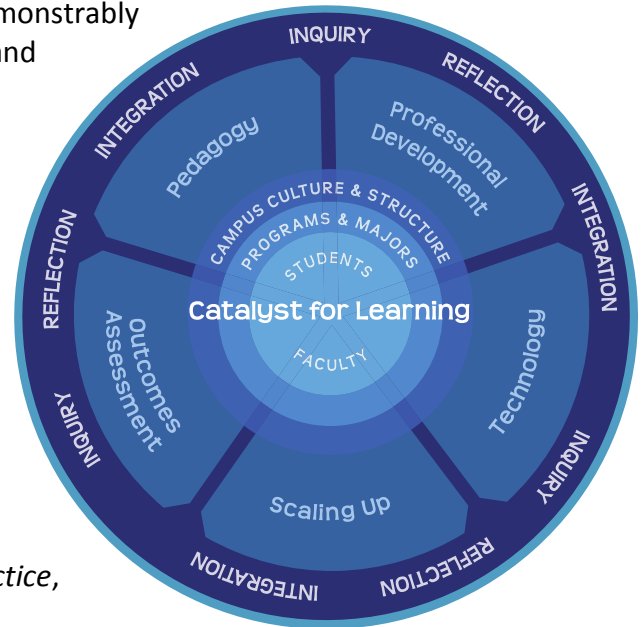


CATALYST in ACTION: Case Studies of High-Impact ePortfolio Practice

Manuscript Submission Deadline: June 15, 2017

The ePortfolio field is crossing a watershed. More than 50% of US colleges now use ePortfolio. And in *High-Impact ePortfolio Practice: Catalyst for Student, Faculty & Institutional Learning*, Bret Eynon and Laura M. Gambino found that ePortfolio, done well, demonstrably advances student learning and success. Building on Eynon and Gambino's research, George Kuh and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) designated ePortfolio as the 11th High-Impact Practice.¹

High-Impact ePortfolio Practice introduced the Catalyst Framework as a way of defining ePortfolio practice "done well." Based on analysis of 24 campus initiatives, the Catalyst Framework highlights five sectors of ePortfolio practice – Pedagogy, Assessment, Professional Development, Technology and Scaling Up. For each, it outlines what it takes to launch, build and sustain a "high-impact" ePortfolio practice that improves student success, deepens student learning, and catalyzes learning-centered institutional change. Describing *High-Impact ePortfolio Practice*, Kuh wrote:



This timely volume shows that ePortfolio is a powerful pedagogical framework at any type of institution, benefitting all participating students in desirable ways as with other high-impact practices. Happily, Eynon and Gambino explain how and why, by illustrating the requisite steps and conditions to do ePortfolio well, in the classroom and beyond.²

Eynon and Gambino now invite articles for *Catalyst in Action*, an edited volume of case studies of ePortfolio practice aligned with the ePortfolio strategies and High-Impact behaviors of the Catalyst Framework. The goal is to test and refine the Framework as a paradigm for the growing field, one that can help guide future ePortfolio research, theory, and practice. *Catalyst for Action* will be published by Stylus Books, with an anticipated release date of summer 2018.

We invite ePortfolio scholars and practitioners to address ways that their work confirms, challenges, or extends the argument laid out in *High-Impact ePortfolio Practice*, centered on the Catalyst Framework. Articles can focus on practice in a single sector of the Framework (e.g., "Pedagogy" or "Professional Development") or explore linked practice across multiple Framework sectors.

Case Studies will range from 3,000 to 5,000 words. Manuscripts are due by June 15, 2017. See below for details of the Call, article requirements, and the timeline for submission.

¹ George D. Kuh, foreword to *High Impact ePortfolio Practice: A Catalyst for Student, Faculty, and Institutional Learning* (Virginia: Stylus Publishing, 2017).

² George D. Kuh, endorsement for *High Impact ePortfolio Practice: A Catalyst for Student, Faculty, and Institutional Learning* (Virginia: Stylus Publishing, 2017).

What is a High-Impact Practice?

The concept of High-Impact Practices is well established. Under the aegis of the AAC&U, Kuh and others have drawn on broad research to identify a set of practices that, when done well, “engage participants at levels that elevate their performance across multiple engagement and desired-outcome measures such as persistence.”³ In 2008, the AAC&U and Kuh codified a list of 10 practices that qualified, including First Year Seminars, undergraduate research, and capstone courses.

These High-Impact Practices met a clear set of criteria. Each was “widely tested and shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds.”⁴ Evidence from multiple institutions shows they advance student outcomes such as engagement, retention, higher GPA, and graduation. Moreover, research shows they are particularly valuable for first-generation and minority students, helping them even more than they help traditional college students.⁵

Implementation quality is key to the definition of HIPs. As Kuh has written, “to engage students at high levels, these practices *must be done well*” (italics in the original).⁶ Research has identified a framework for quality implementation of each HIP, identifying the essential elements, for example, of a first-year seminar done well.⁷

Kuh, O’Donnell, and others have identified a set of underlying characteristics common across HIPs, such as “Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning,” or “Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications.” No one HIP encompasses all characteristics, but all encompass some. These characteristics can be understood as key dimensions of high-impact student learning experiences, the qualities that make a HIP High-Impact.

Finally, Kuh, Finley, McNair and others have argued that the power of each HIP is multiplied when skillfully deployed and sequenced with other HIPs. “Ideally,” wrote AACU’s then President Carol Geary Schneider, “every student ought to have a high-impact experience every year.”⁸

Call for Case Studies of High-Impact ePortfolio Practice

Building on the Catalyst Framework as presented in *High Impact ePortfolio Practice* and the criteria used by Kuh, et. al, this Call seeks case studies that demonstrate aspects of ePortfolio “done well,” addressing priority areas of research and practice. All case studies must address two priorities:

- A) Engagement with key facets of the Catalyst Framework for ePortfolio “done well”
- B) Demonstration of evidence of impact, gathered through evaluation

Case studies may also address these optional priorities:

- C) Practices that generate high-impact behaviors as outlined by Kuh and O’Donnell

³ George Kuh, *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter* (Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2008), 14.

⁴ Kuh, *High-Impact Educational Practices*, 9.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid., 20.

⁷ Jayne E. Brownell and Lynn E. Swaner, “High-Impact Practices: Applying the Learning Outcomes Literature to the Development of Successful Campus Programs,” *Peer Review*, 11, no. 2 (Washington, DC: AAC&U, 2009), 28–29.

⁸ Carol Geary Schneider, introduction to *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter* (Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2008).

- D) Connection with other High-Impact Practices, such as capstone courses
- E) Next Generation ePortfolio, emergent practices, such as the linkage of ePortfolio with digital badging, that chart ePortfolio's evolving role in the new digital ecosystem

The following sections define each of these priorities.

Across priorities, we seek case studies from a range of settings, from Research I and large public universities, liberal arts colleges and community colleges. We seek work from diverse disciplinary perspectives as well as work that addresses interdisciplinary and co-curricular learning. We seek detailed description and the close examination of specific practices and initiatives, but we also want to move past simple “here’s what we did” accounts to consider broader theoretical and practical implications. In this way we hope to advance a cohesive but capacious paradigm or framework for research and practice, one that can help all of us build the field and support student, faculty and institutional learning across higher education.

A. Engagement with key facets of the Catalyst Framework for ePortfolio “done well.” Eynon and Gambino posit the Catalyst Framework as a way of understanding the multiple facets of ePortfolio practice and the ways they connect in High-impact ePortfolio initiatives. We seek grounded case studies that demonstrate or refine our understanding of the soundness of the Catalyst Framework as a construct that links theory and practice.

As developed in *High-Impact ePortfolio Practice*, the Catalyst Framework consists of a learning core, five interlocking sectors, and three design principles:

Learning Core. Effective integrative ePortfolio initiatives address at least three levels of campus life and learning:

- *Students and Faculty:* the active engagement of students, faculty, and other frontline staff (advisors, student affairs staff, etc.) who shape core student learning experiences
- *Centers, Programs and Majors:* crucial organizational units of campus life and learning
- *Institutional Culture and Structure:* the broad campus-wide culture that conditions practice and shapes the learning experience for all—students, faculty, staff and institutional leaders

Sectors: High-impact ePortfolio initiatives address these core learning levels with work that takes place in five interlocking sectors:

- *Integrative Social Pedagogy:* Theory and practice that guides the use of ePortfolio to deepen student learning, including those related to ePortfolio for career and advisement
- *Professional Development:* The active processes (seminars, online tutorials, and institutes) that help faculty and staff learn about ePortfolio technology and pedagogy
- *Outcomes Assessment:* The ways campuses use ePortfolio to support holistic assessment of programs and general education outcomes
- *Technology:* The choices campuses make about ePortfolio platforms and support mechanisms can have a profound impact on the success of the campus ePortfolio initiative
- *Scaling Up:* The ways campus ePortfolio leaders work with students, faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders to build ePortfolio culture and catalyze institutional change

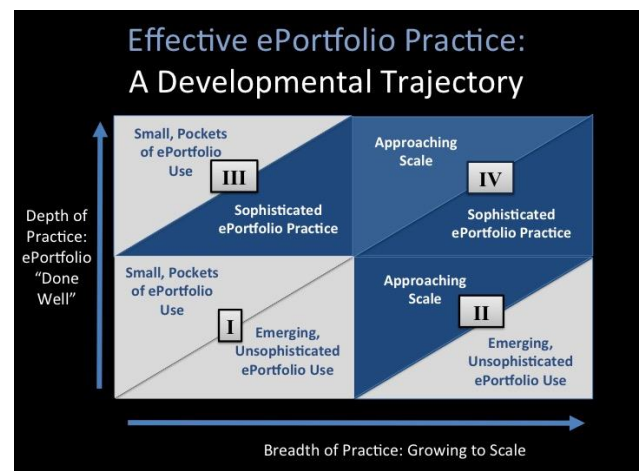
Design Principles: Three overarching design principles embrace all Framework sectors, linking and supporting not only student but also faculty and institutional learning:

- *Inquiry, or inquiry learning pedagogy* involves generating questions, examining evidence, and solving authentic problems.
- *Reflection* stands at the core of deep learning, connecting experience with the generation of meaning.⁹
- *Integration, or integrative learning* involves connections across time, space, and discipline, developing the capacity to integrate and transfer knowledge.

Chapters 2-7 of *High-Impact ePortfolio Practice* detail each of these aspects of the Catalyst Framework. Each chapter illustrates strategies for effective practice in a specific sector.

Case studies for *Catalyst in Action* will explicitly address at least one sector of the Framework. In so doing, case studies will test, confirm, challenge or refine the use of the Catalyst Framework as a paradigm for ePortfolio “done well.” Questions to be pursued could include:

- How does your practice connect with the Catalyst Framework? How are your strategies similar to or different from those spotlighted in *High-impact ePortfolio Practice*? What are the implications of your case study for our larger understanding of effective ePortfolio practice?
- If your case study focuses on Pedagogy, help the reader understand how it looks in practice. What do faculty or staff do? What do students actually do? What examples of student work or student voice would help the reader understand the ways it engages students?
- Whatever sector(s) your case study focuses on, how does your practice manifest the Inquiry-Reflection-Integration design principles? How does the use of these principles guide the practice and deepen student, faculty and institutional learning?
- How does one sector of the Catalyst Framework connect with other sectors? For example, how does your Outcomes Assessment work connect with ePortfolio Pedagogy, and vice versa? How does Professional Development relate to Scaling Up? How does your ePortfolio work across sectors contribute to the overall success of your practice?



B) Evidence of Impact. Evidence of impact is critical to discussion of High-Impact Practices. All case studies should present evidence related to the effectiveness of the practice in question.

We are interested in a broad range of evidence, including qualitative and quantitative evidence, surveys and outcomes (such as pass rates, retention and graduation), samples of student voice, and examinations of student work.

⁹ John Dewey, *Experience and Education*. (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1997); Jack Mezirow, ed., *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000); Bransford et al., *How People Learn*.

Studies focused on Pedagogy should include evidence of impact on student learning. Studies of professional development, outcomes assessment or other sectors may address other impacts, such as attitudes about ePortfolio or changes in faculty, departmental or institutional practice.

Chapter 8 of *High-Impact ePortfolio Practice* provides examples of different kinds of evidence demonstrating the impact of ePortfolio practice on student, faculty, and institutional learning.

C) Practices that Generate High-Impact Behaviors. Eynon and Gambino found that ePortfolio practice, done well, generated many of the underlying behaviors associated with High-Impact Practices. In particular, they found evidence that ePortfolio practice sought to and succeeded in supporting these behaviors from Kuh and O’Donnell’s list:

- Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time
- Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters
- Experiences with diversity
- Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback
- Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning
- Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications
- Public demonstration of competence¹⁰

Case studies that examine the ways that the practice generates or supports High-Impact behaviors will receive priority consideration for *Catalyst in Action*.

D) Connection with other High-Impact Practices. Eynon and Gambino argue that ePortfolio practice thrives when connected to other High-Impact Practices, and can play a unique role in connecting multiple High-Impact Practices across a student’s learning journey. ePortfolio’s integrative quality helps it serve as a “meta High-Impact Practice.”

We seek case studies that explore this connection. Scholars and practitioners interested in this issue are encouraged to read Chapter 9 of *High-Impact ePortfolio Practice* and consider such questions as:

- How does ePortfolio practice build on and reinforce the value of other High-Impact Practices?
- What makes this synergy meaningful? What is the common thread of educational purpose or process that facilitates it?
- What value does ePortfolio practice add when it functions as a meta-HIP, connecting multiple High-Impact Practices? What does this look like? What strategies make it most effective?

E) Next Generation ePortfolio Practice. Higher education is in the midst of rapid change, prompted in part by developments of a new digital learning ecosystem. Some commenters have called for the disruption or “unbundling” of higher education. In this context, we suggest that ePortfolio practice can play a uniquely valuable role, supporting “rebundling” – connecting established and emerging sites for learning in new forms and structures.

¹⁰ George Kuh and Ken O’Donnell, *Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices To Scale* (Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2013), 8.

As Chapter 10 of *High-impact ePortfolio Practice* suggests, ePortfolios can provide a cohesive foundation that links digital badges and learning analytics to broader structures for student, faculty, and institutional learning. ePortfolios can provide a location for connecting students with advisors, faculty, and peer mentors, and for integrating academic learning with developmental support.

At a time when many forces are fragmenting the educational experience, next-generation ePortfolio practice can create opportunities for maintaining and even strengthening meaningful integration.

Case studies for Catalyst in Action may choose to spotlight emergent practices that link ePortfolio to new digital tools or changing higher education environments. Where possible, such case studies should draw linkages back to the Catalyst Framework and suggest ways that the Framework can guide innovations in a new environment. While evidence of impact may be more difficult for emergent practices, case studies should identify any available evidence related to the effectiveness of this innovation.

Manuscript Format

Manuscripts will range from 3-5,000 words (not including abstract, figures, charts and notes). Manuscripts will be double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font and follow Chicago Manual of Style guidelines. Manuscripts should include, but are not limited to, the following sections:

Abstract (200-word maximum): Briefly describe the practice and its scope and its impact on student, faculty, and institutional learning. The abstract will not be included in the published manuscript, but will be used as part of the review and publication process.

The abstract can be submitted for editorial feedback and suggestions until May 15, 2017 (see detailed timeline below).

Introduction: Provide a brief introduction to the practice. What will the reader learn from this piece? Why should the reader be interested?

Institution Description: Introduce your institution—institution type, size, student population, etc. How long has the institution been using ePortfolio? What is the overall focus of your institutional ePortfolio practice? What is the specific context for the practice(s) you describe in this manuscript? Where is the ePortfolio practice located, institutionally, and what is its scope and scale?

ePortfolio Practice Detailed Description: This section will be the core of the manuscript. Describe the practice in as much detail as possible. Include in your description:

- The Catalyst Framework sectors this ePortfolio practice addresses
- The intended goals of the practice for different stakeholder groups (students, faculty and staff, institution)
- How this ePortfolio practice follows the strategies and practices described in the appropriate sectors of the Catalyst Framework
- The role of Inquiry, Reflection, and Integration in the practice
- The ways that student, faculty, and staff engage with and experience the practice
- Ways this practice elicits High-Impact Practice behaviors, and
- Ways this practice connects to other High-Impact Practices at your institution

Connections to the Catalyst Framework: High-impact ePortfolio practices are complex and connected systems. While specific practices may have a primary focus in one or two sectors, there are often connections to the other sectors. In this section, please describe the ways your ePortfolio practice connects with other sectors of the Catalyst Framework.

Evidence of Impact: Describe the impact of this particular High-Impact ePortfolio practice on student, faculty/staff, and/or institutional learning. What type of evidence have you collected to document the effectiveness of this practice? What does your evidence show? Please be specific and include charts, graphs, and tables as appropriate.

Lessons Learned: What can be learned from this practice? What have you and your colleagues learned? How do you envision this practice, individual or institutional, evolving in the future?

Conclusion: Summarize and highlight the key features of the practice. What are the implications of this practice and its impact for other institutions? In what ways is this practice transferable to other institutional contexts?

Manuscript and Publication Timeline

- January 25 – May 15, 2017: Abstract Review and Feedback; Q&A Period
Prior to the manuscript submission deadline, Eynon and Gambino will accept abstracts and/or questions for preliminary review and feedback.
- June 15, 2017: Case Study Manuscript Submission Deadline
- August 1, 2017: Author notification of manuscript status. Authors of accepted manuscripts will receive editorial feedback for revision.
- September 30, 2017: Revised Manuscript Resubmission Deadline
- June 2018 – Tentative Publication Date

Email abstracts, questions and requests for feedback as well as manuscript submissions to catalystinaction@gmail.com.