Reflective Pedagogy Practice – Disability Studies Program Capstone

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Description

Students have a choice about Capstone projects in the MA in Disability Studies program – some choose a long research paper or other project (creating a handbook, for example) instead. In the Fall 2011 semester, we introduced another option for students to complete their Capstone — ePortfolio. Students are made aware of the ePortfolio Capstone option at New Student Orientation and are asked to save their work should they choose the ePortfolio option.

Practice Step-by-Step

Students create a program ePortfolio to represent their learning and reflections over the course of study in a Master’s Program. There are several overarching program goals that are enumerated in the ePortfolio template. The instructor gives students a schedule for completion on the landing page of their template, along with a grading rubric.
The class meets face to face during the semester to review the work completed, suggest revisions and help students make a plan for the next few sections. Students complete all work outside of the classroom, online, using the Digication platform.

| January 28 | **First Day of class – Introduction to EPortfolios** |
| January 28 | Please read the EPortfolio Guide and review videos about setting up your ePortfolio on the web site. Look at other ePortfolios on the Digication website. |
| February 4 | **Presentations** of initial ePortfolio approaches. |
| February 11 | **Welcome** section should be completed (note: class will not meet face to face). |
| February 25 | **About Me** section should be completed (class will meet). |
| March 11 | 2 -3 **Academic Portfolio** pages should be completed. |
| April 8 | **All Academic Portfolio** pages should be completed. |
| April 22 | **Reflections** section should be completed. |
Class members will **Review** and **Comment** on ePortfolios April 22 – May 6. Please have reviews and comment on each other’s work completed by May 6 so revisions can be completed by May 13th class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May 13</th>
<th>Revisions of ePortfolios based on comments.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>Presentations of ePortfolios.</td>
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**Inquiry, Reflection, and Integration**

**Reflection as Integrative**
Their Capstone ePortfolio is designed to help students who are close to graduating think about the program as a whole and how to bring their learning into their future lives. Students are asked to post course descriptions of the courses they took in the program along with representative work for each course. They are asked to reflect on each course and prompted with the following questions), although they are also encouraged to be creative and write about issues that aren’t reflected here):

- What did you think this class was about when you enrolled?
- What was the most valuable thing you learned in this class? Was there a topic or learning module that didn’t resonate with you? Why?
- What was the most challenging thing about this course?
- How did this course connect to the other courses in your Disability Studies program?

There is also a Reflections section on the ePortfolio template, where students are prompted to reflect on the following issues relating to the whole Master’s program (although, again, students don’t have to reflect on all of these or can choose other topics to discuss if they wish):

- How did the program advance your understanding of disability?
- If you work in the field, how will you bring what you learned into your work?
- Has your approach to disability changed? How?
- How did the courses you took connect to each other? Discuss how the courses reinforced, challenged, or deepened your understanding of disability and society.
- Have you changed as a person now that you are in the last weeks of your program? How?
- What work are you most proud of? Is there any work you wish you could revise or change? How would you revise it?
- Did you feel part of a larger learning community? In what way?
- How will you continue to learn about disability studies after you graduate?

**Reflection as systematic & disciplined**
Students’ ePortfolio reflection processes embody the integration of their academic achievements into their professional lives and, to some extent, into their personal lives as well. Students complete the pieces that are most familiar – about themselves and why they took the program, before they complete sections about their work and what it means and how the courses are integrated.

**Reflection as Social Pedagogy**
Students peer-review each other’s ePortfolios as a way of connecting around their experiences in the MA program. At the end of the semester, students present their ePortfolios to each other and are encouraged to enter their ePortfolio in the student showcase.
Reflection as a process of guiding personal change

Students in the Capstone course use ePortfolios as a way of displaying the interaction and overlap between their personal, professional and academic lives. They will be able to use their ePortfolios for career advancement and to solidify their identity as a disability studies scholar.

Some students have used their ePortfolios to illustrate points in the agencies in which they work; they also are presenting them at professional conferences.

Students are also using ePortfolios in this program to build connections to the past by posting, for example, videos of institutional exposés or other historical artifacts that have meaning for the field and for them as workers and students.

Professional Development

The SPS ePortfolio Faculty Development Workshop encourages participants to incorporate reflection into their ePortfolio practice. We begin the workshop with an in-person kickoff session that explains different ways of using ePortfolio and provides examples. Many of the sample ePortfolios we share include examples of reflection. The second phase of the workshop is completed asynchronously. One of the activities asks participants to read two articles about the importance of reflection: “Action + Reflection = Learning,” and “Reflection and Learning from Experience.” We read the first article as part of our C2L jam and found it very helpful. The second article was recommended by Kati Lewis at Salt Lake CC, who kindly sent us the.pdf. We ask our workshop participants to “reflect on reflection,” by posting their responses to the articles and their ideas for how they might incorporate reflection into their ePortfolio assignments to the workshop discussion board forum. This activity is a step toward the workshop deliverable, an ePortfolio template with an “about me” page; a scaffolded assignment that incorporates prewriting, evaluation of sources, multimedia, and reflection; and an evaluation rubric.


The MA Capstone ePortfolio has been used as an example of ePortfolio work to faculty interested in developing ePortfolio assignments at workshops and to Disability Studies faculty to show what their students have achieved at the end of the program.

Other ePortfolio Resources for Faculty

- ePortfolio Resource Website for Students and Faculty
- ePortfolio Resources at CUNY

Workshop Materials

- Workshop Schedule
- Guiding Questions for Peer Review

Attachments and Supporting Material

Assignments/Rubrics/Etc.

- Capstone Template
- **Program Goals**
- **Grading Rubric (below)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
<th>Grammar and Presentation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The ePortfolio represents a thoughtful integration of Disability Studies courses and philosophy. It is creative and substantive and demonstrates excellence in fulfilling Program Goals. The reflection pieces are interesting and present new ways of thinking about Disability Studies.</td>
<td>The ePortfolio clearly demonstrates a deep understanding of the MA program material and relevance to Program Goals.</td>
<td>The ePortfolio is interesting, compelling and well organized. It has no spelling or grammatical errors. The work displayed is interesting and varied, incorporating visual and audiovisual elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>The ePortfolio demonstrates a thoughtful response however, evidence/examples are missing or inaccurate. It does not represent Disability Studies as well. Reflections do not seem as interesting, or as relevant to the course material. It is not as compelling.</td>
<td>The ePortfolio demonstrates a somewhat superficial connection to Program Goals.</td>
<td>The ePortfolio is well organized, but has minor errors in grammar or spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>The ePortfolio does not clearly demonstrate a connection to Disability Studies Program Goals. Reflections are missing or superficial.</td>
<td>The work displayed in the ePortfolio is not relevant to the topic. The connection between Disability Studies courses is unclear or not well developed.</td>
<td>The portfolio is disorganized, has serious errors in grammar or spelling. It is not compelling or attractive to the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sections are missing, or issues of academic honesty or integrity are involved.</td>
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**Student work/ePortfolio examples**

Katie Defoe  
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Munni Gurung  
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