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ePortfolio: Advancing Human Services Education through Technology

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Educators across the country utilize technology in innovative ways to bridge the gap between education and practice. This emphasis is prevalent within helping professions that rely heavily on field placements for further development of students. Digital pedagogy can be used by human services educators to bridge the gap between education and human services practice. In this study, we utilized the Catalyst Framework (Eynon & Gambino, 2017) to delineate student perceptions of their experiences with ePortfolio, demonstrating how digital pedagogy can support human services education. Through qualitative methods, ePortfolios were explored with undergraduate human services students to capture students' experiences and skill development. Three core themes emerged from the findings, suggesting that ePortfolio provides a necessary challenge in the education of human services students. The challenges students reported were meaningful, as ePortfolio increased ownership over their education. Students cultivated a digital space for creativity and authenticity in their education. Implications for human services education are proposed based on the research findings.

Most traditional college students currently enrolled in American universities can be classified as millennials. Millennials, or "generation next," have spent more time using technology than any previous generation (Au-Yong-Oliveira et al., 2018; Jacobsen & Forste, 2011). The human services sector is increasingly advancing the use of technology in the field by allowing more professionals to work remotely and embracing the use of electronic records (Littlefield et al., 2015; Lopez-Crespo et al., 2022). Current research highlights the inclusion of digital pedagogy in human services education (Larsen et al., 2011; Littlefield et al., 2015; Lopez-Crespo et al., 2022; Schelbe et al., 2014); however, there is a gap in the literature regarding the advantages of digital pedagogy. This study sought to fill one such gap by exploring the experiences of undergraduate human services students who have experience utilizing digital teaching platforms in an upper-level (i.e., junior and senior level) human services course at a large, southern university. The purpose of this study was to explore the usefulness of ePortfolio as a form of digital pedagogy in conjunction with human services education. The research question that guided this qualitative inquiry is: How do upper-class undergraduate human services students define their experiences with ePortfolio?

Literature Review

Akyildiz (2019) explained that as our social context evolves, so must the ways in which post-secondary education is provided. Current literature posits today's adult learners benefit from being active agents in their learning, which can be achieved through the integration of technology into heutagogical practices (Akyildiz, 2019; Blaschke, 2019; Wozniak, 2020). Through heutagogy, adult learners can engage in self-directed learning, allowing them to better develop both competence and capabilities in preparation for professional life. Research has explained that integrating technology into this active form of learning lays the foundation for lifelong learning (Blaschke, 2019; Wozniak, 2020). Using technology, such as ePortfolios, educators are better poised to pivot from pedagogy to heutagogy.

Littlefield et al. (2015) and Harvey et al. (2017) asserted that traditional college students are entering college after utilizing technology for most of their lives. These students have been given numerous names related to their technology use, including millennials, digital natives, and the next generation (Akçayır et al., 2016). Many traditional college students utilize technology daily as a way of learning and engaging with the world, making it advantageous for human services educators to integrate technology into their teaching praxis (Akçayır et al., 2016; Rockinson-Szapkiw & Walker, 2009). Digital pedagogy literature suggests instructors go beyond uploading lectures to an online database and instead incorporate the full integration of lessons and experiences onto a digital platform (Littlefield et al., 2015; Lopez-Crespo et al., 2022). Literature also supports the idea that creating a space for students to practice skills that will be used in the field is vital to the development of their identity as a helper (Desmond & Stahl, 2011). A specific technological tool that can be used to incorporate digital heutagogy into the human services classroom is the ePortfolio, an electronic portfolio of student work. By incorporating the ePortfolio into human services courses, students can create electronic portfolios to practice organizational skills and demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired throughout the course (Littlefield et al., 2015).

ePortfolios can provide opportunities for students to participate in more effective and engaging ways of learning (Akçayır et al., 2016).

Digital Heutagogy: The ePortfolio

The utilization of portfolios to document learning is far from a new concept (Lopez-Crespo et al., 2022; Wilson & Albon, 2009). In higher and secondary education, students and teachers have used portfolios to culminate and present what they have learned, while illustrating who they are as professionals (Wilson & Albon, 2009). Historically, a concern regarding the use of traditional portfolios is that learners may view their portfolios as a single project that once presented, is complete (Chang et al., 2014; Fournier & Lane, 2006; Lai et al., 2016; Wilson & Albon, 2009). While the traditional portfolio is complete after the presentation, the ePortfolio has the potential to be continuously developed by the student as they grow, learn, and have new experiences (Lopez-Crespo et al., 2022; Wilson & Albon, 2009). "ePortfolios are used to systematically collect and present students' learning goals, learning processes, reflections, artifacts, and learning outcomes, etc." (Chang et al., 2013, p. 213; also see Pennazio & Fedeli, 2021).

ePortfolios create a space for students to apply both their lived experiences and learned knowledge. Using the flexible ePortfolio interface, human services educators can arrange each module to fit the needs of the coursework and be easily accessed by students (Banachowski et al., 2013; Drabik et al., 2017). Chang et al. (2014) discovered that students had considerably elevated academic growth with the use of ePortfolios in comparison to the control group which did not have access to this resource. In further support of the use of ePortfolios, Fournier and Lane (2006) found that ePortfolios contributed to a greater connection between student learning and additional artifacts, such as the incorporation of a larger array of visual aids to assist in describing their experiences and learning. Furthermore, traditional portfolios utilize artifacts such as notebooks and other devices which may become cumbersome, while ePortfolio allows for the incorporation of a greater span of resources due to digital housing of the materials (Fournier & Lane, 2006; Lopez-Crespo et al., 2022).

Through the purposeful use of the ePortfolio, human services educators can add an additional teaching tool to their pedagogy to enhance student learning. We designed this study to explore the experiences of human services students with ePortfolio as they worked to complete a program evaluation of a human services agency and display their evaluation results. As outlined in the syllabus, students were required to create and utilize an ePortfolio to complete the course, in which they showcased their new knowledge and experiences gained through the course. This study, despite its small sample size, speaks to the importance of integrating ePortfolios into human services education and how ePortfolio can be used as a catalyst for student learning.

Theoretical Foundation

The Catalyst Framework is an evidence-based approach to ePortfolio pedagogy that accounts for the complexities found in ePortfolio implementation (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). This framework is multi-layer, linking pedagogy with broader institutional practices (see Appendix A). Eynon and Gambino (2017) stated, "The Catalyst Framework addresses the multiple facets of ePortfolio practice and the ways they connect to build a high impact ePortfolio initiative" (p. 28). This framework consists of a learning core that includes students, faculty, programs, majors, campus culture, and structure, and has five interlocking sectors: (a) outcomes (b) assessment, (c) pedagogy, (d) professional development, (e) technology, and (f) scaling up (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). Researchers have found that these five sectors reflect core learning levels present in high-impact ePortfolio practices. In addition, this framework has three overarching design principles: inquiry, integration, and reflection (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). Research suggests that ineffective implementation of these design principles is likely to exist in one or more of the five interlocking sectors in ePortfolio pedagogy if this framework is not employed. Exploring the tenets of this framework is important in understanding the outcomes of this current study.

The core of this framework posits that effective integration of ePortfolio involves at least three levels of campus life and learning (Eynon & Gambino, 2017; Lopez-Crespo et al., 2022). Those three levels are identified as: (1) students and faculty, (2) programs and majors, and (3) campus culture and structure (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). At the first level, the faculty involved shape student core learning experiences. At the second level, the organizational units around which campus life and learning are generally organized are represented At the third level, the broader campus-wide policies are represented including conditions that shape educational practices such as mission, culture, and stakeholders (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). The core of this framework informs the current study and is important in understanding why additional ePortfolio research is needed.

The three design principles of this framework are overarching concepts that demonstrate effective ePortfolio initiatives. The inquiry is the first of these design principles which accounts for students taking responsibility for their learning. Eynon and Gambino (2017) explained that by using ePortfolios, students are provided an opportunity to showcase the "products of their inquiries" (p. 33), while engaging them in a deeper examination of their own learning and evolving

identities. Reflection is the second overarching concept and can be built upon inquiry or stand-alone. As explained by Eynon and Gambino (2017) and Pitts and Ruggirello (2012), reflection allows students to form connections between their experiences, thereby fostering the continuation of learning and empowering meaning-making. In addition, the inclusion of reflectivity fosters the use of ePortfolios as an engaging process by which students link academic knowledge and life experiences to their personal growth and development. Integration is the third design principle and specifically addresses the context of ePortfolio and student learning. Eynon and Gambino (2017) explained that, through integrative learning, connections are formed and knowledge is transferred across courses and semesters, thereby linking different forms of knowledge attainment and lived experiences. In utilizing the ePortfolio, students use integrative pedagogy to explore the relationship between the classroom and their lives and to develop a new identity as a learner. Researchers posit that these three design principles are in every interlocking sector of the Catalyst Framework.

The university setting in which this study takes place has adopted ePortfolio as a high-impact practice university-wide, supporting the university's strategic plan and mission in adequately preparing students for the workforce. In addition, university culture fosters this by providing resources to support faculty development and encourage the use of ePortfolio within the classroom. Students and faculty are trained in the development and implementation of ePortfolio. Researchers involved in the current study were trained as a part of this initiative and used the Catalyst Framework as the theoretical underpinning in designing the ePortfolio activity explored in the current study (Eynon & Gambino, 2017).

Method

Qualitative research seeks to describe an individual's experiences by providing thick descriptions, participants' perspectives, and depth while in naturalistic settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hays & Singh, 2012). Using qualitative methods, we worked to understand the experiences of undergraduate students to inform teaching practices and enhance the learning environment for students and ultimately improve students' learning outcomes. We used a phenomenological approach to gain a deeper understanding of participants' lived experiences using ePortfolio as an educational tool. Using this phenomenological approach, we began the study with an unbiased exploration of the use of ePortfolio. Peer debriefing and triangulation were used as trustworthiness strategies throughout this inquiry (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hays & Singh, 2012; Patton, 2014).

Utilizing qualitative research protocols, this study explores the experiences of upper-level (junior and senior level) human services students enrolled in a program evaluation course at a large, southern university in the United States. Over the course of the semester, the participants were expected to complete a program evaluation through the utilization of a regional human services agency. The students were assigned nine individual tasks that were deemed critical aspects of program evaluation. The task was as follows:

- select an agency,
- develop an evaluation question,
- write an annotated bibliography of relevant research articles,
- create a mind map connecting themes found in the research,
- develop a research plan,
- develop a protocol to be used to collect data,
- create a timeline outlining your evaluation plan,
- report research findings, and
- construct a letter reflecting on your experience.

The final assignment required the development of a showcase portfolio through a WordPress ePortfolio template (Sparkman-Key, 2018) specifically designed for the program evaluation course (see Appendix A).

Students were instructed to upload their original ePortfolio along with an edited version, incorporating feedback from instructors and peers. This allowed us to establish a baseline and account for students' writing growth over the course of the semester. The ePortfolio was used to display each task in a cohesive and creative way while documenting the ways in which students used instructor feedback to improve upon tasks throughout the course. Students were asked to include their initial task, a paragraph on what changes were made to the task, and the updated task in the portfolio. Participants were also asked to include a professional introduction in their ePortfolio that could be viewed by a future employer, a copy of a current resumé, and a closing statement. Participants' ePortfolios were evaluated for accuracy, creativity, attractiveness, and technical writing skills.

Participants

Participants were selected using purposeful sampling methods (Merriam & Grenier, 2019; Palinkas et al., 2015; Patton, 2014). We chose purposeful sampling as it would allow for a more representative sample of the undergraduate human services students at this university. This sampling method was also selected because of our goal of data saturation. All participants met preset criteria by declaring a major in human

services, having junior or senior status, enrollment in a program evaluation course, and enrollment in the section of the course that utilized ePortfolio. There were three sections of the program evaluation course taught during the semester of this study. However, only one section of the course utilized ePortfolio as an assignment. Participants were recruited from the program evaluation course that met the requirements for participation. There were 25 students enrolled and invited from the course to participate in this study. A total of 23 students agreed to participate. To ensure the anonymity of students, participants' demographic information was not obtained. However, the demographics of the human services students enrolled in the program are highlighted to provide context regarding the population demographics. At the time of data collection, there were 441 full-time and 93 part-time students majoring in human services. Human services majors at this university are predominantly female (89%). The racial makeup of the students at the time of the study consisted of the following: less than 1% Indigenous, 2% Asian, 3% unknown, 9% Latina, 7% two races, 27% White, and 51% Black.

Multiple steps were taken to ensure ethical practice throughout this study. To maintain confidentiality, participants' reflections and closing statements were taken from portfolios and analyzed in a separate document. Participants' names were also changed to pseudonyms to protect participant confidentiality (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006; Pickering & Kara, 2017). We also informed participants that their participation was voluntary and provided them with information detailing the confidential nature of the research. Participants were given the option to end their participation in this study at any time without penalty. As this was a class, all students were expected to complete the assignments included in the ePortfolio. To ensure ethical practice, however, all data collection was delayed until after the semester ended and grades were submitted. This allowed students to participate freely without the possibility of having their grades impacted because of not participating. Additionally, we pulled all data not affiliated with the course to increase the trustworthiness of the study and to prevent the coercion of students.

Data Collection

For this study, data were collected using written materials (see Appendix B). Written materials can be used to help understand participants' lived experiences, especially when gathering the information might prove difficult (Hays & Singh, 2012; Creswell & Poth, 2018). We chose this method, as it allowed for an unobtrusive observation which encouraged students to be honest about their experience without the fear of retaliation. The use of written materials was also a good fit for our study, as we wanted to highlight the participants' voices and experiences throughout (see Appendix B). All participants were required to reflect on their experiences in the program evaluation course and use the ePortfolio as a learning tool over the course of the semester. Students also provided closing statements and reflection letters to allow us to better examine the students' experiences.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study utilized a phenomenological methodology guided by Willis's (2004) modification of Moustakas's (1994) model. Willis (2004) employed a deeper emphasis on the lived experiences of participants, which is vital to this study. To gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences with ePortfolio, personal reflections were captured for data analysis (as cited in Grbich, 2013). Student reflections were provided to the members of the research team for coding. We ensured the same coding method was followed by each coder. Following the outline of consensus coding by Creswell and Poth (2018), the research team was able to increase trustworthiness and inter-coding reliability. Consensus coding requires researchers to code the data individually, then meet to discuss and arrive at an agreed-upon operational definition for each code (Hays & Singh, 2012). Using consensus coding, the research team agreed on three codes that highlight the experiences of the participants.

Findings

We used an open coding analysis, producing the following themes: (a) demanding educational tool, (b) encourages creativity and critical thinking, and (c) increased ownership of education. These themes emerged through the descriptive narratives of participants at the culmination of the coursework.

Demanding Education Tool

Engaging with any new pedagogical tool can be challenging for any learner. Post-secondary education is structured to challenge the learner to cultivate critical thinking opportunities. The demanding educational tool theme emerged as participants engaged in this process. Participants reported a degree of difficulty in developing the ePortfolio as a part of their course assessment:

> Technology is something that is such a big part of our lives and even though I can see the benefits of having an ePortfolio the overall experience of putting this together was not a great experience. Even though I

> did have my struggles with it I did learn a lot from it. I enjoyed the task themselves and going through those processes putting them all together within this program was difficult. (Participant 1)

Participants viewed the ePortfolio as a difficult activity and displayed a wide range of technological awareness. Participant 12 indicated the following about the difficulty of this experience: "At first, I struggled to develop this portfolio because I was unfamiliar with how to navigate around." Despite the challenge, students grew and learned. Participant 15 stated, "It has been a great experience to learn about program evaluations and develop this ePortfolio. There were few challenges but from those challenges, I had learned, and those experiences will benefit me in my future career." Similarly, Participant 5 stated "In conclusion, this portfolio has been a wonderful experience of growth. I have learned a lot about myself as a writer. This assignment has taught me how to create a portfolio and the reason why a portfolio is needed." Lastly, Participant 4 illustrated this code, stating, "While developing this portfolio, I had to face several problems because for me it was a very new digital report. But after starting to make this portfolio, I was feeling very excited," which accentuates the growth of students using ePortfolio. The participants described their initial hesitation with using ePortfolio while highlighting their growth over the semester.

> Developing this portfolio has been a fun and difficult challenge. I've never created an online portfolio before, so it was a good learning experience. I've made paper portfolios before, so I knew the general requirements for a portfolio. Having a premade template also made it that much easier as well so I didn't have to also learn how to format a web page on top of the assignment. (Participant 8)

Overall, despite their initial difficulty, participants expressed a greater appreciation of ePortfolio at the culmination of the semester.

Encourages Creativity and Critical Thinking

Encourages creativity and critical thinking emerged as a theme as participants highlighted their ability to infuse their personalities into the ePortfolio. Participants indicated having a joyful and meaningful experience with a deeper appreciation of the ePortfolio. Participant 2 spoke highly of her learning experience: "I am very proud of the work I did within this portfolio, and I enjoyed creating this showcase of my work done in HMSV 440W." Similarly, Participant 20 described her ability to complete the task: "I learned more when planning this evaluation than I did conducting it. I was challenged and forced to think critically when completing tasks." Participant 4 rounded out this theme development by expressing pride in the final product:

> Initially it seemed very overwhelming with the number of tasks I had to do. However, now that I am at the end of the road, I can say I'm proud of the work that I have done and can say I have learned a lot.

The versatility of ePortfolio allowed students to personalize their projects while also meeting requirements presented in the course rubric.

Increased Ownership of Education

Increased ownership of education, the third and final theme, evolved through participants' articulation of feeling a sense of pride in their work upon completion of the portfolio. The customizability of ePortfolio increases the sense of ownership which leads to increased learning, as seen with Participant 10:

> Although putting together this portfolio was somewhat difficult because of the user interface, I enjoyed looking back on my old work and uploading it to this site. It has been a pleasurable experience overall and I can see the benefits of using an ePortfolio in the future. It's professional, streamlined, and easy to look at.

Students were able to manipulate information using pre-set templates in the ePortfolio software. Participant 21 described the significance of ePortfolio's flexibility: "I thoroughly enjoyed creating this portfolio because I was able to display my progress on each task outlined in the course. . . . I was able to grasp the improvements I made in this course with my newly obtained skills." Similarly, Participant 10 stated, "Although putting together this portfolio was somewhat difficult because of the user interface, I enjoyed looking back on my old work and uploading it to this site. It has been a pleasurable experience overall" regarding the significance of the project. The flexibility allowed by the ePortfolio framework created a sense of pride and accomplishment for students. Participant 13 stated, "Personally, this portfolio has enlightened me along the way as I completed each task and made final corrections before publishing my portfolio," which aligns with the sentiments of pride and accomplishment. Additionally, Participant 4 depicted this theme with the following:

> This portfolio and course have been an interesting experience. Initially it seemed very overwhelming

> with the number of tasks I had to do. However, now that I am at the end of the road, I can say I'm proud of the work that I have done and can say I have learned a lot. I now know how relevant and important evaluations are to any program or profession and will use this knowledge going forward in my career.

These culminating remarks depict the third and final theme which emphasizes the increased ownership felt by students while using ePortfolio. In the following section, the authors will discuss how these findings can be incorporated into human services education.

Outliers

Participants expressed how demanding both the course and the use of ePortfolios were. Despite the demand, most participants found satisfaction in the activity as outlined above. There was one outlier comment that indicated dissatisfaction with ePortfolio. Participant 1 stated, "the overall experience of putting this together was not a great experience." Technology can often be challenging; in some cases, students may find the entire experience too difficult to engage.

Discussion

Participants in this study utilized ePortfolio to illustrate their understanding of program evaluation course objectives and to reflect on their experiences. The experiences of the participants align with the theoretical foundation of this study which views ePortfolio as a catalyst for learning (Eynon & Gambino 2017; Lin et al. 2013). The three design principles of the Catalyst for Learning Framework are inquiry, reflection, and integration (Eynon & Gambino 2017). Inquiry, reflection, and integration are closely related to the findings of the present study. The results of this study determined that students found ePortfolios to be a demanding yet purposeful form of digital pedagogy that allowed them to be challenged while simultaneously encouraging their creativity. Similarly, to Eynon and Gambino (2017), Katz et al. (2014) stressed the value of using digital pedagogy to create meaningful learning as students engage more freely in the learning process.

Students were required to fully engage in their education by learning to design a comprehensive ePortfolio, completing, and incorporating assignments into ePortfolio, and presenting the final product (ePortfolio). Inquiry, one of three design principles of Eynon and Gambino's (2017) model engages learners through interaction, which was depicted in the first theme: demanding educational tool. According to Eynon and Gambino (2017), inquiry involves "problem-based learning" (p. 33), which directly highlights the experiences of the participants. This course challenged students to grow personally, and in turn professionally, through overcoming difficulties with initial ePortfolio usage.

The second design principle is integration (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). Littlefield et al. (2015) along with Eynon and Gambino (2017) have discussed the significance of integrating technology, instructors, and universities into the education of college students. All of these resources are readily available on most university campuses; however, there is a lack of integration throughout universities and there is a need to continue to bridge this gap. As an educational praxis, educators have evolved past the banker model of education (McAuliffe, 2011; Sharifi et al., 2017). Educators cannot solely deposit information into students; there is a need for purposeful and intentional engagement between students and the course content (Bond et al., 2020; Katz et al., 2014). Participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to incorporate creativity into their education with the use of ePortfolio.

The third and final design principle is reflection (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). Reflection highlights making connections and meaning making through the ePortfolio experience (Eynon & Gambino, 2017). Chang et al. (2013) and Lam (2022) highlighted the significance of deliberately identifying activities for the ePortfolio experience. This purposefulness was applied in the creation of this study with key requirements being identified for the course. Reflection aligns with the participants experiencing an increase in ownership of their education while using the ePortfolio software. Participants found value in this experience and thus created a meaningful experience out of the assigned tasks (Eynon & Gambino, 2017; Lin et al. 2013). While ePortfolio can be a useful tool for academia overall, we will now explore the specific implications for the field of human services.

Implications for the Use of Digital Pedagogy in Digital Human Services Education

The findings of our exploratory study suggest that human services educators could incorporate ePortfolio into their human services curriculum as a meaningful way to provide students with an opportunity to engage with technology. ePortfolio challenges students to actively engage with the material and enhance their organizational, written communication, and critical thinking skills. Specifically, ePortfolio could be an asset in courses that include a culminating project to showcase learning. Through learning to develop an ePortfolio, participants were not only able to showcase their learning of the material but also their ability to construct an ePortfolio. In addition, other key aspects of the courses could be captured through ePortfolio development, such

as writing skill development, creativity, and students' ability to reflect on how course concepts relate to the profession. ePortfolio would also serve as beneficial in intensive writing courses with a focus on developing student writing for the field of practice, capstone courses, and service-learning focused courses.

Human services education should mirror the direction of the profession with the use of technology. Eynon and Gambino (2017) indicated that "pedagogy should drive technology," and the present study reinforces this point. Students had the opportunity to engage with technology in a way that pushed them beyond their comfort zones. This is significant as the profession is experiencing a period of growth with the implementation of electronic records and remote working environments. Ludwick and Doucette (2009) and Tsai et al. (2019) stated that the integration of electronic records is a vital tool in decreasing medical disparity across the world. Additionally, electronic records have also supported the increased usage of telecommuting within the workforce. The ability to access electronic records allows for a greater ability to serve the community. Therefore, students require exposure to the integration of technology within the profession to enter the field. Overall, the participants gained a greater appreciation for digital pedagogy in human services through this course design. This experience will increase their flexibility within the workplace and ensure their marketability in an evolving profession.

Limitations

Despite the significance of the findings in this study, there are limitations. The first limitation is the sample size. Qualitative research often includes a smaller sample size; however, as a phenomenological approach was utilized, it would be beneficial to increase the sample size as much as possible in future studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hays & Singh, 2012; Kvale, 1996). There is a need for the replication of this study at various universities and colleges throughout the country with larger sample sizes to increase the rigor and impact factor of the findings. Another limitation is the data collection method. A survey or questionnaire for data collection could build upon the current findings. Tools such as these would produce more specific findings on the utility of ePortfolio and on the specific skills, which may be learned throughout the process. Only human services students were included in this study, thereby limiting the generalizability of these findings to other fields. The results suggest that the use of ePortfolio fosters skill development in an array of areas, such as creativity, technology literacy, and creative writing. As these skills are prevalent in other fields of study, it is likely that similar results may be found in studies inclusive of other fields. Further research into the utility of ePortfolio in other fields of study is needed, however. A final limitation is the lack of demographic information collected on the participants, which was omitted to maintain anonymity. Specific demographics of participants would be helpful in future research to determine if experiences differ based on demographics.

Conclusion

The utilization of technology that provides students with a platform to showcase and reflect on educational activities is an important aspect of the development of competent human services professionals. This study highlights key benefits of the use of ePortfolio to benefit students in their continued development as human services professionals. In the field of human services, the use of technology is salient, as demonstrated through the common use of electronic medical records, platforms that store and organize case notes, and electronic case files. The use of ePortfolio within the classroom can aid in preparing students to utilize these electronic tools in the field by exposing them to technology prior to entering the field, providing experience with archiving data, showcasing experiences, reflection, and writing development. This study provides evidence of the numerous skills that can be gained and fostered using ePortfolio. The findings of this study demonstrate the ways in which ePortfolio challenges students to take ownership of their education while fostering creativity and critical thinking skills. These results provide insight into the evolution of post-secondary education from pedagogy to heutagogy in fostering self-directed learning.

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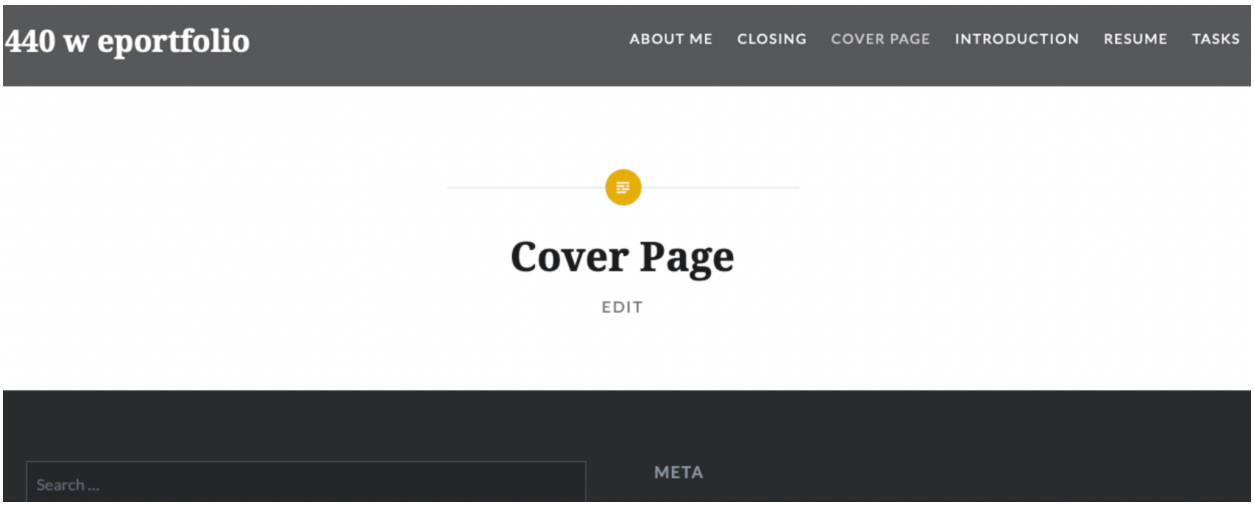
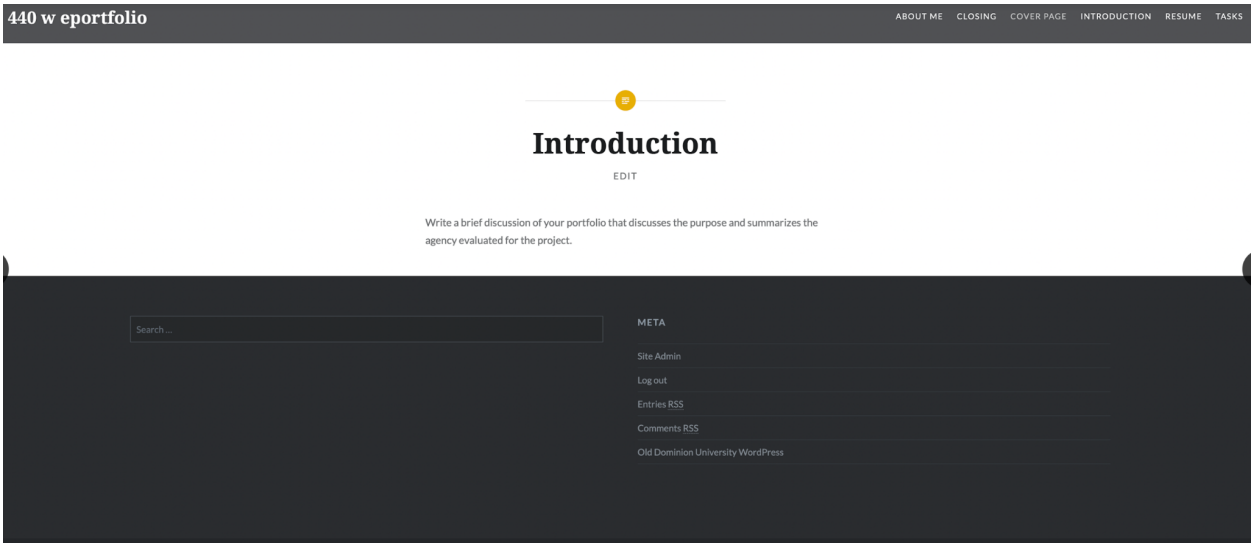
Appendix A
The WordPress Eportfolio Template Designed for the Program Evaluation Course

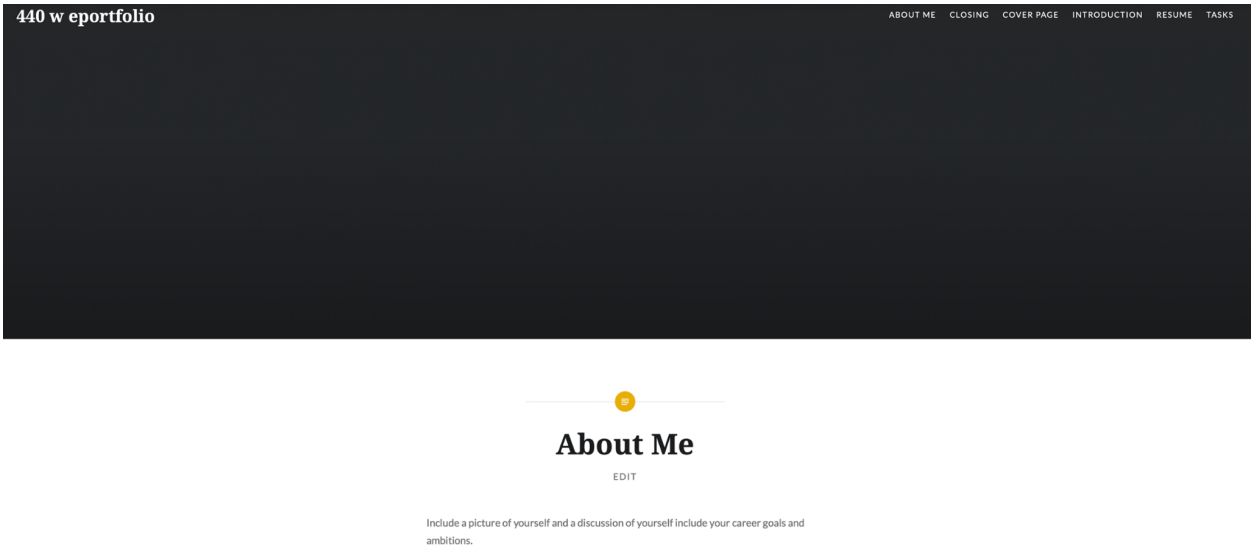
Cover Page:



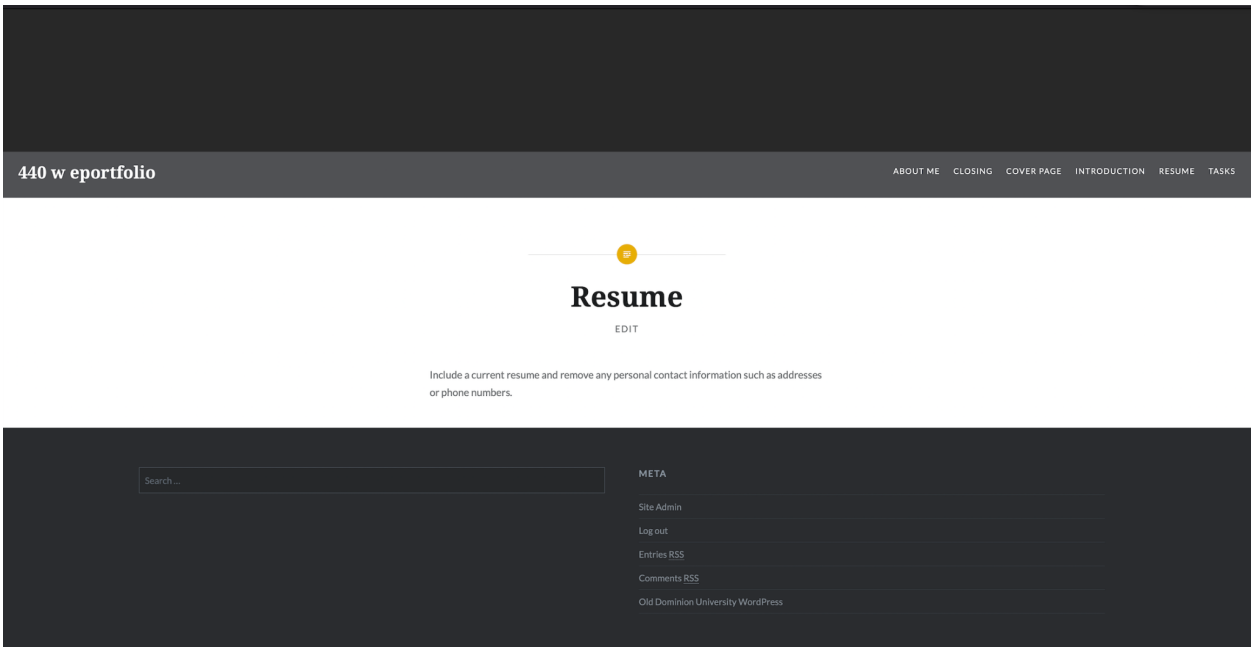
Brief Introduction to the Project:



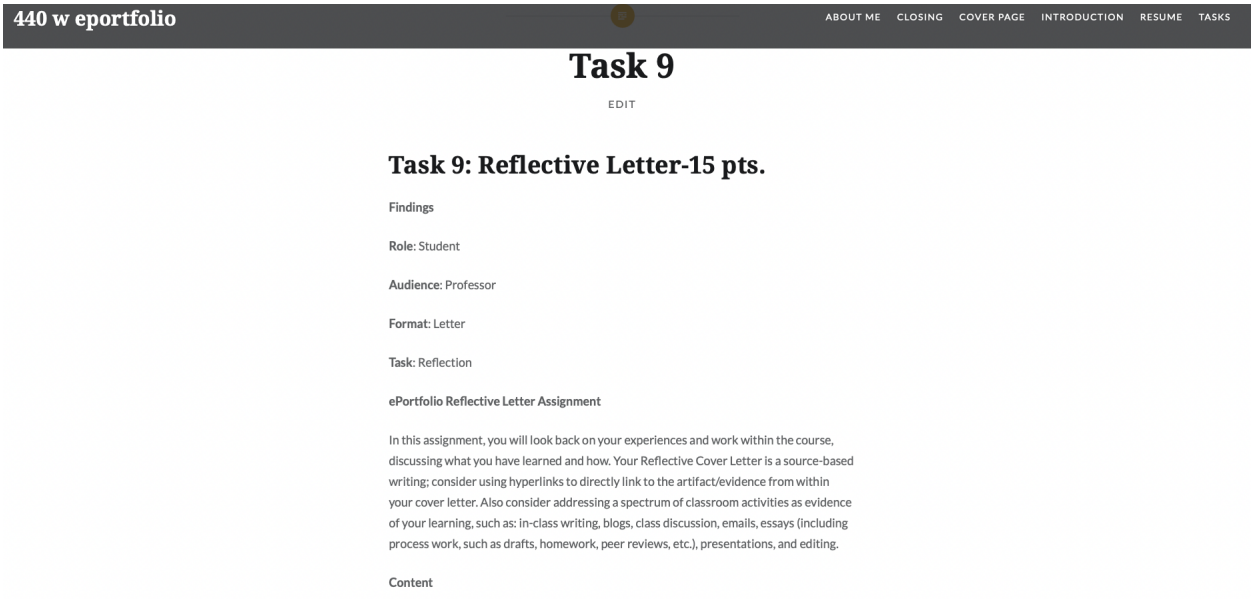
Describe Self, Career Goals, and Ambitions:



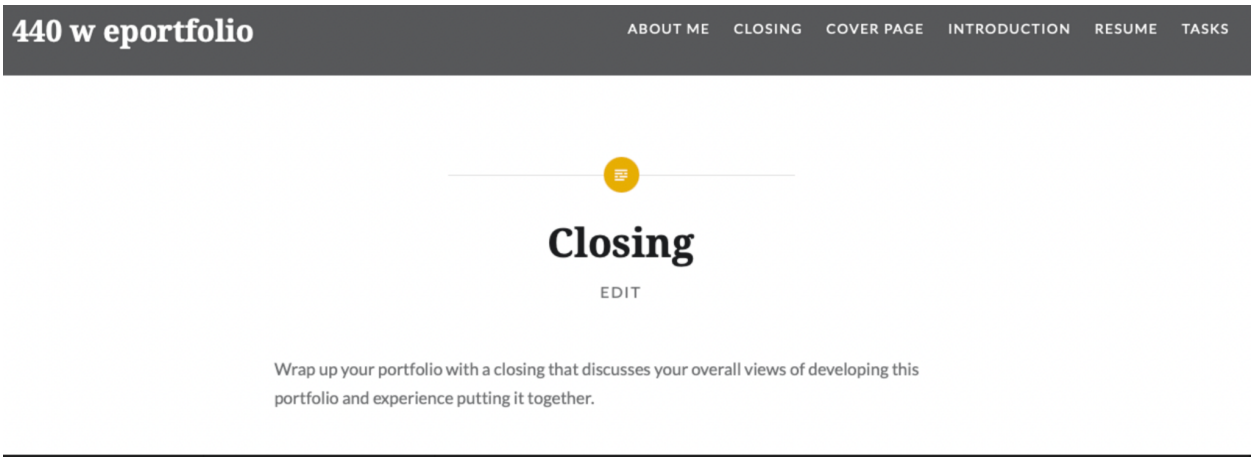
The Resume Creation Template:



Tasks Template for Reflective Letter:



Closing Discussion on Overall Views of Developing ePortfolio:



Appendix B
ePortfolio Reflective Letter Assignment Instructions

In this assignment, you will look back on your experiences and work within the course, discussing what you have learned and how. Your Reflective Cover Letter is a source-based writing; consider using hyperlinks to directly link to the artifact/evidence from within your cover letter. Also consider addressing a spectrum of classroom activities as evidence of your learning, such as: in-class writing, blogs, class discussion, emails, essays (including process work, such as drafts, homework, peer reviews, etc.), presentations, and editing.

Content

1. Persuade, both your instructor and the institution, that your work meets the objectives for this course. Discuss your learning experiences in this course, including any details that are unique to your own learning process, especially as represented by the contents of your ePortfolio. The course objectives are as follows:

- To effectively conduct a program evaluation.
- To understand the role of research in the evaluation process.
- To understand the use of evaluation in program planning.
- Recognize the components of an evaluation i.e., research methods, agency description, understanding population, stakeholders, and research.
- Understand similarities differences in the evaluator's role and stakeholder's role in the evaluation process.
- Learn to recognize stakeholders.
- Utilize stakeholders in the evaluation process.
- Understand the role of evaluation in the field of Human Services.

2. Answer the following questions, using links or excerpts (visual, audio, or written) from your ePortfolio to illustrate your answers:

- Where is your learning demonstrated in the course?
- What areas did you feel you were most successful, or improved the most?
- How do you see this course's content intersecting with your field or career?
- Have you been able to apply concepts you have learned in the course to what you do at work or in other courses?
- How, when where and why you might use this information or skill in the future?