

## Transactional Research from the Inter/National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research



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## Overview

- Context of the Inter/National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research
- Transactional research
- Findings about three types of learning
- Contributing factors
- Three questions for future research

## Our focus

- Inter/National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research
- Eportfolio as a genre with associated processes
- Learning as the object

Alverno College  
Bowling Green State  
University  
Indiana University-Purdue  
University Indianapolis  
(IUPUI)  
LaGuardia Community  
College  
Northern Illinois University  
Portland State University  
Stanford University  
University of Washington  
Virginia Tech University

Clemson University  
Kapi'olani Community College  
George Mason University  
Thomas College  
The Ohio State University  
University of Georgia  
University of Illinois

University of Nebraska  
Omaha  
Washington State University  
Arizona State University

California State Universities  
Florida State University  
Framingham State University  
George Mason University  
Minnesota State Colleges and  
Universities

Penn State University  
University of San Diego  
Seton Hall University  
Sheffield Hallam University  
University of Waterloo  
University of  
Wolverhampton

University of Bradford  
University of Cumbria

University of Groningen  
London Metropolitan  
University  
University of Manchester  
Medical School  
University of Michigan  
University of Northumbria  
University of Nottingham  
University of Wolverhampton  
Queen Margaret University  
College

Kapi'olani Community College  
Louisiana State University  
University of Akron  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Denver  
University of North Carolina  
Wilmington  
University of Oregon  
Virginia State University  
Virginia Tech

## Transactional Research

- Practitioners generate research questions
- Goal is to influence practice
- Methodologies chosen based on knowledge about learning, not exclusively current disciplinarily-accepted methodologies
- Agency for answering the questions resides in multiple constituents
  - practitioner researchers
  - learners
  - peer practitioner researchers

## Dimensions of Learning

- Reflective Learning
- Integrative Learning
- Learning to Establish Identity

## Reflective learning

- Eportfolios can document reflective ability
- Eportfolios reveal a positive correlation between the quality of reflection and evidence
- The relationship between reflection and evidence is more complex than previously considered

Themes <sup>3</sup>	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
<i>Self Assessment Framework<sup>4</sup></i>	Vague, global judgments, asserted without evidence Simply repeats description, judgment of assessors Sees performance as same as assignment (e.g., did what was told to do) Sees feedback as affirmation and evidence Offers procedural stories, describing action without perspective on ability Uses observations without inference	Relates judgments/conclusions to multiple sources of evidence (inference) Deepens understanding of ability Uses feedback to expand understanding of ability Realizes connections and links in plans Recognizes cause and effect relationships Uses designated discipline frameworks	Makes connections and applications, and uses them to move forward Observes intentional changes as a basis for complex learning Uses multiple frameworks from disciplines and beyond Probes own work and meaning of ability Uses abilities as a framework for learning and assisting others
<i>How People Learn</i>	Sees feedback as external and not subject to control and analysis Sees knowledge construction as only what is received through assignment/assessment Sees meaning of ability as limited to the terms given in the assignment or assessment Employs personal theories, more or less consciously, but without exploration or analysis	Sees feedback as a means for understanding links between her performance and target abilities Uses diverse tools and notes own changes in own patterns of performance Begins to have an understanding of the tools being employed and the metacognitive nature of one's decisions and planning Uses explicit theory applications	Incorporates feedback and past performance in constructing further performance and learning plans Uses growing command of knowledge structure (e.g., expertise, discipline, theory, abilities) as a foundation for further learning Understands own performance as a learner and transfers learning strategies to multiple contexts
<i>Learning That Lasts<sup>5</sup></i>	Observes own behavior with concrete relationships to broad criteria Utilizes criteria and generalized notions of effectiveness/success as the basis for reflection Uses global self evaluations that minimize the opportunity to find connections between performance and reflecting on performance	Self-identifies as a learner, constructing meaning in experience Employs a concern for a future self and performance Includes personal values and identity in own narrative Recognizes and analyzes personal change Recognizes multiplicity Questions personal assumptions	Elaborates own identity as person, learner, and professional Employs an internalized construction of effectiveness Uses multiplicity as a basis for developing identity Moves between questioning personal assumptions and construction/articulation of commitments Situates personal narrative in

# Northern Illinois University

Semester	Reflection	Evidence
Fall 2004	2.76	3.31
Spring 2005	3.11	3.12
Fall 2005	3.55	3.70
Spring 2006	3.17	3.23

**My Identity: Accomplishments and Turning Points**

The three items I've chosen to reflect my accomplishments related to my leadership identity are my resume, confirmation certificate, and class ring. These items reflect three different aspects of my leadership identity, and three distinct accomplishments. My resume includes a great variety of accomplishments in several different subject areas: the lab sciences, international service work, health sciences, cultural advocacy, and conflict resolution. In this way it reflects my multifaceted nature, both as a person and a leader. I can take many different approaches to issues and navigate them comfortably. My class ring reflects the accomplishment of graduation. It has taken me seven long and often trying years to get to the point of graduation, and so my class ring symbolizes that as a leader, I can demonstrate great tenacity and persistence, even in the face of adversity. Finally, my Confirmation certificate reflects the accomplishment of my Confirmation in the Roman Catholic Church. As a leader, this reflects two things about me: first, that my faith is a moral guide for me in decision-making processes, and secondly (and perhaps more importantly), I am willing to pursue courses of action that are often unpopular and occasionally downright scandalous - Catholicism is very unpopular among most people I associate with, and I had to put up with a great deal of grief while studying for my Confirmation. I believed in what I was doing (and still do!), and that belief in my cause kept me strong in my course. This quality is definitely important in leadership! The objects that I've chosen reflect three different turning points in my approach to leadership and identity. First, the Rusyn crest and Carpatho-Rusyn Society webpage reflect my awakening to my own Ruthenian (Rusyn?) heritage, which has inspired in me a great appreciation for different cultures and their preservation. I didn't know that I was half-Ruthenian until the Spring of 2006, when I learned it from my Mother. Exploring this heritage of mine and joining the Carpatho-Rusyn Society has inspired me to

- Evidence List
- Casa Tyrol
  - Relucn
  - Name change document
  - Rusyn crest
  - class ring
  - Confirmation certificate
  - Resume
  - Pro Vita site
  - Carpatho-Rusyn Society



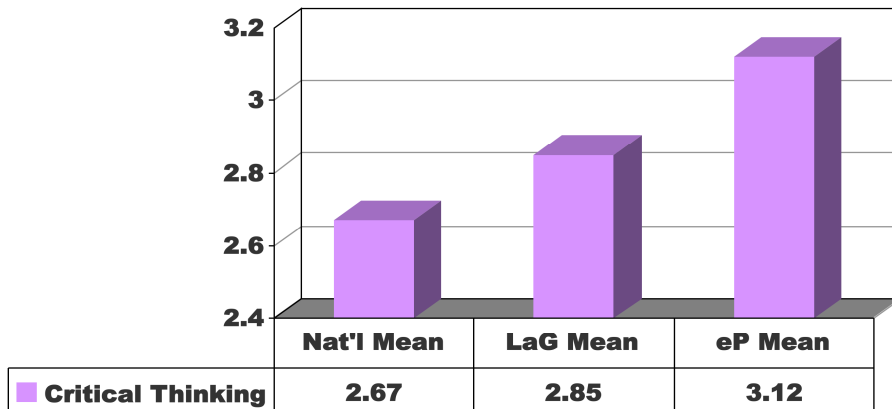
## Transactional Benefits

- Alverno
  - Beginning with faculty conceptual frameworks leads to better integration into practice
- Northern Illinois
  - Teaching assistants as researchers leads to stronger investment in reflective practice
- George Mason
  - Student affairs educators as researchers leads to expansion of knowledge in both domains

## Integrative Learning

Eportfolio use correlates with increased student engagement.

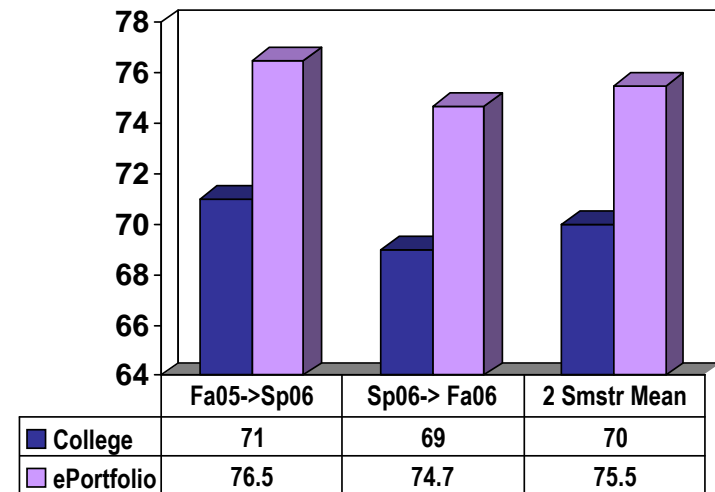
## LaGuardia CCSSE Results



How much has your coursework emphasized synthesizing & organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways?

1 = Very Little, 2 = Some, 3 = Quite a Bit, 4 = Very Much

## LaGuardia ePortfolio & Retention



## Kapi'olani Community College

Scoring Options: 4=Very much 3=Quite a bit 2=Some 1=Very little			
Benchmark Comparison, ePortfolio =38 students	National	KapCC	Nā Wāā
Q4 How much has your experience in ePortfolio contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in developing a personal code of ethics and values?	2.32	2.41	<b>3.13</b>
Q9 How much has your experience in ePortfolio contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in writing clearly and effectively?	2.7	2.86	<b>2.95</b>
Q10 How much has your experience in ePortfolio contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in thinking critically and analytically?	2.86	2.83	<b>2.97</b>
Q11 How much work in your experience in ePortfolio has emphasized synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways?	2.7	2.69	<b>2.99</b>
Q13 How often in your experience in ePortfolio have you worked with instructors on activities other than course work?	1.42	1.35	<b>2.22</b>
Q14 How often in your experience in ePortfolio have you worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations?	2.54	2.52	<b>2.82</b>

## Transactional Benefits

- LaGuardia
  - Multiple methodologies for different constituencies
  - Students as co-inquirers essential to interpretation
- Kapi'olani
  - Impact and interpretation situated in cultural context

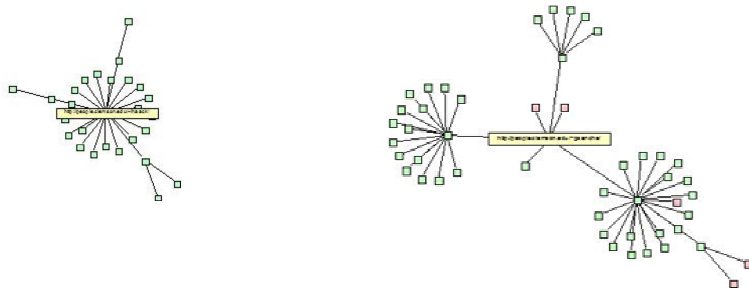
# Learning to Establish Identity

Eportfolios can help engender strong and complex professional identities.

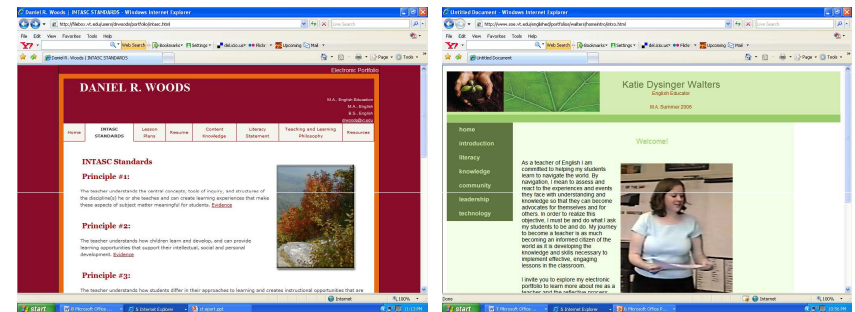
# University of Waterloo

“Again, this is also describing the relationship between employees in audit engagements as well as school assignments. The only difference I noticed is that in school assignments, everyone has around the same educational and technical background, whereas during an audit engagement, there are different levels of employees (senior managers, managers, senior staff and junior staff) grouped together to provide a larger variety of mindset during the engagement. I believe that creating a group with different levels of employees is the most efficient method because junior staff will be learning from more experienced staff during the engagement, senior staff will be able to concentrate on the more difficult aspects of the audit while junior staff could complete the small, simple and tedious tasks, and finally the audit team can get a larger variety of ideas due to the diverse members.”

# Clemson University



# Virginia Tech



# Transactional Benefits

- Cross-disciplinary collaboration yields expanded methods for understanding profession
- Students serve as co-inquirers through reflective representation of their experience

# Contributing factors

- Matrix thinking
- Ownership and expressive range
- Structure and support

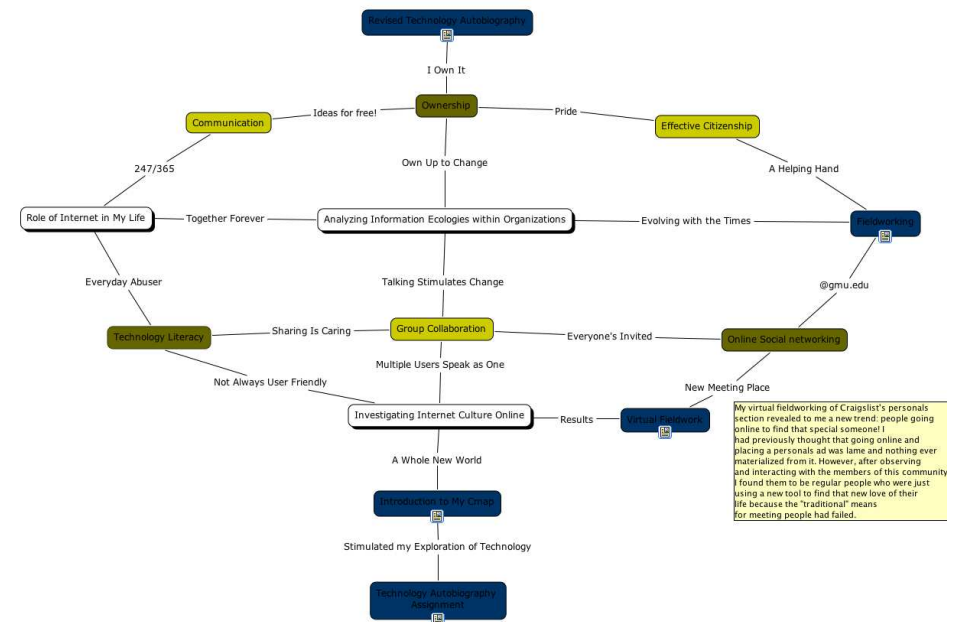
# Matrix Thinking

Nā Wā'a	Pae Ulu	Pae Kūkulu	Pae Huaka'i	Pae Pae
Mālama		☑		
Āewa	☑	☑		
Lauaki			☑	
A'oloko		☑		
Mo'olelo	☑			
Aloha		☑		

Legend

- Ready (White)
- Pending (Yellow)
- Completed (Blue)
- Locked (Grey)

E450 Matrix	My career	My lifelong learning	Who I am as a citizen (of my community, state, country, and/or the world)
My most important PUL	📱 📺 📖	📱 📺 📖	
My most important reason for (or outcome of) becoming an English major	📱 📺	📱 📺	



## Freedom and Structure

- Expressive range
  - Visual design
  - Linking
  - Use of multiple media
- Structure and support
  - Levels of structure appropriate to student ability
  - Language tailored to discipline and profession
  - Peer mentoring and mentors as peers

## Research into the Swamp

“There is a high, hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of [traditional] research-based theory and techniques, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing ‘messes’ incapable of technical solution. The difficulty is that the problems of the high ground, however great their technical interest, are often relatively unimportant to clients or to the larger society, while in the swamp are the problems of greatest human concern.” Donald Schön

## Questions for Future Research

- Can we describe the way reflection and use of evidence varies across different populations and contexts?
- What are the most important elements of learners’ biographies and cultural contexts that influence and are represented in their eportfolios?
- How do and should employer audiences make use of complex and individually-owned representations of professional identity?

## Comparing Reflection Across Contexts

- Linking up situated efforts vs. top down definition
- Adaptation of Alverno developmental scales at IUPUI and Sheffield Hallam
- Nottingham work on multiple levels and contexts
- Association of American Colleges and Universities VALUE project

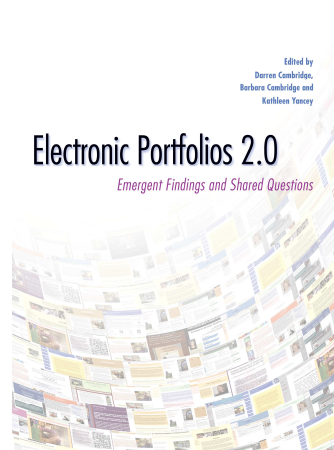
## Learner Cultures

- How can past experience of adult learners be related productively to their new professional identities?
  - San Francisco State
  - Wolverhampton

## Employer Audiences

- To what kinds of evidence will they respond?
  - Florida State
- How can they be helped to understand the value of representations of professional identity that go beyond the standard genres they know to ask for today?
  - University as employer: Cumbria and Kapi'olani
  - Waterloo

### *Electronic Portfolios 2.0: Emergent Research on Implementation and Impact*



- Collection of 24 chapters detailing research from the first three years of the Coalition
- Forthcoming from Stylus in late 2008
- More about the Coalition at [ncepr.org](http://ncepr.org)