



Overview

Institution:
Plymouth State University

Profile:
Plymouth State University was founded in 1871 and has an enrollment of nearly 5,000 students.

Challenge:
Identify a solution to demonstrate the concepts of learner-centered teaching, experiential learning and academic excellence, as well as addressing university, state and national standards.

Solution:
iWebfolio provides a powerful, flexible solution to collect, manage and present evidence of learning and competency, as well as measurement against educational outcomes.

Benefits:

- ✓ Hosted, highly secure solution
- ✓ No hardware or software to buy and maintain
- ✓ Always on availability
- ✓ Access over the web anywhere, anytime
- ✓ Lifelong solution
- ✓ Easy to use

Education Students at Plymouth State University Put Assessment into Practice with iWebfolio

“The iWebfolio solution has helped students demonstrate proficiency related to these standards and also serves as a viable model for assessment with practical applications for the students’ future teaching careers.”

Royce Robertson, Assistant Professor of Education & Technology

The educational philosophy of Plymouth State University (PSU) is based on the concepts of learner-centered teaching, experiential learning, and academic excellence. To help demonstrate these concepts, the University began using iWebfolio, an innovative online electronic portfolio management system, in the fall of 2003. Today, undergraduate students including Childhood Studies and Health & Physical Education programs are using the portfolios.

PSU has a strong commitment to teacher education, and these programs are required to focus upon many state and national standards,” said Royce Robertson, assistant professor of education and technology. “The iWebfolio solution has helped students demonstrate proficiency related to these standards and also serves as a viable model for assessment with practical applications for the students’ future teaching careers.”

iWebfolio provides an individual with the ability to store, organize, modify, and selectively control personal information displayed to others, as well as the ability to effectively interact with institutional improvement and program development.

“iWebfolio gives learners more freedom within and personalization of their portfolios. It lets them be creative and flexible with their artifacts while simultaneously allowing the structure we have outlined.”

Royce Robertson, Assistant Professor of
Education & Technology

“It will let our students produce portable documentation of their current competencies, and they will be able to add to their portfolios throughout their careers as evidence of their own professional development.”

Dr. Kenneth Heuser, Professor of Education

This personal information includes self-assessment data, educational accomplishments, skills, activities, competencies, and work products, among other items.

According to Dr. Kenneth Heuser, professor of education at PSU, portfolios help focus the students on important standards. “It directs the students to address standards that the University thinks are important, and allows the students to thoughtfully reflect upon their courses and field experiences. Students are encouraged to put their own personal stamp on the portfolios by highlighting their unique talents and experiences. We are also using the application to help students demonstrate competency in program strands like diversity, technology, and the differentiated classroom.”

The University chose iWebfolio after reviewing seven different solutions. as it provided three functions critical to Plymouth State’s implementation. First, iWebfolio allows students to write reflections at multiple levels—on an individual artifact, on a portfolio category, or on the portfolio as a whole. Second, iWebfolio has a built-in rubric feature for scoring the whole portfolio or parts of the portfolio. Third, iWebfolio allows internal and external reviewers to have secure access to the portfolio content and the feedback provided to the student.

There are significant advantages to keeping portfolios and the related digital assets in an electronic format. All of the students’ work is stored in a controlled, secured, hosted environment by Nuventive. “The students know they have a place to store all their work, and we ask them to store and organize their materials there,” said Mr. Robertson.

The iWebfolio solution also enables a broader range of individuals to provide feedback to the students, help them plan, and assist them as they work toward program outcomes. Additionally, the portfolio can become part of their career placement file to be viewed by prospective employers. iWebfolio also allows students to control which individuals or groups can access their portfolios, what they can see, and for what period of time.

In addition to benefiting students, the information derived from iWebfolio will help the University gain a better understanding of institutional assessment. “We’re a relatively small institution, but we have diverse programs and departments. The widespread use of the portfolios will help us assess common programs such as general education and drive institutional assessment across all programs,” explained Mr. Robertson. Moreover, the students who have used iWebfolio will be leaving with an added advantage. “Our teacher candidates will have had the bonus of working with electronic portfolios.” As the use of electronic portfolios expands within education, it will be critical to empower the next generation of teachers with the capability to help their students effectively represent their skills and experience.

Integrated Computing Environment

- ✓ Portfolio: iWebfolio by Nuventive
- ✓ Course Management: WebCT CE
- ✓ Portal: SCT Luminis
- ✓ Student Information System: SCT Banner

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