

An Overview of Institutional E-Portfolios

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Abstract

Web-based institutional e-portfolios allow colleges and universities to share information about their missions, goals, accomplishments, and challenges. Institutional e-portfolios typically consist of reaccreditation self-studies and other information that supports an institution's accomplishments. This report provides an overview of institutional e-portfolios, highlighting three specific projects. It also explores the use of e-portfolios by regional accrediting agencies. Finally, the report examines the challenges in developing and implementing institutional e-portfolios.

Introduction

Colleges and universities are developing Web-based institutional e-portfolios to more effectively and easily assess and share information about their overall missions and goals. These institutional e-portfolios typically consist of reaccreditation self-studies and numerous levels of additional information and artifacts that reveal an institution's accomplishments. Institutional e-portfolios may document an institution's progress—or lack of progress—at the college, department, or program level, along with information about how it plans to improve. Publishing such information publicly on a Web site often results in a more concerted and coordinated effort by an institution's stakeholders to work on continuous improvement plans and policies. For all these reasons, institutional e-portfolios can play a vital role in an institution's overall improvement.

The Urban Universities Portfolio Project (UUPP) (<http://www.imir.iupui.edu/portfolio/>) may have been the first institutional e-portfolio initiative.^{1,2} Six institutions participated in UUPP; three have continued to develop their institutional e-portfolios since the project ended in 2001: Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI); Portland State University (PSU); and California State University, Sacramento (CSUS).

UUPP had two basic goals, which also define institutional e-portfolios:

- to enhance understanding, among internal and external audiences, of an institution's distinguishing features, mission, and goals through a public institutional e-portfolio; and
- to use the process of building and updating an institutional e-portfolio to enhance and maintain an institution's ability to communicate, plan, and achieve its mission and goals on a continuous basis.

External audiences, in this context, are accrediting agencies, state and local governments, prospective students and parents, and the communities the institution serves.³

IUPUI, PSU, and CSUS have created institutional e-portfolios that include a wide variety of online data, reports, information, links to resources, and full electronic versions of their reaccreditation self-studies. In 2002, IUPUI was the first institution to submit an electronic version of its reaccreditation self-study to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA); PSU has created an electronic version of its reaccreditation self-study for a 2005 submission to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU); and CSUS is building its electronic reaccreditation self-study for a 2007 submission to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

In addition to the institutional e-portfolio activities undertaken by IUPUI, PSU, and CSUS, two regional accrediting agencies actively encourage the development of institutional e-portfolios among their member institutions: WASC and the HLC's Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). This has resulted in more colleges and universities adopting institutional e-portfolio strategies.

This report on institutional e-portfolios in higher education includes:

- an overview of institutional e-portfolios exemplified by IUPUI, PSU, and CSUS;
- how WASC's and HLC's quality improvement programs are supporting institutional e-portfolios, and what other regional accreditation associations are thinking about institutional e-portfolios; and
- the challenges of institutional e-portfolio development and implementation.

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

The IUPUI institutional e-portfolio (<http://www.iport.iupui.edu/>) was built to serve two purposes:

- to document its reaccreditation self-study online; and
- to provide detailed information and examples of the work carried out by IUPUI students and faculty, with the goal of making the public aware of its goals, accomplishments, and strategies on a Web site that would be maintained and updated on a continuous basis.

Campus-Wide Involvement

Creating an institutional e-portfolio requires a great deal of organizational preplanning and development. In addition, the ongoing support and participation of administrators, faculty, and information technologists is absolutely necessary for organizing the resources and building a logical, easy-to-comprehend site. IUPUI's campus-wide infrastructure for building its institutional e-portfolio included the following steps.

- Working relationships with the offices of information management and institutional research were established to build a credible body of institutional data linked to IUPUI's mission and strategic plan.
- The involvement and support of senior administrators including the provost, vice chancellor for planning and institutional improvement, and the vice chancellor for external affairs ensured the project's ongoing support and relevance.
- Faculty-approved principles of student learning formed the basis for collecting and representing undergraduate student learning outcomes.
- Campus-wide faculty committees for faculty governance and undergraduate education, as well as program review and assessment, were created.
- Two major committees responsible for designing and implementing production were formed:
 - an executive committee that advised the institutional e-portfolio project director and provided necessary resources; and
 - an implementation committee that advised the project director on the development of conceptual frameworks and ongoing work accomplished on the institutional e-portfolio itself.⁴

IUPUI obtained approval from HLC to use its institutional e-portfolio for the creation of an electronic version of its reaccreditation self-study (<http://www.iport.iupui.edu/selfstudy>). Much of the self-study content came from previously established departmental assessment structures and processes, including annual reports. This structure allowed the transfer of already-created and up-to-date reports, assessment data, and presentations into the electronic self-study.

As the self-study progressed, departments upgraded Web sites because “nobody wanted to have a bad-looking Web site, and nobody wanted to be conspicuously absent from the list of reports that could be clicked on and accessed inside the self-study.”⁵

Evaluation Team Visit

The IUPUI self-study e-portfolio was designed so a 12-member HLC evaluation team could easily find important links, resources, and information during their evaluation visit. A search engine, site index, and glossary helped make the information more readily accessible than the voluminous, traditionally paper-based reaccreditation resources.

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The IUPUI resource room, where the review took place, had 12 laptop computers so evaluation team members could electronically access the self-study. Next to each laptop was a six-inch-deep paper document detailing financial information that was considered too tedious for publishing online.

The observations of the HLC evaluation team (which were sometimes conflicting) are addressed in a report that is accessible through the IUPUI institutional e-portfolio (http://www.iport.iupui.edu/selfstudy/nca_report.pdf).⁶

Performance Indicators

Beyond the self-study, IUPUI created performance indicators (<http://www.iport.iupui.edu/performance>). Based on IUPUI's annual performance reports, these previously in-print reports are now published and updated annually on the institutional e-portfolio Web site. Color-coding draws attention to the status of an indicator; scoring rubrics integrate information such as current status, support levels, and/or whether or not there is sufficient information available on activities, projects, plans, and goals. (See Appendix 1: IUPUI Performance Indicators.)

Portland State University

PSU (<http://portfolio.pdx.edu/>) was the first institution to submit an electronic version of its reaccreditation self-study to NWCCU in 2005, and may become a model for other NWCCU institutions. (PSU will receive a NWCCU visiting team in fall 2005.) The overriding objective of the institutional e-portfolio is to provide a comprehensive picture of PSU rather than being limited to narratives that address specific reaccreditation standards.⁷ The self-study process focuses on nine specific standards.⁸ PSU addresses NWCCU's nine reaccreditation standards and weaves five primary themes into its institutional e-portfolio:

- Community and global connections
- Institutional effectiveness
- Research and scholarship
- Student success
- Teaching and learning

PSU's institutional e-portfolio illustrates how PSU's planning and assessment priorities are being met. It is intended to stimulate conversations about PSU's mission and goals, both online and in campus-based meetings. As a result, a wide variety of additional information rounds out the PSU institutional e-portfolio.

The initial development of PSU's institutional e-portfolio began with a provost-appointed faculty committee under the leadership of the director of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP), along with the collaboration of the OIRP staff. An external Web site design and programming consultant and a graphic designer were hired as part of the initial institutional e-portfolio-building team.⁹

Department Profiles with Assessment Data and Information

One of the innovative features of the PSU institutional e-portfolio is a Department Profile satellite Web site (<http://www.programreview.pdx.edu/index.php>), which features an extensive amount of department-level information based on student learning, teaching practices, and academic decision making. The profiles are based on common criteria used across all of PSU's colleges and schools.

Department profiles cover the effectiveness of curricula, programs, faculty, costs, and institutional support. In addition, each profile features an assessment plan, including objectives, plans, tools, data, and reflections (<http://www.programreview.pdx.edu/assessment/>). The information is generated through online templates that departments complete and submit for publication into the institutional e-portfolio.

The department profiles provide the reaccreditation evaluation team, as well as all internal and external PSU audiences, a view of every PSU department and program. The templates make it easy for departments to readily update PSU's institutional e-portfolio. (See Appendix 1: PSU Department Profile.)

Adding Student E-Portfolios

PSU's institutional e-portfolio also includes information about student learning outcomes and competencies from PSU's collection of student e-portfolios. PSU's University Studies Program, which requires all of its students to create e-portfolios, has become a test bed for linking student learning outcomes to the institutional e-portfolio. This learning-outcomes information is publicized for both internal and external audiences to illustrate how PSU is providing students with meaningful educational experiences.¹⁰

California State University, Sacramento

CSUS has created two separate e-portfolios—the University Electronic Portfolio (UEP) (<http://www.csus.edu/portfolio/index.htm>) and the WASC accreditation site (<http://www.oir.csus.edu/wasc/>). Combined, these two e-portfolios represent CSUS's institutional e-portfolio. The UEP was started under the UUPP and is based on established academic program review processes and institutional data that are regularly collected and analyzed by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). The WASC accreditation site, also started under UUPP, is the electronic version of the CSUS reaccreditation documentation. Like IUPUI and PSU, the CSUS institutional e-portfolio provides an overview of the institution's mission and goals.

The project began with a committee of faculty, staff, administrators, and students, including the associate vice president of academic affairs; the director for curriculum, assessment, and accreditation; and the director of institutional research, under the direction of a UUPP campus project director. Today, the director of institutional research and his staff are responsible for the actual building and maintenance of the CSUS institutional e-portfolio.¹¹

A Culture of Evidence

The CSUS UEP features a large evidence section segmented into two categories:

- **Institutional Assessment** (http://www.csus.edu/portfolio/institutional_portfolio/inst_main.htm) is structured around the eight themes of the CSUS strategic plan and six components of the university's strategic planning and quality improvement activities.¹²
- **Program Assessment** (<http://www.csus.edu/portfolio/program.htm>) features links to departmental assessment plans, data, stated goals, desired outcomes, and more. These documents are reviewed by a program review team.¹³ (See Appendix 1: CSUS University Electronic Portfolio.)

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The UEP is designed as a living document that continues to improve, with the reaccreditation process feeding it. The information that goes into the two evidence categories is template-driven and centrally managed and maintained by OIR.

All CSUS programs undergo review every six years. OIR provides each program with an outline to follow for completing the review process and offers each program the option of submitting the completed review in a paper format or online for publication in the institutional e-portfolio. The online versions are labeled portfolios. Programs that opt into this electronic format are assisted by OIR both financially and technically.¹⁴ Since the program e-portfolios, as well as the institutional assessment section, are both centrally administered by OIR, all updates to the templates, processes, and content occur through a simple online refresh process, after all the related documentation has been analyzed and approved. Administrators can easily review online information at any time.¹⁵

Overall, the UEP is meant for assessment, evaluation, and improvement; their intended audience is university administrators, faculty, and accrediting bodies. Although the UEP is not public-relations oriented, this does not mean that the general public cannot find this information useful, especially prospective CSUS students and their parents.¹⁶

Additionally, the program e-portfolios help to serve three additional functions:

- **Faculty recruitment:** Department and program administrators can refer prospective faculty hires to these Web sites for detailed information over and above what one would typically find on department Web sites.
- **External accreditation:** In addition to regional reaccreditation processes, CSUS can link to department profiles for specialized accreditation groups, such as the National for Accreditation for Teacher Education (NCATE)¹⁷ and the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology Engineering (ABET).¹⁸
- **Cumulative record:** Programs no longer have to start from scratch when they come up for their six-year review.¹⁹

WASC Site in Progress

The CSUS WASC accreditation site, as of July 2005, was in a relatively early development phase. OIR has published online PDF documents that comprise the first phase of the reaccreditation process—the Institutional Proposal (http://www.oir.csus.edu/wasc/IP_OVERVIEW.cfm). The next phase, slated for completion in December 2006, is the Preparatory Review. The third phase, targeted for November 2007, is the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

The three phases—Institutional Proposal, Preparatory Review, and Educational Effectiveness Review—of WASC accreditation (<http://www.wascsenior.org/wasc/>) are part of its institutional review process, adopted in November 2000, which encourages the creation of institutional e-portfolios. As of July 2005, every WASC institution with a student population of at least 1,000 was developing some kind of institutional e-portfolio. There is significant variation from one institution to another. For instance, many of these e-portfolios are in early development phases, posting only the beginning documents for reaccreditation. Others are completed self-studies with visiting team reports and responses to key issues. WASC believes institutional e-portfolios should have value beyond the accreditation process as vehicles for institutional dialogue and analysis of the teaching and learning environment.^{20,21} (See Appendix 1: UC Berkeley Accreditation Web Site.)

The public visibility and accessibility of these e-portfolios by campus administrators and accreditation evaluators has encouraged their refinement, making them more effective catalysts for meaningful, informed discourse. As one educator put it, “In the past you would produce this massive paper document that nobody really read with all these data files housed in a room for the visiting team. Many of our own people did not even have access to all this.” As these materials have been published online, they have generated more educated discussion. Plus, “because you are putting things online, where a lot of people can see it, you take a little more care in how the information is published.”²²

Another educator explained how the building of its institutional e-portfolio became much more than writing a report that would have “eventually been in a file cabinet at WASC.” Instead, by publishing the extensive amount of analysis that went into its reaccreditation process on a Web site, “most of the exhibits that grew out of senate and administrative processes, for instance, are now [public] documents that will guide further administrative academic planning and resource allocation.” In addition to moving the institution into a “spirit of accountability, willing to publish all kinds of things about itself on a Web site, it [the institutional e-portfolio] became an internal means of sharing information.”²³

The Higher Learning Commission’s Academic Quality Improvement Program

The Higher Learning Commission launched AQIP (<http://www.aqip.org/>) in 1999 as an alternative accreditation process for colleges and universities. As of July 2005, 150 institutions volunteered to be part of the AQIP process. AQIP is loosely based on the criteria and processes used in the Baldrige National Quality Program.²⁴ Starting in 2002, each institution was required to create a portfolio (published online), within four years of joining AQIP, that covers nine categories; within these categories are a host of institutional processes, results, and improvement questions.²⁵ The answers to these questions determine what is made public in the portfolios. AQIP refers to these as “systems portfolios.”²⁶ In July 2005, 17 institutional systems portfolios were published on the AQIP site (http://www.aqip.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=56&Itemid=89). (See Appendix 1: Fort Hays State University Academic Quality Improvement Program Web Site.)

When AQIP institutions build their systems portfolios, they identify three areas (or more) that are in need of improvement, called “action projects.” The online tool and interface developed by AQIP allows institutions to publish reports on their three improvement areas in a searchable online directory that is open to the public (http://www.aqip.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=32&Itemid=51). In July 2005, there were more than 550 projects listed in the online directory. Similar to what has occurred with WASC e-portfolios, the public accessibility of the AQIP directory, as well as the AQIP systems portfolios, have made institutions’ work more visible, and hence, more accountable. Plus, the online directory facilitated networking with other AQIP institutions pursuing similar initiatives.²⁷

Overall, the goal of AQIP is to make the entire accreditation process paperless. Work is under way to build a secure Web-based environment where evaluation team members can collaborate, review, and provide feedback throughout the accreditation process. This electronic process should reduce evaluation team travel time and decrease the overall cost of accreditation. As the director of AQIP noted, “this program is really about as radical as you can get within accreditation.”²⁸

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Other Regional Accrediting Agencies and E-Portfolios

While WASC and AQIP actively encourage their constituents to develop institutional e-portfolios, the other regional accrediting agencies are observing how WASC and AQIP are progressing and gradually accepting the creation of institutional e-portfolios.²⁹

Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)

The SACS accreditation process was revamped in 2004 and is becoming more reliant on electronic forms to present data and to improve communication. This new electronic flow of information has resulted in a decrease in noncompliance issues. Most SACS institutional e-portfolios are for internal communication and reporting within the institution during the accreditation review process. Overall, reporting electronically has made the work of SACS “more effective, efficient, and focused.”³⁰

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Outside the AQIP process, HLC is watching WASC to see how well institutional e-portfolios work but adds that it will definitely rely on electronic self-studies in the near future. The challenge, however, is to discover to what degree such electronic self-studies will live on beyond the final accreditation review process. “We are just starting to understand what it means to actually put an e-portfolio up and make it work,” said the HLC executive director.³¹

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

The official statement from MSCHE is that it “welcomes and accepts any institutional effort that would share institutional information and self-study processes most broadly among its constituents. In our standards, we require sharing of many types of information and involvement of the institutional community in self-study in many ways. We do not require any particular method, and it’s the same regarding submission of information to us and to our teams. Some send us CDs, some e-mail attachments, some hard copies. We accept different forms of submissions if they comply with our overall practices and policies.”³²

New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)

NEASC has seen an increase in electronic self-studies, with most institutions keeping such studies password-protected on an intranet for internal communication purposes only. NEASC’s new standards will take effect in 2006, including a number of stipulations about public disclosure, stating, for instance, that its institutions provide information online that is “complete, accurate, accessible, clear, and sufficient for intended audiences to make informed decisions about the institution.” How this stipulation will lead to the further development of institutional e-portfolios at NEASC institutions remains to be seen.³³

Challenges

Institutions that have decided to build institutional e-portfolios face numerous challenges (listed below), from establishing the right predevelopment organizational structure and staff, to making decisions about complex information technology issues, to fielding genuine concerns about what information should be made public.

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- **Team:** Building an institutional e-portfolio is a labor-intensive process that requires engaging administrators, staff, and faculty from across campus. All parties must realize the importance of the project and sustain their interest.
- **Staff:** Increased administrative support and funding are needed to provide staff dedicated to creating and maintaining institutional e-portfolios. Without a dedicated staff, the institutional e-portfolios, as well as the continuous updating and rebuilding of content, can easily fall behind schedule.
- **Diversity of documentation:** Institutional e-portfolios need to be more than just collections of PDF documents. Elements such as discussion boards, multimedia presentations, and examples of student learning outcomes (see below) should be added to gain the greatest value. But these additional elements require time and expertise.
- **Representing student learning:** Developing links to student e-portfolios and valid representations of authentic student learning outcomes is a formidable task. While some institutions can be considered early works-in-progress, no single institution has an extensive student learning outcomes/competency initiative.
- **Meaningful aggregation of information:** Student e-portfolios typically encompass large and diverse collections of student-learning outcomes and educational achievements. The same is true for teaching e-portfolios. Institutions face a challenge aggregating and analyzing these collections in meaningful ways.
- **Multimedia:** Multimedia can enhance an institutional e-portfolio, but production costs have to be carefully weighed. For example, content like PSU's video clips of students talking about their involvement in a metro waste disposal project (http://portfolio.pdx.edu/Portfolio/Community_Global_Connections/Senior_Capstones/view?p=Metro_Waste_Disposal_Project) or the experience of IUPUI English majors in a capstone course (http://www.iport.iupui.edu/teach/teach_example_english_seminar.htm), while valuable, can be costly and time-consuming to produce.
- **Web site design:** Institutional e-portfolios encompass a large and complex set of information. Designing a clear, easily navigable Web site can be difficult and time-consuming. The Web site design is important to ensure that accreditation evaluation teams are not overwhelmed. A well-designed Web site with an effective search function and site map make the e-portfolio more useful for all.
- **Content management:** Affordable content management software is needed that can integrate data from system-wide applications to help build e-portfolios. Such software should also facilitate automatic updating of information in e-portfolios.
- **Comfort with technology:** Accreditation evaluation team members who are not comfortable online may have difficulty navigating e-portfolios. Some evaluators, for instance, have requested printouts of the instructional e-portfolio Web pages.³⁴ AQIP has addressed this issue by requiring all of its evaluators to be electronically literate.
- **Duplicate media:** Publishing an institutional e-portfolio does not necessarily save paper or time. Accreditation self-studies still require that paper versions are distributed to the accrediting agencies and evaluation teams. Self-studies are also burnt onto CD-ROMs so people can easily transport the files and access them while traveling.
- **External access:** Accrediting agencies encourage candor about an institution's strengths and weaknesses during the review process, but institutions must make decisions about what is publicly accessible.

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Conclusion

Institutional e-portfolios are a relatively new development that promises to streamline academic planning and development, generate more effective communication and collaboration among internal and external stakeholders, and possibly reduce the cost of accreditation processes. In short, institutional e-portfolios can catalyze institution-wide improvements.

The jury is still out, however, as to whether institutional e-portfolios can actually save dollars. Institutions must invest a considerable amount of time, energy and resources in developing a valid, effective, and ongoing institutional e-portfolio. The general consensus is that it could save money on a long-term basis, with savings realized through less travel and accommodation expenses during accreditation processes, and possibly less labor expended if maintained properly on a continuous basis for future reaccreditations. However, no cost-effectiveness studies have been developed at this time.

Technology may be a factor in how rapidly institutional e-portfolios progress. There is a need for affordable and easily customizable content management software that can integrate data from disparate campus enterprise systems; this information also needs to be automatically updated and published online.

To learn more about institutional e-portfolios, explore the links provided in this report as well as on regional accrediting agency Web pages. We hope you will send us information on how you are building institutional e-portfolios for your campus (eli@educause.edu).

Endnotes

1. This report was produced from information gathered through a general investigation into how institutional e-portfolios in higher education have evolved since the late 1990s and how regional higher education accrediting agencies are furthering the development and implementation of institutional e-portfolios.
2. For a definition and brief overview of institutional e-portfolios, in general, see G. Lorenzo and J. Ittelson, "An Overview of E-Portfolios," D. Oblinger, ed., ELI paper, July 2005, <<http://www.educause.edu/LibraryDetailPage/666?ID=ELI3001>>.
3. UUPP, "Portland State University Institutional Portfolio Project Summary," <<http://docs.portfolio.pdx.edu/Main/ProjectSummary>>.
4. S. Hamilton, "Snake Pit in Cyperspace: The IUPUI Institutional Portfolio," in B. L. Cambridge, S. Kahn, D. P. Tompkins, and K. B. Yancey, eds., *Electronic Portfolios: Emerging Practices in Student, Faculty and Institutional Learning* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 2001).
5. S. Kahn, personal communication, July 2005.
6. The Higher Learning Commission—A Commission of the North Central Association of College and Schools, *Assurance Section Report: A Comprehensive Evaluation Visit to Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, November 18-20, 2002*, January 28, 2003, <http://www.iport.iupui.edu/selfstudy/nca_report.pdf>. Team observations were synthesized as follows:
 - Publishing the self-study online provided the potential to "invite a broad range of public comment."
 - Emphasizing the development of "clear and well-understood performance indicators communicated through the electronic institutional portfolio has developed a climate of collaboration."
 - *Advantages of publishing online were perceived as:*
 - ♦ Materials could be accessed from a distance.
 - ♦ Projects, initiatives, and documents that supported and illustrated key points were immediately accessible.

- ♦ "Connections between interrelated or overlapping elements within the self-study could be drawn with a minimum of repetition."
 - *Disadvantages of publishing online were:*
 - ♦ Links did not always work properly.
 - ♦ Information changed as the project grew.
 - ♦ Hard copies of the self-study lacked some of the information that was provided online.
 - ♦ The boundaries were not always clear, "leading the team far afield."
 - ♦ "Raw data were not always summarized or would have benefited from capsule statements or interpretations."
 - ♦ Retracing steps to find information was sometimes challenging.
 - ♦ "Executive summaries and a search feature would have helped."
 - The team's criticisms were "not intended to minimize IUPUI's impressive undertaking in making the self-study and related materials available."
7. K. A. Ketcheson, personal communication, April 2005.
 8. The nine NWCCU standards are institutional mission and goals and planning and effectiveness; education programs and its effectiveness; students; faculty; library and information resources; governance and administration; finance; physical resources; and institutional integrity.
 9. K. A. Ketcheson, "Portland State University's Electronic Institutional Portfolio: Strategy, Planning and Assessment," in B. L. Cambridge, S. Kahn, D. P. Tompkins, and K. B. Yancey, eds., *Electronic Portfolios: Emerging Practices in Student, Faculty, and Institutional Learning* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 2001).
 10. Ibid.
 11. S. Sujitparapitaya, personal communication, March 2005.
 12. Institutional assessment at CSUS is structured around eight themes: teaching and learning; academic programs; scholarly and creative achievement; pluralism; enrollment management; campus life; community engagement and impact; and institutional effectiveness. These themes are structured around six planning processes: strategic plan and goals; assessment, performance indicators; progress reports; objectives; and budget and action plan.
 13. These electronic program reviews are segmented into numerous categories and subcategories, with major categories titled academic program; teaching and learning; research and creative activities; university and community services; and special accomplishments. Other major categories are segmented by such titles as mission; curriculum; assessment plan; learning goals; data, and self-study. Beneath these are subcategories such as those listed under teaching and learning: student work, syllabi, publications on teaching, awards for teaching, and faculty development.
 14. Sujitparapitaya, op. cit.
 15. Ibid.
 16. D. S. Dorn, "Electronic Department Portfolios: A New Tool for Departmental Learning and Improvement," in B. L. Cambridge, S. Kahn, D. P. Tompkins, and K. B. Yancey, eds., *Electronic Portfolios: Emerging Practices in Student, Faculty, and Institutional Learning* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 2001).
 17. NCATE (<http://www.ncate.org/>) accredits schools, colleges, and departments of education. As noted on its Web site, "NCATE's performance-based system of accreditation fosters competent classroom teachers and other educators who work to improve the education of all P-12 students."
 18. ABET (<http://www.abet.org/>) accredits college and university programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology.
 19. Sujitparapitaya, op. cit.

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20. To view some of the WASC institutional e-portfolios, visit <http://www.wascsenior.org/wasc>, mouse over Institutional Representatives, and click on Sample Institutional Portfolios.
21. R. Wolfe, personal communication, April 2005.
22. P. Allen, personal communication, March 2005.
23. B. Ladusaw, personal communication, April 2005.
24. The Baldrige Program is a Congressionally established award program that recognizes U.S. organizations for their achievements in quality and performance, <http://www.quality.nist.gov/>.
25. The nine AQIP categories are understanding students' and other stakeholders' needs; valuing people; leading and communicating; supporting institutional operations; planning continuous improvement; building collaborative relationships; helping students learn; accomplishing other distinctive objectives; and measuring effectiveness.
26. S. Spengahl, personal communication, May 2005.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. The Commission on Colleges Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges were interviewed by telephone. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education responded to an interview inquiry via e-mail correspondence. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities was unavailable for comment.
30. D. Carter, personal communication, May 2005.
31. S. Crow, personal communication, May 2005.
32. J. Morse, e-mail correspondence, May 16, 2005.
33. B. Brittingham, personal communication, May 2005.
34. J. G. Wexler, "The Role of Institutional Portfolios in the Revised WASC Accreditation Process," in B. L. Cambridge, S. Kahn, D. P. Tompkins, and K. B. Yancey, eds., *Electronic Portfolios: Emerging Practices in Student, Faculty, and Institutional Learning* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 2001).

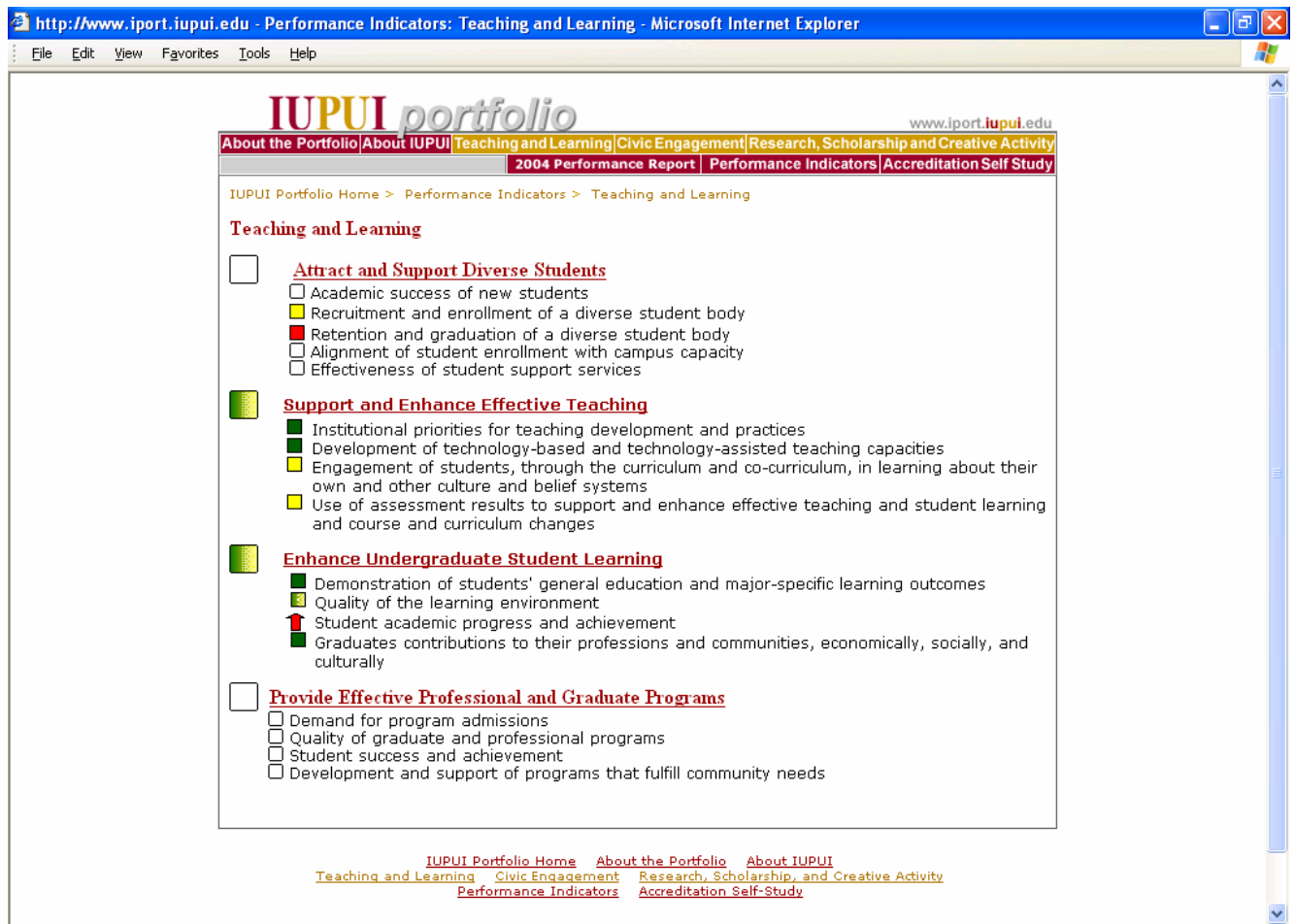
Appendix 1: Examples of Institutional E-Portfolios

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

Performance Indicators Web Site

URL: http://www.iport.iupui.edu/performance/perf_teach.htm

Description: IUPUI's performance indicator Web site (<http://www.iport.iupui.edu/performance/>) provides numerous evaluations of IUPUI's progress within a variety of "indicator areas." The Web page shown below, for example, highlights four areas listed under the Teaching and Learning heading (linked to from the performance indicator home page). IUPUI review panels evaluate progress in each indicator area using a color-coded scoring rubric. In this case, the Web site visitor sees that a white-colored indicator has been applied to the areas titled "Attract and Support Diverse Students" and "Provide Effective Professional and Graduate Programs." The white color indicates that insufficient information was available to perform a valid evaluation. Green means that an area has reached an acceptable level; yellow indicates an area is not at an acceptable level, but improving. A red-colored indicator means an area's current status or direction of change is unacceptable and in need of immediate action.



An Overview of Institutional E-Portfolios

Portland State University

Department Profile Assessment Web Site

URL:

http://www.programreview.pdx.edu/assessment/index.php?dept=UNST&page=reflection&plan_cycle=2003-2004°ree=UG

Description: As noted on PSU's Department Profiles satellite Web site (<http://www.programreview.pdx.edu/assessment/index.php>):

Assessment of student learning involves documenting the extent to which students in our program have learned what we claim they will learn. Through our assessment of student learning, we seek to improve our teaching practices and academic decision making, and contribute to our program quality.

Visitors can link to assessment materials for specific programs. In the screenshot below, for example, an assessment narrative, which feeds into PSU's reaccreditation self-study, is provided about the University Studies program.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.programreview.pdx.edu>. The page title is "Departmental Profile ASSESSMENT" and the sub-page is "University Studies". The navigation menu includes "Introduction", "Objectives & Plans", "Tools & Data", and "Reflection". The main content area has a heading "Choose the Plan Cycle and Program Level from the dropdown menus, then click 'See Documents.'" Below this are two dropdown menus: "Plan Cycle:" with "2003-2004" selected, and "Program Level:" with "Undergraduate" selected. A "See Documents" button is positioned below the dropdowns. A "Printable Version" link is also visible. The "Reflection" section is titled "What was learned through the assessment process?" and contains two paragraphs of text. The left sidebar lists various departments and links.

Departmental Profile ASSESSMENT

University Studies

Introduction Objectives & Plans Tools & Data Reflection

HOME | [Interdisciplinary Program](#) | [University Studies](#)

Colleges & Schools

- [Business Administration](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Extended Studies](#)
- [Engr & Computer Science](#)
- [Fine and Performing Arts](#)
- [Interdisciplinary Program](#)
- [Liberal Arts & Sciences](#)
- [Social Work](#)
- [Urban & Public Affairs](#)
- [Library](#)

Links

- [Site Map](#)
- [OIRP Website](#)
- [PSU Website](#)
- [Institutional Portfolio](#)

Choose the Plan Cycle and Program Level from the dropdown menus, then click "See Documents."

Plan Cycle: 2003-2004

Program Level: Undergraduate

See Documents

[Printable Version](#)

Reflection

What was learned through the assessment process?

In 2003-2004, the assessment process illuminated for University Studies much useful formative information. The Prior Learning Survey demonstrated that the student body entering as freshmen was very diverse in term of their background experiences paralleled to the mission and goals of University Studies. Over 90 percent of students entering as freshmen had exposure to individuals different than them, been challenged to think critically in high school, and brought with them a variety of experiences in communicating via different means. In addition, the Prior Learning Survey illustrated that many students could greatly benefit from community service learning, which would make their journeys through University Studies rewarding in the long-term as they approached Capstones.

The End-of-Term Course Evaluations and Portfolio reviews showed that the program is strong in terms of delivering quality instruction in FRINQ and SINQ. Students for the most part were guaranteed to have consistent educational experiences in acquiring skills for working with others, developing writing skills, learning to think critically, and exploring ethical issues. The course evaluations equally confirmed that faculty and mentors involved in the program improve as perceived by students over the course of the year. Students often cited that faculty and mentors continuously improved at delivering instruction that made it clear how mentor sessions fit into the course and the relevance of University Studies goals.

California State University, Sacramento

University Electronic Portfolio Web Site

URL: http://www.csus.edu/psa/soc_v1/1Acad_Introduction.htm

Description: CSUS's Program Assessment Evidence Section (<http://www.csus.edu/portfolio/program.htm>) links to department portfolios such as the sociology department home page shown here, which in turn links to a wide range of departmental information and artifacts.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "http://www.csus.edu - Sociology Dept Portfolio - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar contains the URL "http://www.csus.edu/psa/soc_v1/1Acad_Introduction.htm". The browser's menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "View", "Favorites", "Tools", and "Help". The page content is displayed on a green background. At the top, there are navigation links: "Dept Portfolio", "Dept Statistics", "Dept Web Page", "Program Home", "Portfolio Home", and "CSUS Home". Below these are five tabs: "Academic Program", "Teaching & Learning", "Research & Creative Activities", "University & Community Services", and "Special Accomplishments". On the left side, there is a vertical navigation menu with the word "sociology" written vertically. The menu items are: "Introduction", "Mission", "Curriculum", "Assessment Plan", "Learning Goals", "Data", and "Self-Study". The main content area features a welcome message: "Welcome to the Sociology Department Portfolio". Below this, it states: "In these pages you will be able to access information about the work of faculty and students in the () Department and its academic program, mission, curriculum, assessment plan and assessment data. For more detailed information, use the tabs above. For specific information, see below." A bulleted list follows: "• What is Sociology?", "• Who are our faculty?", "• What is our curriculum?", and "• What are students expected to learn, and how well do they learn it? [examples of student work]". At the bottom of the main content area, there is a "contact info:" section with the following details: "Charles Varano", "Dept. of Sociology", "CSU Sacramento", "Sacramento, CA 95819-6005", "916.278.6675", and "cvarano@csus.edu". The footer of the page reads "California State University, Sacramento".

An Overview of Institutional E-Portfolios

University of California, Berkeley

UC Berkeley Accreditation Web Site

URL: <http://education.berkeley.edu/accreditation/>

Description: As noted on the WASC Web site (go to <<http://www.wascsenior.org/wasc>> and navigate to Sample Institutional Portfolios):

Berkeley's accreditation Web site makes available all of the key documents and data sources related to its institutional accreditation efforts. It was designed to encourage the broadest possible participation in the accreditation self-studies and in the dissemination of their results.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS [Overview]

[WASC website](#)
[WASC Requirements](#) [pdf]

[Committees](#)

What's New

Latest News
At its February 1920, 2004 meeting, the WASC Commission acted to reaffirm the campus Accreditation. The [Educational Effectiveness Visiting Team Report](#), [Campus Response](#), and [WASC Commission Action](#) are now available [pdf].

The [Educational Effectiveness Review Report](#) is available for download [pdf].

CAMPUS PRESENTATION [Overview]

Completed October 15, 2001 Due August 1, 2002 Due August 1, 2003

Institutional Proposal
[Narrative](#) [pdf]
[Original Basic Descriptive Data](#)
[Updated Basic Descriptive Data](#)
[See Preparatory Review Report, Appendix 1, Section 8]

Preparatory Review
[Introduction](#)
[Reflective Essays](#)
[Conclusion/Executive Summary](#)
[Appendix 1 Required Data Elements](#)
[Appendix 2 Stipulated Policies](#)
[Appendix 3 Response to Previous WASC Accreditation](#)
[Appendix 4 Selected Exhibits/Data Displays](#)
[Appendix 5 WASC Standards Cross-Referenced to Report](#)
[Appendix 6 List of Acronyms](#)
[Preparatory Review Site Visit Schedule](#) and [Detailed Schedule](#)

Educational Effectiveness Review
[Introduction](#)
[Analytical Essays](#)
[Conclusion](#)
[Appendix 1: List of Evidentiary Exhibits](#)
[Appendix 2: List of References](#)
[Appendix 3: Educational Effectiveness Working Groups](#)

Fort Hays State University

Academic Quality Improvement Program Web Site

URL: <http://www.fhsu.edu/aqip/reports.shtml>

Description: FHSU joined AQIP in 2000 and has built a complete Web site that follows the AQIP model and is open to the general public.

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Fort Hays State University website. The address bar shows the URL <http://www.fhsu.edu/aqip/reports.shtml>. The page features the university's logo and name, with the tagline "affordable success". A navigation menu includes links for Future Students, Parents, Current Students, Graduate School, Virtual College, Alumni & Friends, and Faculty & Staff. The main content area is titled "AQIP Reports and Documents" and includes a search bar, a "Quick Links" sidebar, and a list of reports and documents. The sidebar lists various categories such as Dashboard, Our Mission, FHSU's Vital Goals, Assessment, AQIP Quality Criteria, KBOR Performance Agreements, Quality Initiatives, Benchmark Data, Accreditation, Committees, Reports and Documents, Resources, and Links. The main content area lists several reports and documents, including "Action Projects and Quality Criteria Data", "Balanced Scorecard Data", "FY2004 Completed Departmental Initiatives", "FY2004 Completed Department Initiatives (non-academic units)", "Declaration of FY2005 Departmental Continuous Improvement Initiatives", and "Declaration of FY2005 Departmental Continuous Improvement Initiatives (non-academic)". Below this list is a section titled "2004 AQIP Systems Portfolio" which includes links for "Institutional Overview", "Systems Portfolio", "Table of Contents", and "Appendix 1 - Organization Charts".

Appendix 2: Interviewees

The following individuals were interviewed for this report.

Patrick Allen, former Chief Academic Officer and Provost at Point Loma Nazarene University and currently Provost of Southern Nazarene University

Barbara Brittingham, Interim Director, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges

David Carter, Associate Executive Director, Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Steven D. Crow, Executive Director, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Elizabeth Griego, Associate Director, Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Susan Kahn, Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and former national Director of the Urban Universities Portfolio Project

Kathi Ketcheson, Director Institutional Research and Planning, Portland State University

William A. Ladusaw, Vice Provost and Dean, Undergraduate Education, University of California, Santa Cruz

Jean Avnet Morse, Executive Director, Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Stephen D. Spangehl, Director, Academic Quality Improvement Program, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Sutee Sujitparapitaya, Director of Institutional Research, California State University, Sacramento

Ralph Wolf, Executive Director, Western Association of Schools and Colleges

The EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI) is a community of higher education institutions and organizations committed to advancing learning through IT innovation. To achieve this mission, ELI focuses on learners, learning principles and practices, and learning technologies. We believe that using IT to improve learning requires a solid understanding of learners and how they learn. It also requires effective practices enabled by learning technologies. We encourage institutions to use this report to broaden awareness and improve effective teaching and learning practice.
