions, and interest in ePortfolio pedagogy on their own campus and across the field.

Here are examples of cross-campus professional development conferences organized by some of our C2L partners:

Salt Lake CC – Civic Engagement and Lifelong Learning: Infusing ePortfolios with Activism, AAEEBL regional conference.

<http://www.aaeebl.org/aaeebl-western2013>

Virginia Tech – ePortfolios Focused on Learning and Integrative Online Thinking, AAEEBL regional conference

<http://eportfolioca.org/events/11-articles/219-virginia-tech-hosting-aaeebl-eportfolio-conference>

IUPUI – The 2013 Assessment Institute

<http://planning.iupui.edu/conferences/national/nationalconf.html>

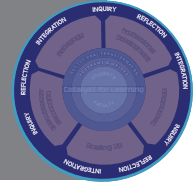
LaGuardia CC – Making Connections ePortfolio Conferences, Workshop about Reflection with Carol Rodgers, and Symposium on the First-Year Experience with a team from Virginia Tech

<http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/connections/>

### **Encourage the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (Inquiry, Reflection, and Integration)**

ePortfolio-related professional development that engages faculty in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) can help faculty improve their own teaching and learning strategies and build broad knowledge about practice and theory. Through sustained professional development efforts that guide participants through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning process, faculty move a scholarly inquiry to more formal scholarship.

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They pose research questions, engage in a classroom inquiry, gather and analyze evidence of impact, reflect on the implications, and go public with their findings. At the conclusion of this process, faculty are encouraged to present or publish the results of their SoTL projects.

The Carnegie Seminar at LaGuardia commits itself to the principles of SoTL and to LaGuardia's vision of an integrated culture of evidence-based teaching and learning. LaGuardia's Carnegie Seminar provides faculty with the opportunity to cultivate habits of pedagogical research that result in transformed and shared understanding of student experiences in our classrooms and beyond. LaGuardia's in-house publication, *In Transit: The LaGuardia Journal on Teaching and Learning*, was inaugurated in Fall 2005. *In Transit* is a collective product of the teaching faculty and staff, and it symbolizes LaGuardia's growing engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning, an emerging field in higher education.

The *International Journal of ePortfolio (IJeP)* is a peer-reviewed journal that encourages the study of ePortfolio practices and pedagogies in educational settings, and offers faculty and staff nationwide a chance to publish their ePortfolio-related SoTL projects. Advancing scholarship and theory-building, the creation of the IJeP was an important step in building and sustaining the ePortfolio field. Faculty and staff from C2L partner campuses publish their work in this journal, evidencing outstanding inquiry into teaching and learning. Some examples include:

*Using the ePortfolio to Document and Evaluate Growth in Reflective Practice: The Development and Application of a Conceptual Framework*

Wesley Pitts, Lehman College, CUNY

Rachel Ruggirello, Washington University in St. Louis

<http://www.theijep.com/pdf/IJEP43.pdf>

*Growing a New Culture of Assessment: Planting ePortfolios in the Metro Academies Program*

Alycia Shada, San Francisco State University and City College of San Francisco

Kevin Kelly, San Francisco State University and City College of San Francisco

Ruth Cox, San Francisco State University and City College of San Francisco

Savita Malik, San Francisco State University and City College of San Francisco

<http://www.theijep.com/pdf/IJEP35.pdf>

*Faculty Professional Development: Advancing Integrative Social Pedagogy Using ePortfolio*

Rajendra Bhika, LaGuardia Community College

Andrea Francis, LaGuardia Community College

Dionne Miller, LaGuardia Community College

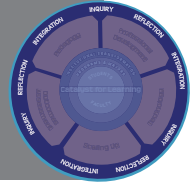
<http://www.theijep.com/pdf/IJEP113.pdf>

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# Professional Development: Effective Strategies in the C2L Network



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