

Institutional Support for ePortfolios

Prepared for University of Alaska Anchorage

March 2013



In the following report, Hanover Research outlines the administrative support practices of institutions with ePortfolio systems in place. Additionally, trends and software options for ePortfolio systems are discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	3
KEY FINDINGS.....	3
Section I: ePortfolio Trends and Software	5
TRENDS.....	5
SOFTWARE.....	6
Section II: Peer Selection Methodology	8
Section III: Administrative Support for ePortfolios	10
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY.....	10
CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY.....	11
INDIANA UNIVERSITY - PURDUE UNIVERSITY INDIANAPOLIS	12
LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE.....	13
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE.....	14
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE.....	15
VIRGINIA TECH	16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this report, Hanover discusses administrative support for ePortfolio systems at peer institutions as well as at institutions leading the nation in ePortfolio development. Software options and ePortfolio trends are also briefly outlined.

- **Section One** discusses trends and software options in ePortfolio systems.
- **Section Two** presents a brief discussion of the methodology used to select the ePortfolio systems that were profiled in the report.
- **Section Three** discusses administrative practices, staffing, funding, and software at seven institutions with well-developed ePortfolio systems currently in place.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Staffing and organizational structure for ePortfolio systems vary among the profiled institutions, but two main approaches emerged.** Some institutions have an ePortfolio office with a dedicated team whose full-time roles are to support and maintain the system. Other ePortfolio teams are comprised of employees from other offices in the university who maintain the ePortfolio system part-time. Employment of graduate or undergraduate student assistants is also common in ePortfolio offices. Teams at profiled institutions range from two to 14 staff members and include directors, coordinators, IT specialists, and consultants.
- Among the profiled institutions, **full-time ePortfolio offices are housed in Centers for Teaching and Learning, Academic Affairs, Offices of the Provost, or Divisions of Undergraduate Education.** Part-time teams include members from the Center for Teaching and Learning, Information Services and Technology, Office of Institutional Effectiveness, or Planning and Institutional Improvement. Institutions using open-source options appear to be more likely to have dedicated teams, as maintenance and software development is handled by the university rather than an external company.
- **Software built from scratch, open-, and closed-source software choices are represented among the profiled institutions.** Popular proprietary software choices include Digication and Taskstream, which handle all hosting, maintenance, and support issues. All of the profiled institutions that use open-source ePortfolio systems use Sakai, which is an open-source platform developed through the collaboration of several universities.
- There are over 70 software options for ePortfolio systems. Essentially, there are two broad categories: open- or closed-source software. Open-source software is free to use, but must be hosted and maintained by the university. Closed-source software charges fees for usage but all technological infrastructures are maintained by the

vendor. Popular closed-source options include Digication and Taskstream while popular open-source options include Sakai, Google Sites, and Mahara.

- **All profiled institutions provide at least some training and services for the ePortfolio system.** All of the institutions provide faculty assistance upon request, through either one-on-one training or workshops. Many of the institutions also provide workshops and online tutorials to students. **The rigorosity of training seems to depend on whether the institution uses open- or closed-source software.** Institutions using closed-source software leave much of the support and training to the software provider, adding supplementary faculty assistance where necessary. Institutions with open-source platforms provide all faculty and student assistance internally.
- **Budgets and sources of funding varied greatly, with three main approaches: grant funding, student or user fees, or budgetary allocations.** The University of Delaware, University of Southern Maine, and LaGuardia Community College each receive grant funding from the United States Department of Education or Title V funding that pay for the ePortfolio initiatives. Cleveland State University funds their ePortfolio system through student subscription fees, which are built into applicable course fees. Indiana University Purdue - University Indianapolis allocates approximately \$160,000 per year in funding for its ePortfolio program through its budget. Virginia Tech and Clemson University each allocate approximately \$350,000 per year to their ePortfolio systems.
- **Recent research has uncovered a number of trends in ePortfolio systems.** Many emerging companies are beginning to offer ePortfolio services; institutions are implementing larger and more sophisticated systems; systems offer improved interactivity and mobile access; there are increased alternate certifications of learning through ePortfolio systems; and Learning Management Systems are merging with ePortfolio systems.

SECTION I: EPORTFOLIO TRENDS AND SOFTWARE

Institutions implement ePortfolios for three main reasons: “(a) to identify areas that need improvement, (b) to demonstrate the alignment of curriculum and student outcomes with state and national standards, and (c) to make learning visible.”¹ In addition to these, new uses for ePortfolios are being developed. In this section, Hanover discusses trends in ePortfolio offerings as well as prominent software options.

TRENDS

A September 2012 article from Campus Technology listed twelve trends in the ePortfolio industry, based on extensive interviews with 14 ePortfolio companies, including Digication and Taskstream.²

Figure 1.1: 12 Trends in ePortfolios

TREND
Many emerging companies
Larger scale implementations
Greater sophistication on campus
Selling to individuals instead of only to campuses
Increased access through mobile devices
Sparse international markets
Increasing K-12 markets
Increasing corporate markets
Alternate certification of learning
The merging of Learning Management Systems and ePortfolio technologies
Market specialization
The move to Web 2.0, supporting social networking and interactivity

Source: Campus Technology³

The trends of (1) alternate certifications of learning and (2) the merging of Learning Management Systems with ePortfolio technologies are particularly notable. First, with increased attention to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and open education resources, some ePortfolio software have begun offering badges which function as micro-certifications. These badges also allow endorsement by other ePortfolio users who have experience with that individual’s skill level, similar to endorsing skills on LinkedIn.

Second, many institutions are replacing separate Learning Management Systems by incorporating those services into the ePortfolio. Learning Management Systems are generally used for delivery and managing educational materials and records for online and

¹ Quoted directly from source: Curtis, R. "Learning and Assessment: The Application of ePortfolios." 2012. Accessed through ProQuest.

² Batson, T. "12 Important Trends in the ePortfolio Industry for Education and for Learning." Campus Technology. September 19, 2012. <http://campustechnology.com/Articles/2012/09/19/12-Important-Trends-in-the-ePortfolio-Industry.aspx?Page=1>

³ Ibid.

hybrid courses. Using ePortfolios for assessment has blurred the line between LMS and ePortfolio systems. For example, Blackboard software, originally a LMS provider, now offers ePortfolio services as well.⁴

SOFTWARE

There are both open- and closed-source software options for ePortfolios. Open-source software refers to software where source code, licensure, and distribution are all free. Developments and derived works must also remain free.⁵ In comparison, closed-source software is owned and maintained by the creator and licenses generally must be purchased.

There are over 70 software options specifically for ePortfolios, not including alternative options such as WordPress blogs or Google Sites. **A complete and frequently-updated list of software options can be found on the Electronic Portfolio Action and Communication (EPAC) website.**⁶ Below, Hanover presents a comparison of three popular ePortfolio software options: Digication, Taskstream, and Mahara. Digication and Taskstream are closed-source, hosted options that are fee-based. Mahara is free, open-source software, but institutions must arrange for hosting independently.

Figure 1.2: ePortfolio Software Comparison

NAME	DIGATION	TASKSTREAM	MAHARA
URL	www.digication.com	www.Taskstream.com	www.mahara.org
CUSTOMER BASE	Teachers and students at more than 4,000 higher education institutions and K-12 schools use Digication.	Taskstream works with individual learners, K-12 schools, districts, states, colleges, universities, and national organizations.	In August 2011, there were 245 registered Mahara sites with 271,000 accounts. Registration is voluntary.
STUDENT LICENSE	Free for Google Apps for Education, more details on www.digication.com/google. For individual student licenses, student pricing is \$19.95/year	Students can purchase accounts for one semester up to six years. Prices vary from \$25/semester to \$129 for six years.	Mahara is an open-source application that can be downloaded and used without incurring licensing fees.
INSTITUTIONAL PRICING	Based on the size of the institution, cost per user range from \$5 to \$14 / user / year.	The institution does not incur additional fees.	Open-source, there are no licensing fees.
POSTGRADUATE AND TRANSFER STUDENT LICENSE	Free of charge for all alumni for as long as an institutional model is in place. Otherwise, \$19.95/year.	Postgraduate or transfer students can maintain their accounts by paying individual subscription rates.	Open-source, there are no licensing fees.
ONLINE SUPPORT	Free online/email support online as well as video and PDF tutorials.	Unlimited implementation consulting, online training, and ongoing support at no additional charge.	Online Mahara wiki as well as community message boards for support.

⁴ "ePortfolios." Blackboard. http://www.blackboard.com/quicktutorials/Bb_ePortfolios_swf.htm

⁵ "The Open Source Definition." Open Source Initiative. <http://opensource.org/docs/osd>

⁶ "Evolving List of ePortfolio-related Tools." EPAC. <http://epac.pbworks.com/w/page/12559686/Evolving%20List%20of%20ePortfolio-related%20Tools>

NAME	DIGICATION	TASKSTREAM	MAHARA
IT REQUIREMENTS	No permanent IT staffing is required, 10 to 20 hours of IT resources for initial IT integration is recommended.	No permanent IT staffing is required.	Dependent on university set up.
SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS	Any internet connected computers with a modern browser.	Any internet connected computers with a modern browser.	Any internet connected computers with a modern browser.
HOSTED SERVICE	Yes	Yes	It can be hosted by a third party or by the university. Mahara is open-source software and does not host.
STORAGE CAPACITY (PER ACCOUNT)	100MB to Unlimited, dependent on plan.	2GB	Set by the institutions.
PRIVACY POLICY	Digication does not own any work created by its users.	Taskstream does not own any work created by its users.	Set by the institutions.
MIGRATION AND EXPORTATION	Yes, both	Yes, both	Yes, both
ACCEPTED FILES	All files are accepted.	Image, video, audio, text, html, and doc files are accepted.	Any media type can be uploaded; certain media can also be embedded, e.g. mp3, mp4, flv.

Source: Software Websites and the Association for Authentic, Experiential, and Evidence-Based Learning⁷

Due to the fact that software is either closed- or open-source, institutions that do not plan to build software from scratch have two choices: buy access to a closed-source software platform or customize an available open-source platform. Pros and cons for each approach are discussed below:

Figure 1.3: Pros and Cons of Buying and Customizing

BUYING		CUSTOMIZING	
PROS	CONS	PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedicated support team ▪ One stop for implementation and support ▪ Can be cheaper, students may pay the fees ▪ Updates are built-in ▪ Vendor provides technical and consulting assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be costly for subscriptions and ongoing service ▪ Sometimes lacks customization ▪ Requires commitment to a vendor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free and customizable ▪ Control over the final product ▪ Integration into current university website ▪ Can use university IT and other resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need skilled staff to maintain and manage open-source platform ▪ Can be expensive ▪ Modification and administration handled by the institution ▪ Less support for problems

Source: Adapted from Making Connections⁸

⁷ "ePortfolio Comparison Matrix." AAEEBL. <http://www.aeebl.org/eport-webinar>

⁸ Lambert, S and Richardson, J. "Selecting Your ePortfolio System: Needs, Issues, & Possibilities." Making Connections: ePortfolios, Integrative Learning and Assessment. pp. 4-7. http://www.jamesrichardson.net/raw/selecting_eport_systems.pdf

SECTION II: PEER SELECTION METHODOLOGY

In order to arrive at an appropriate comparison group for University of Alaska Anchorage, Hanover Research used the Carnegie Foundation Classification System, the Chronicle of Higher Education peer institution database, and the peer selections provided by the University of Alaska Anchorage for the December 2012 *Best Practices in the Assessment of GER Student Learning Outcomes* Hanover report. Leading ePortfolio programs were also selected.

Using the Carnegie Foundation system, Hanover Research used the criteria of: (1) Four year or above public institution, (2) Very high undergraduate population, (3) Medium sized four year, primarily non-residential, and (4) Master's colleges and universities (larger programs). This search yielded the following institutions:

- Armstrong Atlantic State University
- Austin Peay State University
- Indiana University-Purdue University
- Indiana University-Southeast
- Jacksonville State University
- McNeese State University
- Northeastern State University

Hanover screened these institutions to identify those with robust ePortfolio systems, which resulted in the selection of Indiana University.

Next, Hanover utilized The Chronicle of Higher Education database. This database lists peer institutions selected by specific institutions. The University of Alaska at Anchorage selected 22 institutions, most of which did not have strong ePortfolio systems.⁹ Institutions that have ePortfolio systems are the University of Southern Maine, Cleveland State University, and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Hanover then reviewed peer institutions provided by the University of Alaska Anchorage for the December 2012 *Best Practices in the Assessment of GER Student Learning Outcomes* report: Appalachian State University, Clemson University, Ferris State University, Florida

⁹ The 22 institutions were: Auburn University at Montgomery, Boise State University, Cleveland State University, Columbus State University, Indiana State University, Indiana University-Northwest, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indiana University-Fort Wayne, Indiana University-Southeast, Lamar University, Northern Kentucky University, Southern Connecticut State University, University of Alabama-Huntsville, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, University of Massachusetts-Boston, University of Michigan-Dearborn, University of Missouri-St. Louis, University of Nebraska-Omaha, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, University of Southern Maine, University of West Florida, Weber State University, and Wichita State University.

Gulf Coast University, Illinois State University, and Montgomery College. Of these, Clemson University was the only university with a highly-developed ePortfolio system.

Finally, Hanover searched for exemplary ePortfolio programs, which yielded LaGuardia Community College, University of Delaware, and Virginia Tech. These three institutions received grants for the Connect to Learning ePortfolio, Engagement, and Student Success program from the United States Department of Education. The table below displays characteristics of the identified institutions:

Figure 2.1: Profiled Institution List

INSTITUTION	STATE	PUBLIC OR PRIVATE	ENROLLMENT	ENDOWMENT
University of Alaska-Anchorage	AK	Public	17,890	\$43,084,132
Clemson University	SC	Public	15,836	\$164,834,619
Cleveland State University	OH	Public	11,729	\$6,605,607
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis	IN	Public	22,236	\$632,003,923
LaGuardia Community College	NY	Public	17,569	N/A
University of Delaware	DE	Private/Public*	17,120	N/A
University of Southern Maine	ME	Public	7,311	\$3,040,500
Virginia Tech	VA	Public	31,087	\$594,800,000

Source: U.S. News and World Report¹⁰

* The University of Delaware is a private charter with some public state assistance.

¹⁰ "Colleges." U.S. News and World Report. <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/search>

SECTION III: ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR EPORTFOLIOS

In this section, Hanover Research outlines the ePortfolio systems at several peer and exemplar institutions in order to assess the typical level of administrative support for ePortfolio systems.

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

Clemson University has an institution-wide ePortfolio system. All 15,000 undergraduate students must create an ePortfolio that demonstrates their understanding of eight core general education competencies in order to graduate. The ePortfolio is used for accreditation as evidence of student proficiency in those eight core competencies.¹¹ Hanover Research interviewed ePortfolio program director Dr. Gail Ring about the details of their ePortfolio system.

STAFF

The ePortfolio office is housed in the division of Undergraduate Studies under the Vice Provost. Full-time ePortfolio staff includes the director of the program, as well as an assistant director. In addition, 10 undergraduate students work in the office, with at least two working each day from 8:00am until 4:30pm. Students may ask for ePortfolio assistance from these student aides.¹²

In addition to these employees, Clemson has created eight teams to assess the ePortfolios. These eight teams are led by eight faculty representatives. Each team scores on one of the eight core competencies and the majority of the scoring is handled by student peer review with faculty overseeing the process. Finally, every summer Clemson hires 50 professors to assist with a summer assessment of students after graduation.¹³

FUNDING

Funding is provided by the Provost's office. Including faculty support, summer assessments, and technology support, the budget is roughly \$350,000 per year.¹⁴

SOFTWARE

According to Dr. Ring, there are two pieces to a student's ePortfolio. The first is the website, which is hosted on Google Sites, Weebly, Wordpress, or any other website that the student chooses. Second, Clemson utilizes software created by the Clemson computer science department. This software, called Q-Port, is a learning management system used for

¹¹ Ring, Gail. Phone Interview. February 20, 2013.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

student assessment. Students must link their personal portfolio website to Q-Port and tag their work to each of the core eight competencies in order to be evaluated.¹⁵

SERVICES

Student aides provide daily walk-in support to other students in need of assistance. The director and assistant director of the program provide workshops, orientations, and presentations for faculty, staff, and students.¹⁶

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Cleveland State University (CSU) utilizes Taskstream, a closed-source, subscription-based software, for its ePortfolio system. Hanover Research interviewed Ms. Heather Gallacher, Coordinator of Assessment and Accreditation, about the details of the system.

STAFF

The ePortfolio system is run by **ten individuals**, including several student assistants. Staff members are housed in the Center for Educational Technology and in Information Services and Technology. Due to the fact that the service is hosted externally, the ePortfolio team focuses primarily on faculty training and implementation and manages the ePortfolio system only part-time.¹⁷

FUNDING

Students pay a subscription fee in order to use Taskstream, which is built into the lab fee for their courses. According to the Taskstream website, students pay \$25 per semester, or \$42 per year, for access.¹⁸ Software development, updates, and IT assistance is all handled by Taskstream. The ePortfolio team at CSU is comprised of staff members who have other responsibilities as well. This means that there is no dedicated staffing budget for the full-time employees.¹⁹

SOFTWARE

CSU previously had built and used an in-house ePortfolio system, but found it difficult to maintain the system and to generate interest among faculty.²⁰ As a result, CSU has switched to Taskstream, a closed-source, hosted ePortfolio provider. Taskstream handles support services, maintenance, updates, and all other aspects of technology infrastructure.²¹

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Gallacher, Heather. Phone Interview. February 19, 2013.

¹⁸ "Benefits for Students." Taskstream. <https://www1.Taskstream.com/benefits-for-students/>

¹⁹ Gallacher, Heather. Op. cit.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "ePortfolio Comparison Matrix." Op. cit.

SERVICES

The team provides tutorials and extensive faculty training needed to acclimate to the recent switch to Taskstream.²²

INDIANA UNIVERSITY - PURDUE UNIVERSITY INDIANAPOLIS

There is a single ePortfolio system, accessible by the entire Indiana University system, which is managed by University Information Technology Services. However, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) has been the leader in ePortfolio and Learning Management Usage since 2002.²³ Hanover Research interviewed Ms. Susan Scott, Coordinator for the ePortfolio Initiative, to learn more about the system.

STAFF

The IUPUI ePortfolio Initiative has a **seven-person staff** from various offices in the University. The team is led by Mary L. Fisher, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Associate Dean of the Faculties. Day-to-day management is handled by the ePortfolio Coordinating Committee:²⁴

- The Director of the ePortfolio Initiative is also Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Institutional Improvement
- The Executive Director for the Center for Research and Learning
- An Instructional Development Specialist for Information Technology Services
- The Principal Systems Analyst for Academic and Faculty Services in the Information Technology Services office
- An Instructional Technology Consultant from the Center for Teaching and Learning
- The Coordinator for the ePortfolio Initiative is also an Assistant Director in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness

FUNDING

The ePortfolio initiative has a budget of approximately \$160,000 per year, which includes one full time employee budget and a graduate research assistant.²⁵ Funding is provided through a matching grant from the Mellon Foundation. Supporting funding is provided by IUPUI, IU University Information Technology Services, and software company rSmart.²⁶ Software development and web hosting are handled by University Information Technology Services and represents a small portion of the UITS budget.²⁷

²² Gallacher, Heather. Op. cit.

²³ Scott, Susan. Phone Interview. February 19, 2013.

²⁴ "ePortfolio – Contact." IUPUI. <https://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/plans/ePort/contact.cfm>

²⁵ Scott, Susan. Op. cit.

²⁶ "Indiana University ePortfolio." ePortfolio. http://www.eport.iu.edu/about_the_project_frameset.htm

²⁷ Scott, Susan. Op. cit.

SOFTWARE

IUPUI uses the Sakai Open Source Portfolio System for its ePortfolio system. The Sakai system is a free open-source platform used for teaching, research, and collaboration.²⁸ Sakai was collaboratively developed by universities including Indiana, Virginia Tech, Michigan, Georgia Tech, Virginia, Cambridge, Stanford, UC-Berkeley, UC-Davis, Rutgers, Yale, Cape Town, and others.²⁹ The system offers tools such as chat rooms, forums, grade books, wikis, and assignment drop boxes.³⁰ IUPUI has been instrumental in the development of the Sakai software over the last decade.³¹

SERVICES

The ePortfolio team provides training and services to both faculty and students. The team focuses primarily on faculty who express interest. These staff members have been offered workshops and incentives to learn the ePortfolio system. Students have access to a call helpline for ePortfolio or LMS issues as well as videos, tutorials, and other online help sources. The student resources are provided by the University Information Technology Services, which provides IT assistance across all nine Indiana University campuses.³²

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LaGuardia Community College has been using ePortfolios since 2001. Since then, LaGuardia has since expanded the program to include teaching and student assessment. ePortfolios are used to strengthen instruction, advisement, and assessment. Hanover Research interviewed ePortfolio Director Dr. Mercedes Del Rosario and ePortfolio Program Manager Ms. Sada Hye Jaman for more details about the system.

STAFF

The ePortfolio system at LaGuardia has a **14-member team**, located in the ePortfolio Office, overseeing daily operations. The team is comprised of the director and program manager along with twelve consultants. The ePortfolios Office is housed in the Center for Teaching and Learning, which is part of the Office for Academic Affairs.³³

FUNDING

Along with other institutions, including University of Delaware and Virginia Tech, LaGuardia Community College received \$700,000 in grant funding from the Connect to Learning: ePortfolio, Engagement, and Student Success grant through the United States Department of Education. Additionally, LaGuardia received a five-year Title V grant.³⁴

²⁸ "Indiana University ePortfolio." ePortfolio. http://www.eport.iu.edu/about_the_project_frameset.htm

²⁹ "Learning Technologies – Scholar." Virginia Tech. http://www.lt.vt.edu/Programs_and_Services/Scholar.html

³⁰ "Sakai: Open Source... Open Minds." Learning Solutions Magazine.

<http://www.learningsolutionsmag.com/articles/216/sakai-open-source--open-minds>

³¹ Scott, Susan. Op. cit.

³² Ibid.

³³ "ePortfolio – Contact Us." LaGuardia Community College. <http://eportfolio.lagcc.cuny.edu/about/contact.htm>

³⁴ "ePortfolio – Milestones." LaGuardia Community College. <http://eportfolio.lagcc.cuny.edu/about/milestones.htm>

SOFTWARE

LaGuardia Community College uses Digication’s hosted service for its ePortfolio system.³⁵ Digication has an institutional pricing model which charges the institution based on the number of students at the institution, ranging from \$5 to \$14 per student. Students retain access to their account after graduation as long as the institution still uses the service.³⁶ Digication handles updates, maintenance, support, and all other aspects of the ePortfolio infrastructure.³⁷

SERVICES

Faculty members and students can request one-on-one training for the ePortfolio system. Students are periodically offered hands-on classroom workshops for training or strengthening their skills with the ePortfolio system. Video tutorials are also available online.³⁸

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

The University of Delaware uses its ePortfolio primarily for teaching and assessment. The “Programmatic Teaching, Learning and Assessment ePortfolio” is a collaborative initiative between the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Office of Educational Assessment, and the Information Technology Client Services and Support units.³⁹ In addition, Delaware has used Google Sites ePortfolios for graduate candidates in the higher education teacher certification program as a means of demonstrating their experience and learning. Hanover Research spoke with Mr. Kevin Currie-Knight, the Graduate Assistant to the ePortfolio Director at the University's Center for Teaching and Assessment of Learning.

STAFF

The ePortfolio initiative is led by a collaborative partnership between three university offices:

- The Center for Teaching and Learning provides support and resources to faculty.
- The Office of Educational Assessment supports the creation and implementation of faculty and student feedback mechanisms.
- IT-Client Services and Support provides development and maintenance of the ePortfolios.

These three offices are represented by a **three-person team**. The Associate Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning focuses on “instructional design, reflective practice,

³⁵ Del Rosario, Mercedes. Email. February 20, 2013.

³⁶ “ePortfolio Comparison Matrix.” Op. cit.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Jaman, Sada Hye. Email. February 20, 2013.

³⁹ “E-PORTFOLIOS – Home.” University of Delaware. <http://www2.udel.edu/e-portfolios/>

student and faculty feedback mechanisms, and faculty development.”⁴⁰ The Director of the Office of Educational Assessment is responsible for assessing student learning outcomes and general education results. The Director builds assessment tools used for creating programmatic and institutional assessment data in the ePortfolio system. An Instructional Designer in Information Technology - Client Support and Services focuses on the technical development and implementation of all ePortfolios and manages the Sakai Open Source Portfolio software.⁴¹

FUNDING

The University of Delaware is a recipient of the Connect to Learning: ePortfolio, Engagement, and Student Success grant from the United States Department of Education.⁴² The University received about \$150,000 of instructional grants which are used specifically for the ePortfolio system.⁴³

SOFTWARE

The University of Delaware uses Google Sites and Sakai Open Source Portfolio System for its ePortfolio applications.⁴⁴ Google Sites are used for graduate students' ePortfolios in the higher education teacher certification program while Sakai is used for the Programmatic Teaching, Learning and Assessment ePortfolio. Both are free, customizable platforms that must be managed and overseen by the University.

SERVICES

According to Mr. Currie-Knight, the ePortfolio team has helped departmental faculty on request with implementation of ePortfolios for student learning. Assistance has been provided with issues such as templates for student ePortfolios, presentations, and assisting with the use of the system.⁴⁵

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE

The University of Southern Maine (USM) is currently testing a pilot ePortfolio program involving approximately 800 student users and 50 faculty and staff users. The pilot will continue for another year at which time the University will determine whether to go forward with an institution-wide program.⁴⁶ Hanover Research interviewed program director Ms. Susan McWilliams about the pilot system, discussed in detail below.

⁴⁰ “E-PORTFOLIOS - About Us.” University of Delaware. <http://www2.udel.edu/e-portfolios/about-us>

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² “UD receives funding for ePortfolio initiative.” University of Delaware. <http://www.udel.edu/udaily/2011/jan/eportfolio-funding-010311.html>

⁴³ “E-PORTFOLIOS – Pilot Programs.” University of Delaware. <http://www2.udel.edu/e-portfolios/pilot-programs>

⁴⁴ “E-Portfolios: Foundational Knowledge, Student Voices, and Best Practices.” Association of American Colleges and Universities. <http://www.aacu.org/meetings/annualmeeting/AM13/symposium.cfm>

⁴⁵ Currie-Knight, Kevin. Phone Interview. February 20, 2013.

⁴⁶ McWilliams, Susan. Email. February 19, 2013.

STAFF

The ePortfolio program is housed in Academic Affairs. The staff for the ePortfolio pilot program is comprised of **two staff members** in the Provost's office who work on the ePortfolio part-time. Ms. McWilliams is an Assistant Provost and oversees the pilot as a whole. An administrative assistant to the Associate Provost provides basic project management and administrative support for the pilot. Both staff members spend the majority of their time in the Provost office completing regular duties and management of ePortfolios represents a small portion of additional work. Due to the fact that USM is using a closed-source external provider for its ePortfolio pilot, matters like software design, updates, and tech support are handled externally and do not require additional staff.⁴⁷

FUNDING

Funding for the project has been provided through an external grant from the Davis Educational Foundation.⁴⁸ The current budget is \$10,000 for 1,200 subscriptions and full technical support. If USM decides to implement an institution-wide ePortfolio system, budget will depend on competitive bids from vendors.⁴⁹

SOFTWARE

Like LaGuardia Community College, USM is using Digication, a closed-source hosted provider, for its ePortfolio pilot program.⁵⁰

SERVICES

Digication provides all training and technical support for the pilot. When needed, Ms. McWilliams has enlisted student tutors to provide live help sessions for students or faculty who need assistance.⁵¹

VIRGINIA TECH

Virginia Tech offers ePortfolios through its eP@VT site, an open-source system which allows students and faculty to make an ePortfolio through easy to use tools hosted on the Virginia Tech website. There are currently approximately 9,000 unique users creating and maintaining portfolios, or roughly 25 percent of the student population.⁵² Hanover Research interviewed ePortfolio program director Mr. Marc Zaldivar for details about the system.

STAFF

Virginia Tech's ePortfolio initiatives are run by a **six-person team** comprised of three full-time employees, two graduate assistants, and an undergraduate intern. The director,

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ "ePortfolio." University of Southern Maine. <http://www.usm.maine.edu/assocprovost/eportfolio>

⁴⁹ McWilliams, Susan. Op. cit.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ McWilliams, Susan. Op. cit.

⁵² Zaldivar, Marc. Phone Interview. February 20, 2013.

associate director, and a Virginia Tech PhD candidate comprise the full-time employees on the ePortfolio team. The director of the program has a PhD in Instructional Design and Technology as well as experience in overseeing Online Course Systems. The associate director develops ePortfolio-related curriculum for learning, assessment, and professional development, as well as faculty development and training. The PhD candidate in Instructional Design and Technology provides additional technical and curricular assistance to the director and assistant director.⁵³ In addition to these full-time employees, there are also two graduate assistants who handle training, student support, and technical work such as template design. Finally, the office has an undergraduate intern.⁵⁴

The ePortfolios Initiative is a subdivision of the Learning Technologies office. Learning Technologies is an office in the Division of Undergraduate Education, which is part of The Office of the Senior Vice President and the Provost.⁵⁵

FUNDING

The Virginia Tech ePortfolios Initiative receives a small amount of funding from the Connect to Learning: ePortfolio, Engagement, and Student Success grant from the United States Department of Education.⁵⁶ The majority of funding comes directly from the Provost for Undergraduate Education. The budget is approximately \$350,000 per year including the salaries for three full-time employees and two graduate assistants.⁵⁷

SOFTWARE

Virginia Tech uses Scholar for its ePortfolio system, which is the Virginia Tech brand for the Sakai Open Source Software. Scholar combines learning management capabilities with the ePortfolio.⁵⁸ The software development and updates are handled by systems support personnel in the Learning Technologies office.⁵⁹ Students are not required to use the Scholar software and have the option of creating an ePortfolio elsewhere, such as on a Wordpress or Google site.⁶⁰

SERVICES

The ePortfolios team provides services to the Virginia Tech community including ‘Portfolio Consultation and Training,’ and ‘Technical Development.’ Portfolio Consultation refers to teaching faculty, groups of students, or other interested parties how to plan and implement

⁵³ “Contact Us.” ePortfolio Initiatives at Virginia Tech. http://eportfolio.vt.edu/aboutUs/bio_indexer.html

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ See: “VP for Information Technology.” Virginia Tech. http://www.it.vt.edu/publications/organization-chart/IT_Org_Charts_10-1-12.pdf; “The Office of the Senior Vice President and the Provost.” Virginia Tech. <http://www.provost.vt.edu/>; and “The Division of Undergraduate Education.” Virginia Tech. <http://www.undergraduate.vt.edu/index.html>

⁵⁶ “Connect to Learning: ePortfolio, Engagement, and Student Success.” FIPSE Database. <https://fipsedatabase.ed.gov/fipse/grantshow.cfm?grantNumber=P116B100295>

⁵⁷ Zaldivar, Marc. Op. cit.

⁵⁸ “Learning Technologies – Scholar.” Op. cit.

⁵⁹ Zaldivar, Marc. Op. cit.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

a portfolio. Training and support is also offered to students who need assistance with the ePortfolio system. Technical Development refers to teaching and training faculty or students to develop tools and templates for creating their own open-source portfolio system.⁶¹ The ePortfolios team also conducts faculty development workshops and classroom visits.⁶² Daily student support is handled by peer student assistants.⁶³

⁶¹ "Services." ePortfolio Initiative, Virginia Tech. <http://eportfolio.vt.edu/aboutUs/services.html>

⁶² Zaldivar, Marc. Op. cit.

⁶³ Ibid.

PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

Hanover Research is committed to providing a work product that meets or exceeds client expectations. In keeping with that goal, we would like to hear your opinions regarding our reports. Feedback is critically important and serves as the strongest mechanism by which we tailor our research to your organization. When you have had a chance to evaluate this report, please take a moment to fill out the following questionnaire.

<http://www.hanoverresearch.com/evaluation/index.php>

CAVEAT

The publisher and authors have used their best efforts in preparing this brief. The publisher and authors make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this brief and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. There are no warranties which extend beyond the descriptions contained in this paragraph. No warranty may be created or extended by representatives of Hanover Research or its marketing materials. The accuracy and completeness of the information provided herein and the opinions stated herein are not guaranteed or warranted to produce any particular results, and the advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every client. Neither the publisher nor the authors shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. Moreover, Hanover Research is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. Clients requiring such services are advised to consult an appropriate professional.



1750 H Street NW, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20006

P 202.756.2971 F 866.808.6585
www.hanoverresearch.com