

# The Journey to Best Practices: Results of a Two Year Study of E-Portfolios in Beginning Composition

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# Catalyst Research & Development



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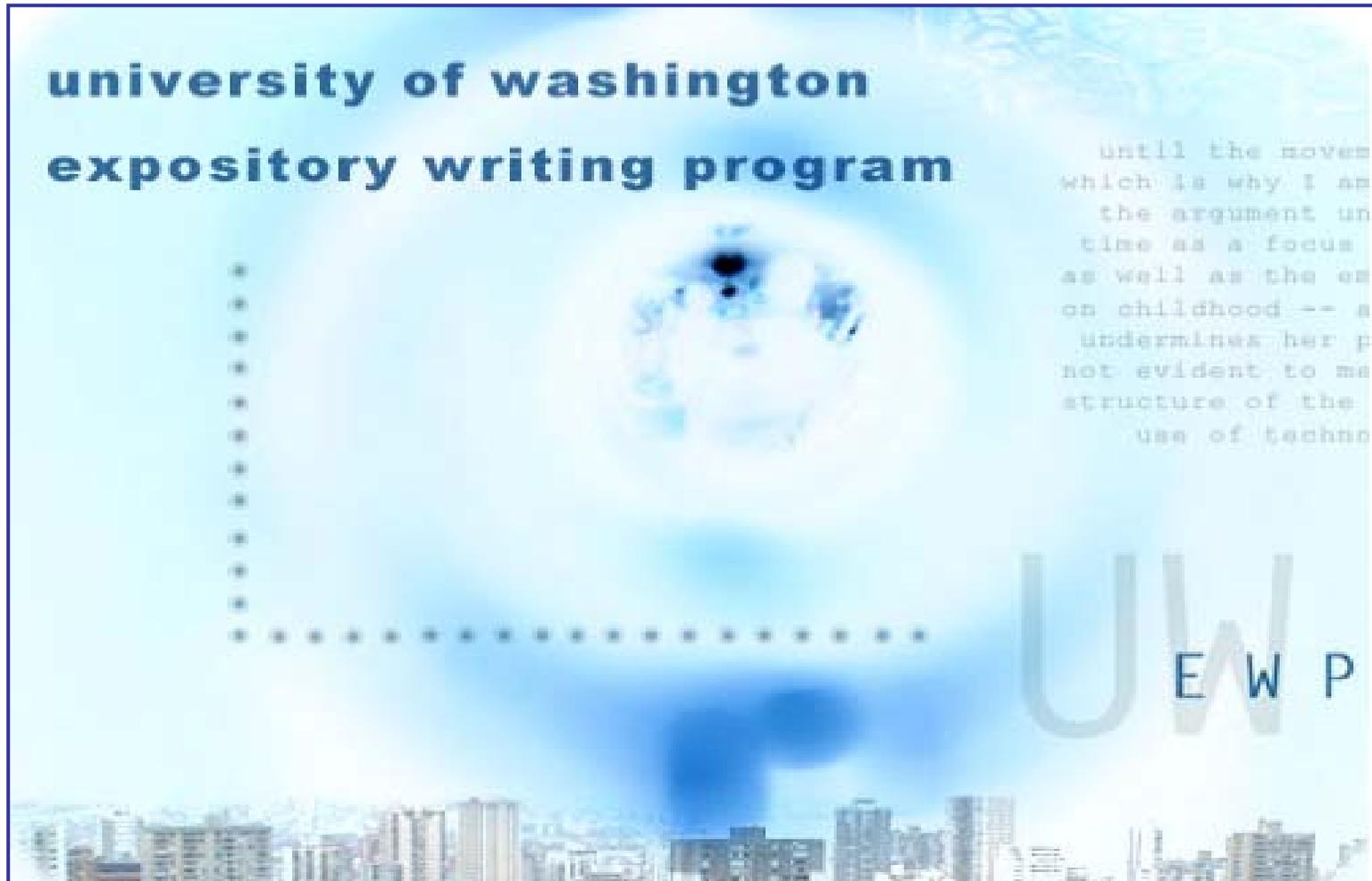
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# Expository Writing Program



# Catalyst Portfolio Tool

- Designed for individual use
  - Instructor customization
  - Non-course applications
- Published portfolios look like Web sites
  - Narrative structure, not matrix format
  - Commentary and artifacts



# Study Details

- *Question*

What, if any, value is added by using electronic portfolios for the required portfolio assignment?

- *Participants*

- Instructors (13)
- Students (32 sections)
- Administrators (3)

- *Timeline*

- Pilot study (2005/6)
- Implementation (2006/7)



- Katerine Bielaczyc’s term “implementation path” describes the sequence of phases teachers move through as they progress from initial trials with a new technology to more sophisticated and effective use.

Advancing along this trajectory involves more than gaining familiarity with the functionality of a tool; it may also require **shifting the mindset of students and teachers.**

—*Conference proceedings*





# Shift #1: Embracing New Teaching Practices

# Using Electronic Comments

How has your discourse been altered? Be more specific.

three of which are traits my sorority, Delta Zeta, strives to uphold and advance in women. Many of these so called “sorority ideals” have also been engrained in us women throughout our lives and are not only pertinent to those belonging to sororities. Since joining a sorority this year, I have realized that my primary discourse of being a woman has been altered and bettered by my secondary discourse of sorority member.

A primary discourse is the discourse that one is born with and the one that affects

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**Comment [CL3]:** Think about your audience? What about men reading the paper?

**Comment [CL4]:** Your claim could use further development. How exactly has your experience been altered? Be more specific. Refer back to the arguable claims lesson we covered in class.



- “I think it's really neat to see those scanned papers with the comments... Because they get kind of sterile when they're typed up, you don't really get the same effect. [But the students] didn't want to do the work of scanning, they just wanted to give me all of their hard copies with my comments on them.”

—*Graduate student instructor, EWP*



# Integrating Verbal Feedback

*“McDonald’s advertisements are probably the most well-known in the world, especially since its slogan is now in multiple languages... Yet the multi-lingual slogan is not half-- Yet the multi--*

OH! It’s slogan. I think you need to give the slogan. ‘Cause...when I read ‘McDonald’s advertisements,’ I immediately thought of the golden arches, and I was thinking, how is that translated into multiple languages?”





# Shift #2: Teaching Visual Design

**Go to**

[Home](#)

[My Portfolios](#)

[My Artifacts](#)

**I want to**

[Move](#) this page

[Copy](#) this page

Edit page [Styles](#)

Edit page [Layout](#)

[Delete](#) this page

<< Page 1   Page 3 >>   Jump to:

*Page last saved at: Jun 26, 2006 12:44 PM*

Copy of ENGL 131 Portfolio Template: By paper

Page 2:

**Attach Paper # 1 in this section. List the full title of your paper and the outcomes it best demonstrates. Include the full text of each outcome.** Remember that in creating an electronic portfolio, you are essentially creating a web site. Each page should include a header that describes or frames the content on that page. By including the title and your targeted outcome(s) here, you quickly tell your reader what this page is about.

If you would like this text to appear as bold and/or bulleted, follow the directions in your HTML guide and click below to "display content as HTML".

**Attached artifacts:**

**Your reflection:**

Display content as:  Plain Text    HTML

**Move this section:**



[Letter to Dove](#)

[Analysis of Ramamurthy](#)

[Addressing My Audience](#)

[Endless Revision](#)

[Final Reflection](#)

## Letter to Dove

"Dove's New Ad Campaign Aimed to Redefine Beauty Still has Ties to the Conventional Ideal: Physical Appearance=Beauty"

Outcomes demonstrated:

1. Write persuasively for an academic audience
2. Analyze and synthesize texts in order to support one's writing

Outcome 1:

The format of the business letter lends itself to a persuasive context, which is why I feel the letter demonstrates proficiency of outcome one. The stakes of the argument are apparent when I mention how beauty stereotypes affect women's mental health. Ultimately, Dove's attempt to redefine beauty can revolutionize the way women view themselves. My incorporation of the denoted and connoted message shows I have taken into consideration multiple points of view to generate a position.



[Letter to Dove](#)



[Dove's Campaign Website](#)



[Freckles Image](#)

Letter to Dove

Analysis of  
Ramamurthy

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[Letter to Dove](#)



[Dove's Campaign Website](#)



[Freckles Image](#)



[Susan's ENGL  
131 Portfolio](#)

[Letter to Dove](#)

[Analysis of Edgar  
Allen Poe](#)

[Final Reflection](#)

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[Letter to Dove](#)

The Final  
Performance: A  
Collection of  
Compositions

Outcome #1

Outcome #2

Outcome #3

Outcome #4

Final Reflection

## The Final Performance: A Collection of Compositions



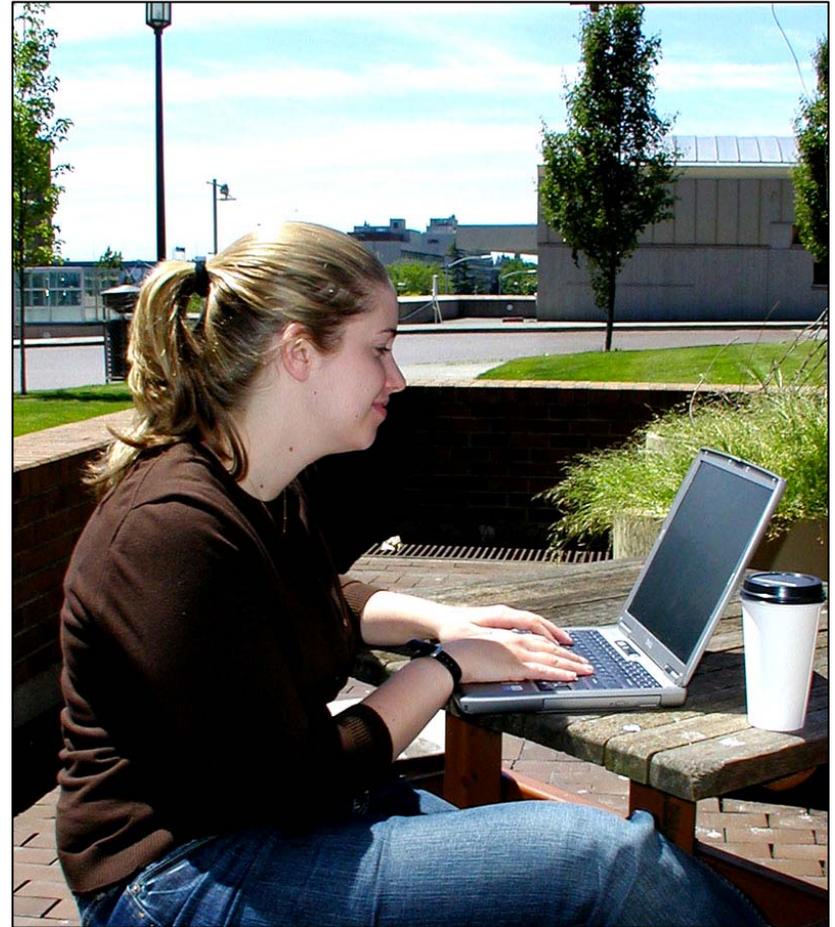
As a pianist, I am taught to listen for mistakes. More specifically, I am taught to listen to my own mistakes. In practicing for a concert, I work to perfect the piece I am to perform and to focus on where I am having the most trouble, that is, where I am making the most mistakes. I practice this part over and over again, hundreds of times, in my attempt to get it just right. When the time comes and I am sitting on the stage, playing the piece I have worked so hard to perfect, the amount of time I spent practicing, both on the parts I had the most trouble with and the piece in general, will determine if my performance is successful.

In English 131, we are guided as students throughout the writing process with the objectives of becoming focused, accurate, analytical, creative writers. But, on a global level, we are taught the skills to critique and challenge what is presented to us both in academic settings and "outside the educational arena" as well. Throughout this winter quarter in which I experienced English 131, we were taught how to critique certain academic texts, develop our own complex arguments, and compose essays that were concurrently creative and academically correct. In one statement, "This class is less about understanding and more about intellectual exploration of inquiry and writing, of ideas and individual writing practices of your own as well as your fellow classmates."



# Shift #3: Changing Department Culture

# Embracing a New Paradigm



- “The English Department is characteristically famous for being stuck in traditional or outdated ways ...”

–*Grad student instructor, EWP*

- “Like most faculty in the department, I haven't used much technology. I never developed expertise with it. Until I taught with e-portfolios in 567, I never used e-portfolios, listservs, or Web sites for my courses.”

–*Administrator, EWP*



# Working with Available Technology



# Teaching with Multiple Tools

## *Catalyst Tools*

- Portfolio
- Portfolio Project Builder
- SimpleSite
- Collect It
- GoPost

## *Other Tools*

- Word  
(commenting)
- PowerPoint
- Blogs
- iRiver
- UTube



# Next Steps

- Extend use beyond beginning composition
- Emphasize use and practice in graduate student instructor training
- Make more resources available, including models



# Contact Information

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**QUESTIONS?**

