Auburn University Quality Enhancement Plan 2012-2018

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Executive Summary

Auburn University has identified as its Quality Enhancement Plan a project to enhance student learning through professional ePortfolios—personal Web sites designed to communicate and showcase skills, experiences, and learning. Professional ePortfolios are both a learning process and a product that demonstrates learning. As a process, they engage students in assembling artifacts from across an academic career—written texts, drawings, video, oral performances or other media products from their coursework and other experiences—and in revising and contextualizing these artifacts to demonstrate for a specific audience the themes in their learning experiences. This process enables students to think deeply about their learning, to choose evidence from the many learning experiences they have documented, to revise specific artifacts, and to find connections among their experiences, interests, and aspirations. As a product, professional ePortfolios offer evidence of learning and capacity for graduate study or employment. Though involving web-based technology, the heart of Auburn’s ePortfolio Project is the additional learning that happens as students revisit and reconsider the evidence of their learning experiences and present that learning to a real audience as they near graduation (see Figure 1).

The ePortfolio Project extends Auburn’s Writing Initiative, begun in 2010, which provides students in each undergraduate major with guided opportunities to practice the kinds of writing most relevant to their field of study and future careers. While remaining feasible in scope, this new project will broaden the Initiative by stimulating new modes of learning and communication. The project plan here described will provide infrastructure, training, support and coordination to carefully selected cohort groups in order to achieve key student learning outcomes, enhance Auburn’s culture of writing, and build stronger connections across the disciplines. Cohort members for initial implementation represent both curricular and co-curricular learning and both undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students. Going forward, any department, educational program, student or co-curricular organization may apply to join a subsequent cohort.

Auburn University believes that its ePortfolio Project provides evidence of compliance with the Principles of Accreditation applicable to the Quality Enhancement Plan:

It Emerges from Institutional Assessment: The ePortfolio Project was chosen after careful examination of existing institutional assessment data, focus group interviews, and surveys designed specifically to identify an appropriate QEP. NSSE data indicated that writing, critical thinking, and opportunities to connect experiences across multiple courses are specific areas where interventions could improve student engagement at Auburn. Surveys of faculty and students suggested that writing, critical thinking, technology, hands-on learning, and preparing students for the world of work are high priorities for enhancing Auburn’s educational mission.

It is Focused on Learning Outcomes: Auburn’s ePortfolio Project addresses four student learning outcomes: effective communication, critical thinking through reflection, technical competence, and visual literacy. Abundant research supports the potential for ePortfolios to enhance stu-
dent learning in these four areas and the special value of Professional ePortfolios to ensure ongoing student and faculty engagement.

**It Demonstrates Institutional Capability:** The ePortfolio Project includes a staged implementation approach with action items that will: 1) Develop necessary infrastructure to implement the project; 2) Expand existing academic support units and components; 3) Support faculty in developing and extending curriculum, in their mentoring of students throughout the process of creating professional ePortfolios, in their use of reflection to promote critical thinking, and in their use of ePortfolios to facilitate teaching and research; and 4) Provide support to assess the Project’s learning outcomes and its institutional impact and then to use assessment data to guide subsequent decisions about the Project. Adopter grants and co-ordination of resources support those most ready to undertake implementation of professional ePortfolios and contribute data to the assessment of the Project. Additional personnel necessary to support the Project have been identified, a continuing budget has been allocated, and an oversight structure has been created to involve students, faculty, and other stakeholders.

**It Involves Broad-Based Institutional Constituencies:** A broad-based QEP Exploratory Committee conducted initial research using existing institutional data, focus group interviews, and surveys. It then solicited and reviewed proposals and recommended four as potentially appropriate. After senior leadership selected the ePortfolio project from among these four, a QEP Development Committee representing faculty, academic support staff, and students was convened to review the extensive scholarship about ePortfolios, to agree on the learning objectives for the Project, and to develop specific action plans. Models from other institutions were reviewed in order to narrow the focus to professional ePortfolios. The Development Committee determined actions necessary to achieve the learning objectives, solicited comments from the Auburn academic community, involved interested students, and revised the implementation plan to produce this final report. Broad involvement will continue as the project is implemented. The initial cohort is helping to create models for subsequent adopters. A steering committee and several subcommittees will examine assessment data and recommend additional refinements as the project progresses. A Student ePortfolio Ambassadors Program will allow students to participate in and further shape the project. Industry advisory boards have been consulted to ensure that the ePortfolio Project is attentive to external constituencies.

**It Identifies Goals and a Plan to Assess Their Achievement:** Goals for student learning have been identified and appropriate assessment plans have been developed to monitor those outcomes, including information gathered at both the cohort level and the institutional level. In addition, assessment plans include monitoring the impact of the Project on the Auburn community. The ePortfolio Project enriches Auburn’s commitment to enhancing students’ abilities to communicate and adds the elements of digital expression and visual literacy that are essential in the 21st Century. The Project also encourages more attention to reflective writing, deep thinking, synthesis, and application. Though participation in the ePortfolio Project is not mandatory, it has been designed to support departments as they integrate isolated writing experiences into coherent instruction, incorporate reflection, and include technology and visual literacy. Drawing on Auburn’s mission and land-grant
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tradition, the ePortfolio Project provides an opportunity for students to connect their academic studies with co-curricular experiences such as study abroad, undergraduate research, service learning, internships, co-op experiences, clubs, organizations, and civic engagement. The ePortfolio Project thus enhances student learning within and outside the curriculum and aims to enable student success at Auburn and beyond by encouraging students to communicate what they have learned to diverse audiences.

The “About” portion helps create an overall framework for the student to connect their academic and professional experiences.

The work as a whole helps students to identify themes and patterns in their own skill set.

Demonstrates effective communication across multiple genres, audiences and contexts through written and oral examples.

Shows visual literacy by creating an argument with the effective combination of written materials and visuals using various technologies.

Uses a variety of artifacts, or different documents and projects, from work inside and outside the classroom to showcase skills.

Figure 1: Will Hart, Auburn University, BA Architecture 2010, MBA 2011
Introduction

No matter what experiences we have, no matter how much we know or have learned, if we can’t communicate our experiences and knowledge to others, we are less effective—even less educated—than we need to be. As a land-grant institution with a long tradition of interactions with the public, Auburn University values and promotes experiences that take students into the world beyond the campus. We expect our students to be able to communicate effectively with that world, translating disciplinary knowledge to the public, moving gracefully between academic and public audiences, and using knowledge to impact real-world problems. Our students complete internships, take part in co-op experiences, compete in sporting events and design contests, and travel abroad to further their studies and serve others. Auburn students enrich their classroom experiences by participating in community service projects of all kinds, join various organizations, and conduct undergraduate research. With a variety of academic programs available to them, Auburn students often move between colleges or programs, changing their majors or forging interdisciplinary connections that stretch their talents and prepare them for the world beyond the university. We expect students to synthesize what they learn from these many experiences, both to make new knowledge and to become more conscious of the process of learning. We want our students to be prepared for whatever the future brings by understanding how to learn and how to communicate learning in multiple ways to multiple audiences. In the twenty-first century, effective communication necessarily includes using various forms of technology to reach those audiences.

Auburn students and faculty have consistently recognized the need for increased written and oral communication skills. Writing and oral communication are a part of Auburn’s existing General Education Student Learning Outcomes (see Appendix I) and improved communication is included as a learning outcome for the many professional programs offered at Auburn. Communication and the need to improve the communication skills of Auburn students has been such a priority that in 2008 a faculty task force was appointed to study writing issues and make recommendations for improving writing and writing instruction for Auburn students. Their work led to the Auburn Writing Initiative, launched in January 2010 with the hiring of a Director of University Writing and the formation of the Office of University Writing. The Auburn ePortfolio Project is a natural extension of that effort to enhance the culture of writing, broadly defined to include all forms of communication.

Given the growing influence of technology, we need to ensure that our students have the ability to communicate via technology as well as the confidence to use technology to learn. Drawing on the abundant scholarship that suggests ePortfolios have significant advantages over paper portfolios, the ePortfolio...
Project aims to create both the technological and academic infrastructure necessary for students to 1) collect their written, oral, and visual work across multiple courses and extra-curricular experiences; 2) reconsider those experiences, make connections, and think critically about their experiences in order to decide how best to present those experiences to others, including public audiences beyond the university; 3) understand and be able to use various technologies in communicating to others; and, 4) effectively integrate visual materials of various kinds.

Establishing the academic support structures that help students create a professional ePortfolio will provide enriched learning as students have opportunities for reflection and synthesis (see Sidebar 1) and occasions to present their learning to audiences both internal and external. Creating a professional ePortfolio with various artifacts will provide Auburn students the sophisticated technological skills crucial for success, enhance their communication skills, and allow them to present the full range of their learning experiences to a public audience. Thus, the ePortfolio Project enriches the Auburn learning experience even as it captures and communicates that experience to others.

As Wende Garrison of Virginia Tech explains so well (see Figure 2), online resume and networking sites like LinkedIn allow students to present the evidence of their learning to real audiences, but such sites don’t include the reflective process that helps students find connections in their learning or reconsider and synthesize their experiences. Paper portfolios include artifacts as evidence and involve reflection that allows students to synthesize and make connections between different learning experiences, but they are difficult to share with real audiences and rarely include evidence of technological competency necessary to modern life.
Likewise, online writing such as Blogs might include opportunities for students to reflect, communicate to real audiences, and utilize technology, but they don’t typically include different kinds of documents as evidence of the student’s learning or experiences. Only ePortfolios combine all three of these essential elements: online technology to address real audiences; artifacts that document the learning; and, reflection to contextual and synthesize those experiences into a meaningful framework that presents a professional identity.

*Figure 2: ePortfolio Elements Adapted from Wende Garrison, 2012*
Overview of the QEP Exploratory Committee
The thirty-member Quality Enhancement Plan Exploratory Committee was constituted in August 2010 taking care to ensure broad representation from various campus divisions including both undergraduate and graduate students, advisors, administrative and professional staff, alumni, and faculty from all colleges and schools. The QEP Exploratory Committee included members experienced in student learning, a representative from the Division of Student Affairs, and members who were conversant with the University’s strategic plan. The resulting thirty-member committee (see Appendix II for the complete roster) met fourteen times from September 2010 through April 2011. A review of QEP goals and guidelines, followed by a thorough examination of best practices at peer universities and Auburn’s institutional data augmented by focus group interviews conducted in December 2010, led to the development of a working strategy to identify the most suitable QEP topics.

The topic search was conducted in three stages: 1) campus-wide survey and investigation of possible topic areas; 2) submission and review of short QEP concepts; and, 3) pre-proposal submission, review, and final selection. Each stage was supported by an informative QEP Web site that was developed in January 2011. The first stage, a campus-wide survey and investigation of possible topic areas, sought input from all campus constituencies including students, staff, alumni, faculty, and administrators. Invitations to participate were disseminated through multiple avenues and the results of this survey were used in the second stage of the process to formulate a call for submissions of QEP concepts, defined as short, two-paragraph descriptions of topic ideas. The eight most promising concepts from the twenty-five submitted were identified and the authors were provided with stipends of $1500 to develop fifteen-page pre-proposals for the third stage. Based on the review of the seven full pre-proposals submitted in April 2011, the QEP Exploratory Committee recommended four topics for consideration to the Senior Leadership Team: 1) The Auburn University Global Leadership Challenge; 2) The ePortfolio Project: Communicating Learning the Auburn Way; 3) Financial Literacy for Today’s Citizen; and, 4) REACT: Research ACTive Students and Faculty.

The Senior Leadership Team (President, Provost, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, Executive Vice President and CFO, President of University Senate) read all the final pre-proposals and selected The ePortfolio Project: Communicating Learning the Auburn Way. The announcement was made to the University Community in May 2011.

Overview of the QEP Development Committee
The QEP Development Committee was formed in September 2011 to develop a working plan to implement the selected QEP topic of ePortfolios. The Committee included representatives from several colleges, including three that were already in the process of developing ePortfolios (see Appendix II for the roster). The QEP Development Committee was charged “to deliver a complete draft of a working plan for Auburn’s e-portfolio project by September 1, 2012. After an opportunity for review and commentary by the campus community, the final draft of the QEP document will be submitted to the South-
ern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) by January 2013.” In order to accomplish this task, the Committee decided to: 1) research ePortfolios, including similar programs at other universities; 2) determine how best to narrow the scope of the project to ensure success; 3) devise a thorough plan for implementation; 4) create a budget; 5) develop the timeline for implementing ePortfolios at Auburn; 6) prepare a draft of a detailed final report containing an account of its work and its decisions regarding implementation; 7) solicit input from the Auburn community throughout this process; and, 8) incorporate suggestions into revisions of that plan as the final document for SACSCOC was produced.

The QEP Development Committee met for the first time at the beginning of October, 2011 and continued to meet twenty-one times prior to circulating the first draft of an implementation plan. The Committee began by reviewing the QEP pre-proposal, refining the student learning outcomes, and gathering data from other QEP projects and from ePortfolio initiatives at other institutions belonging to SACSCOC. The SACSCOC Handbook was consulted throughout this process and the suggested steps for development were followed. The Committee recognized that the implementation plan needed to prioritize the different types of ePortfolios and began to investigate the differences. The Committee formed subgroups to develop definitions of key terms, investigate commercial and open-source ePortfolio software packages and develop criteria for selecting a software package, and compile references and Web site links to relevant information (see Appendix III for bibliography). The Committee used this research to revise the student learning outcomes and develop specific measurable components of each outcome. The central criteria for selecting an ePortfolio platform were developed from the comprehensive resources compiled at the Electronic Portfolio Action and Communication: Community of Practice (EPAC 2012) and include: company profile, customer base/size, cost/pricing, free and fee-based support, system requirements, hosted solutions, storage capacity per account, aesthetics and user-friendliness, ability to customize, multi-use across departments with different ePortfolios types or “view”, portability in exporting or migrating to other systems upon graduation, support of multimedia, mechanisms for feedback from instructors with or without rubrics, integration with current campus technologies, accessibility, access after graduation, security, privacy, standards of compliance, and published application programming interface. In November 2011, two members of the Committee attended a Conference on ePortfolios at Virginia Tech and brought back recommendations (see details below and in Appendix IV) which helped narrow the scope of the project.

The pre-proposal on ePortfolios identified three different kinds of ePortfolios: 1) a portfolio archive, or learning portfolio, 2) a programmatic portfolio, or assessment-centered portfolio, and 3) a showcase or professional portfolio (see Sidebar 2 for definitions). After much discussion, the decision was made to...
Process Used to Identify and Develop the ePortfolio Project

Auburn University

Types of ePortfolios

**Student Learning Portfolio:** A tool that allows for systematic documentation and reflection on skills development, competency, and career readiness resulting from a single course, an experience, or the integration of multiple courses or experiences. It is designed to enhance student learning and growth through the use of self-reflection, integration, metacognitive appraisal of the learning process, and mentoring. (Zubizaretta 2009)

**Assessment Portfolio:** The major purpose of an assessment portfolio is to document demonstrable, measureable student competence, achievement, and skill for well-delineated content areas and specified frameworks. These portfolios are commonly premised on end-of-course, program, or curriculum completion assessments primarily used for evaluating student performance. The major goal is to evaluate student competency as defined by the achievement of program and/or discipline standards and learning outcomes. The assessment portfolio typically emphasizes the summative component as contextualized within the formal evaluation process. The focus of this type of portfolio is typically on products. This type of portfolio has as its essential function its use as an assessment tool.

**Professional ePortfolio:** A collection of artifacts selected by a student to showcase the knowledge, skills, and abilities they have developed as part of their learning experience. The contents of the ePortfolio include artifacts such as text-based, graphic, or multimedia material that is archived on a Web site and is accessible to external audiences of the student’s choosing. The ePortfolio Project provides the student the opportunity to reflect on their learning experiences and present their experiences in and out of the classroom in a way that will aid them in achieving their career goals.

Sidebar 2: Types of ePortfolios

focus the ePortfolio Project on career or professional ePortfolios because the research the Committee conducted, the literature it reviewed, and the feedback it received from practitioners at other universities suggested that assessment portfolios are less useful for promoting engaged learning. In addition, the Committee found that the portfolios already being undertaken by various programs at Auburn focused more on helping students demonstrate their abilities and synthesize their experiences as they approached graduation. For example, students in the Apparel Design Program create ePortfolios in connection with their senior design projects targeting the kinds of positions they hope to secure upon graduation (see Figure 3). The Committee recognized that professional ePortfolios also encompass preliminary learning portfolios, as students assemble relevant artifacts and demonstrate their abilities within specific courses. Professional ePortfolios might also inform program assessment without being motivated primarily by assessment.

The QEP Development Committee identified members of the Auburn community who were interested in ePortfolios and invited their participation. In March 2012, Kathleen Yancey of Florida State University, an internationally recognized expert on ePortfolios, was invited to campus to consult with the Committee and review draft documents (See Appendix V for details about Dr. Yancey). Preliminary discussions were held with Auburn’s Provost and SACSCOC liaison to ensure that the scope of the project, proposed structure, and anticipated budget were in keeping with long-term institutional goals and resource allocation. After Dr. Yancey’s visit, the Committee substantially revised and refined the student learning outcomes, the original timeline, and the budget based on these
consultations and suggestions. In June 2012, a draft of the implementation plan was made available on the Web site and 125 individuals who had expressed interest in the project were sent emails announcing the draft and soliciting comments. The site received visits from 70 different individuals. Suggestions and comments were gathered through email, the online comment feature attached to the draft, and in meetings with individuals. In July 2012, two members of the Committee attended the AAEEBL ePortfolio Conference in Boston and reported back to the Committee (see Appendix IV for the summary of their experience). Through discussions with the Student Government Association leaders, students interested in creating professional ePortfolios were identified. Those who volunteered received individual and small group support in the summer of 2012 to create professional ePortfolios that could be used as examples and served as initial ePortfolio Ambassadors. Richard Burt, the Committee Chair, presented an overview of the ePortfolio Project to University Senate on August 21, 2012. Based on the comments made on the initial draft, the experiences of students who participated in the summer program, and consultations with other institutions, the document was revised again and made available for additional

Showcasing my design work in an ePortfolio format allowed me to express my passion for the bridal industry and demonstrate my abilities in Web design, illustration, and writing. It helped me find a job where I can utilize all those skills, even without having editorial experience.

Figure 3: Heather M. Hall, Auburn University, Apparel Design 2012
public comment from September 10 to October 12, 2012. Throughout this period, public forums and presentations about the project occurred, with the QEP Development Committee meeting regularly to discuss suggestions and incorporate revisions. The final document was then submitted to the Senior Leadership Team for approval and submission to SACSCOC.

Use of Data to Inform Selection and Development of the Project
Throughout the process of selecting the topic and developing the implementation plan both QEP Committees compiled and analyzed relevant data. Both Committees reviewed other institutions’ QEP documents, consulted with QEP coordinators at peer institutions, and compiled research relevant to their assigned tasks.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
The QEP is meant to arise out of an analysis of on-going institutional data; thus, both Committees considered the data from NSSE and other assessment documents already collected (see Office of Institutional Assessment 2010). Analysis of this data first led the QEP Exploratory Committee in its development of areas for greatest improvement including:

- Level of academic challenge for both first-year students and seniors
- Student-faculty interactions for both first-year students and seniors
- Enriching experiences for seniors
- Active and collaborative learning for first-year students
- Communication
- Diversity/globalization/internationalization

Current areas of strength that were identified by the QEP Exploratory Committee were citizenship and service.

Consortium of Colleges Studying Writing (CCSW)
The QEP Development Committee also reviewed the National Survey of Student Engagement data and the results of Auburn’s participation in the Consortium of Colleges Studying Writing in 2010. The data from the 28 additional questions asked as a part of the Consortium Survey reveals more

We can’t prepare students for every possible situation they may encounter once they leave, so they’ve got to realize that we’re training them to think problems through and find solutions, especially when those solutions may not be obvious ones.

Library faculty quoted in the QEP Exploratory Committee’s survey summary
specifically where the writing experiences of Auburn students differ on average from the writing experiences of their peers at institutions in the consortium. Both first-year students and seniors report having fewer opportunities to describe their experiences and summarize readings. Seniors report having fewer occasions to argue a position with evidence and first-year students report fewer opportunities to create projects that include multimedia such as Web pages, posters, slide presentations or PowerPoint (Office of Institutional Research and Assessment 2010). One of the most startling findings is that few students in the consortium colleges, either as seniors or in their first year, prepare a portfolio that collects work from more than one class yet Auburn students fall significantly behind this minimal level.

**Scholarship on ePortfolios**

The QEP Development Committee consulted a range of published scholarship on ePortfolios. The question on the Consortium of Colleges Studying Writing survey about preparing a portfolio that collects work from more than one class arises from that abundant scholarship. For example, LaGuardia Community College (2006) found that ePortfolios have the potential to be a transformative learning project not only for students and faculty, but also for the institution as a whole. To determine whether ePortfolio processes supported student engagement, LaGuardia compared 2005-6 data from ePortfolio and non-ePortfolio classes. Their data documented major gains for the students completing ePortfolios on virtually every measure, including critical thinking (see Sidebar 3 for definition). Likewise, a study conducted at Virginia Tech University (Young 2006) found that providing students with multiple opportunities to revisit a particular experience through reflection and occasions to revise an initial reflection at various points in a program facilitated much more explicit critical thinking. Also, when the final reflection included in student ePortfolios was compared with the formative versions, the researchers established that students’ perspectives about their learning experiences evolved over time and that returning to earlier learning experiences and the documents that represented those experiences facilitated students’ consideration of how those learning experiences would be used in their careers and in their professional identities. Results from a quantitative study undertaken at Bowling Green State University (2006) showed that undergraduate students completing ePortfolios had significantly higher grade point averages, credit hours earned, and retention rates than a matched set of students without ePortfolios.

**Critical Thinking**

“Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.” (Scriven and Paul 1987).

*Sidebar 3: Critical Thinking*
Reflection activities embedded in the ePortfolio Project foster critical self-assessment, synthesis, and awareness of one’s own learning processes. Indeed, “critical thinking” and “problem solving” both emerged as synonyms for “reflection” from John Dewey’s work in this area in the early twentieth century (Shermis 1999). As with communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving are broad-based skills highly valued by employers. In a Survey of Employers commissioned by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U 2007), 81% of employers said critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills were both important and needed more emphasis in college programs. Applying knowledge and skills to real-world settings through internships or other hands-on experiences were important and in need of improvement for 79% of the employers. As noted above, ePortfolios allow students to not only capture such moments of connection and application in their college career, but also provide the means of demonstrating these complex problem solving and application abilities to prospective employers.

Effect of Web-based Technologies

The effect of Web-based technologies on students’ analytical and critical-thinking skills is a much-debated subject. Some practitioners, like T. Mills Kelly (2006), have argued persuasively that Web-based technologies can be a valuable part of the contemporary learning and research experience. Others, for example Mark Bauerlein (2009), have argued that Web-based technologies—especially social-networking technologies like Twitter and Facebook—have degraded students’ thinking and impaired their writing skills. The point that emerges clearly from this polemic is that Web-based technologies, like other powerful technologies before them, can be used to good or ill effect. The ePortfolio Project uses new technologies in a positive way by combining them with traditional methods of teaching and research to produce sophisticated, well-designed Web sites that showcase written, visual, and audio materials cre-
ated by Auburn students and provide students with the opportunity to reconsider, revise, and reflect on prior learning experiences.

For better or worse, technology is the future. Whether it takes the form of a Facebook page or a scholarly Web site, technology permeates our lives. The value of using ePortfolios relative to paper for a required portfolio assignment was documented by the University of Washington (October 2006). These researchers reported that the strongest ePortfolios submitted by students were equal to or better than the strongest paper portfolios. But “technological competence” does not consist of mastering a single narrow skill or technique. Rather, it is an approach to technology that comprises learning, adapting, and reconfiguring technology for useful purposes. In a recent longitudinal study (Ramanau, Hosein, and Jones 2010), students in fourteen different courses at five different universities were tracked for their use of technology for social and study purposes. The findings suggest that while younger students are frequent users of technology for social purposes, they are less adept at utilizing technology for academic purposes. Obviously, students come to Auburn with varying degrees of technological competence, but even the most technologically savvy students do not always know the full features of the technologies they use, may not have opportunities to experiment with new technologies, and may not be enrolled in programs where technological skills are taught rather than merely expected. Building technological competence requires teaching students to learn for life, not merely to master a perishable skill set that may soon become obsolete. A good part of learning technology requires the ability to use all available resources to gain confidence and competence with different technological tools. However, experience can expedite the learning process: as a student gains hands-on experience with one technology, it becomes easier to acquire and master others. It should be expected that students will be more competent in certain areas than in others since it is almost as difficult to master all aspects of technology as it would be to become an expert in all sub-fields of any discipline. Still, producing a professional ePortfolio will give students exposure to and practice in mastering commonly used technologies that will help them discover, learn, and adapt to other technologies as they emerge and evolve. The ePortfolio Project also allows faculty and students to think carefully about issues of copyright and fair use of visual materials, about the possibilities and constraints of digital technologies, and about the interaction of technology with issues of privacy, free speech, and identity.

Chang’s (2001) study of Web-based learning noted that ePortfolios allow students to make choices about their own learning and become self-directed learners, choosing which technologies they need for their own purposes and mastering those that are most essential in the process. In addition, surveys of students using an ePortfolio system at Penn State concluded that students highly value learning the skills that enable them to publish on the Web (Johnson, Hsieh & Kidwai 2007). Many other institutions have established ePortfolio systems that allow students to reflect on and showcase their learning experiences. Though several of these are embedded in specific disciplines like Nursing and Education where accreditation agencies require assessment at the individual student documents level, others focus on interdisciplinary minors or certificates added to existing majors (e.g. Louisiana State University’s Communication Across the Curriculum Program and their Distin-
surveys at http://cxc.lsu.edu/Portfolios.html). As of 2012, the AAC&U records over 12,000 students enrolled in ePortfolio courses, with over 400 universities using ePortfolios. This movement is global, spanning a multitude of countries (Clark and Eynon 2012). So many universities have adopted ePortfolios, in fact, that an International Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research was formed in 2001 and has enrolled 54 different institutions from around the world, including many land-grant institutions in six different cohort groups (see details at http://ncepr.org/).

**Surveys of Alumni and Employers**

Surveys of alumni in a wide range of disciplines identify oral and written communication as essential to success, though most employers expect students to have both a broad range of skills and specific in-depth knowledge in their field (Hart Research Associates 2010). The AAC&U survey of employers found that 89% identified communicating effectively, orally and in writing, an essential skill they not only expect of college graduates but also the number one area which they believe colleges need to emphasize more strongly (Hart Research Associates 2010). This same study indicated that employers, no matter the size of the company, expect graduates to handle more complex problems and connect their classroom learning to internships, research experiences, and other hands-on experiences. As the AAC&U Vice President for Quality, Curriculum, and Assessment points out, ePortfolios allow prospective employers to see students’ abilities in a way they simply can’t in resumes, transcripts, or reference letters (Rhodes 2011). Local studies confirm that these skills are essential but not fully mastered by graduates. Auburn’s survey of alumni, for example, reported only 29.2% who thought their preparation in written communication was excellent (Office of Institutional Research and Assessment 2009). Likewise, only 28.6% of these alumni reported that their oral preparation was excellent, with 22.9% reporting that their preparation in this area was fair or poor. Since ePortfolios can include both written and oral artifacts, they allow students to practice both forms of communication.

**Focus Groups**

The QEP Exploratory Committee conducted eight focus groups—two each with advisors and faculty, one with graduate students, and three with undergraduate students. The total number of participants was seventy-five. The primary findings of needs and improvement for Auburn University across all focus groups were grouped into five key areas: 1) Better quality of instruction for greater engagement in large lecture classes; 2) Greater interdisciplinary approaches to programs through undergraduate projects and research; 3) Increased attention to academic support, advising, and career development; 4) More emphasis on professional skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication; and, 5) Expanded opportunities for study abroad and increase in global and cultural perspectives. The focus group information was used to develop and implement a campus-wide survey (described below) to provide broad-based feedback from all stakeholders, and to gain a deeper understanding of the general areas in which a QEP topic might be successful and well-supported.
Survey of the Campus Community

The QEP Exploratory Committee also conducted a survey which combined qualitative information from sources such as the focus groups and the strategic plan with quantitative information from National Survey of Student Engagement and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). The information was synthesized into a cohesive set of core areas that provided the best chance to identify QEP topics that would satisfy the guiding principles of delineating areas of greatest perceived need, and connecting selected topic to assessable learning outcomes consistent with on-going institutional self-assessment. In discussions with the full Committee, the survey was broadened in focus to meet the needs of all stake-holders, not just students. The resulting Quality Enhancement Plan Topic Survey Instrument was launched on January 31, 2011 via the QEP Web site using the Qualtrics survey tool. The response to the survey was extensive and broad-based with 239 respondents. This information resulted in the identification of the top eleven QEP topic areas that were of greatest interest to survey respondents, and the top ten most desirable skills and abilities for Auburn students.

In both the survey and focus group sessions, the importance of including communication in the QEP project was clear since communication received more responses as an important skill for Auburn graduates than any other identified skill. In that same survey, writing experiences were also identified as important for Auburn graduates, with scores only slightly less (19) than hands-on experiences (25) and critical thinking (21). In the focus groups conducted by the QEP Exploratory Committee, communication, critical thinking, and job skills were among the consistent threads mentioned across all groups. Improving opportunities for integrating material across courses was also mentioned as important. Though the CLA results have demonstrated that Auburn students improve their critical thinking and analytical abilities over the course of their experiences here, this “value added” improvement may well be lost on Auburn’s increasingly bright students if they are not provided with challenging learning experiences. In the QEP Exploratory Committee’s survey asking how much emphasis Auburn should place on particular areas, activities that help develop critical thinking had the highest mean score of the 19 areas listed; of 239 respondents, 179 gave activities that develop critical thinking heavy emphasis, while another 44 gave it some emphasis. On that same survey, critical thinking was second only to hands-on experiences.

Interviews with Individuals and Impacted Units

As part of the process of gathering information, members of the QEP Development Committee interviewed individuals across campus whose units would be impacted by the spread of ePortfolios through a range of disciplines. The Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and the Instructional Multimedia Group, two units that provide pedagogical support to faculty, were consulted about the impact of ePortfolios on the services they provide and their capacity to increase appropriate services. Both agreed to expand existing workshops to include support for faculty and departments that want to require or encourage professional ePortfolios from their students. The Ralph Brown Draughon Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, the Miller Writing Center, and Auburn University Career Center—units that provide support and training to students—were also consulted. All areas agreed to provide different kinds of support—whether with the production of
documents, presentation space, tutoring support for document development, or employer/audience counseling. Initially, units will be able to provide services with their existing resources, but as the number of disciplines requiring portfolios grows, additional staff and equipment support may be needed. These concerns were incorporated into the budget and timeline. In addition, individual meetings were held with the Department Chairs and Associate Deans and their suggestions were incorporated into the draft document as well.

The Association for Authentic, Experiential, and Experience-Based Learning (AAEEBL)

AAEEBL is the main communication forum and collaboration venue for the international ePortfolio community. The QEP Development Committee therefore recommended that Auburn join AAEEBL as an institutional member, which was approved. As part of the Committee’s exploratory work, two Committee members attended the AAEEBL Conference on ePortfolios at Virginia Tech in November 2011. There they had the opportunity to talk with ePortfolio coordinators at other universities, students who are doing ePortfolios, and vendors of ePortfolio software. They returned from the conference with a list of guiding principles and ideas for further action (see Appendix IV for summary notes). The insights and information obtained at the AAEEBL Virginia Tech conference had a strong influence on the Committee’s subsequent work and recommendations, especially those having to do with administrative structure, the decision to emphasize career or professional ePortfolios, and the decision to de-emphasize technology in the implementation plan and the recommended budget. Similarly, two Committee members attended the AAEEBL National Conference on ePortfolios in Boston in July 2012. The additional examples and information they gathered (see Appendix IV) led to reshaping the implementation plan to incorporate staged implementation and to reallocating resources to faculty and students rather than investing in a software package.

Consultation Visit by Dr. Kathleen Yancey

On March 27-28, 2012, the QEP Development Committee invited Dr. Kathleen Yancey of Florida State University (see Appendix V for an overview of Dr. Yancey’s credentials) to come to Auburn for a consultation visit. In her day and a half at Auburn, Dr. Yancey had a working lunch with potential ePortfolio participants and interested faculty members, received a tour of the Career Center, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, and the Learning Commons in the Ralph Brown Draughon Library, an open-concept student study space that also houses common student support services like the Miller Writing Center. Dr. Yancey, who had been furnished in advance with a summary of the QEP Committee’s work to date, including the student learning outcomes, the draft budget, and a draft timeline. The QEP Development Committee met with Dr. Yancey twice for in-depth discussions and she provided a detailed critique of the draft documents during these discussions (see Appendix V for key points and recommendations from those discussions).

Inclusion of Auburn Community in Selection and Development

Throughout the selection and development of the ePortfolio Project, care has been taken to include the Auburn campus community. Both the QEP Exploratory and the QEP Development Committees includ-
ed broad representation and both disseminated information and solicited input from all stakeholders throughout the process.

**Information Dissemination**

The QEP Exploratory Committee’s Information Dissemination Plan Subcommittee recommended several methods of disseminating information to the campus community in December 2010. An interactive Web site, maintained by the Office of Communications and Marketing, was established in January 2011 to provide information to, and solicit feedback from, the campus community. Presentations were made in the spring of 2011 to various campus agencies such as the Administrative and Professional Assembly and the Student Government Association. Katelyn Boston, the undergraduate student representative on the QEP Exploratory Committee, took responsibility for distributing flyers to increase the level of student involvement. As described above, the QEP Exploratory Committee conducted focus groups, administered a survey, collected concept submissions, and invited pre-proposals to select the most viable topic for the QEP. Likewise, the QEP Development Committee conducted surveys to identify potential participants, circulated drafts of the implementation plan, made presentations to University Senate and the Student Government Association, and solicited input from students. Laura Elmer, the graduate student representative on the QEP Development Committee, prepared a video of students talking about why they were interested in ePortfolios and what they had learned from the process of assembling a professional ePortfolio. She also prepared a walk-through demonstration of her own and other students’ professional ePortfolios to share with student and faculty groups.

**Survey, Faculty Forums, and ePortfolio Webinars**

In January-February 2012, the QEP Development Committee compiled an initial list of departments and programs using portfolios of any kind and administered a survey to collect further information about the extent of interest on campus in developing professional ePortfolios which give students the opportunity to reflect on their studies and experiences across multiple courses and present their work in a public Web site that they would be able to reference as they made the transition to post-graduate life. The survey generated over 60 responses from administrators and faculty members in all colleges as well as from the Career Center, the Graduate School, and the Libraries. From that survey we determined that those interested fell into four broad categories: 1) those already doing digital portfolios of some kind; 2) those doing paper portfolios who wished to migrate to ePortfolios; 3) those with no current portfolios; and, 4) support units. Based on enrollments in these programs in the 2010-11 academic year (the latest figures available to us at the time) we estimated a potential involvement of 4,065 undergraduates (out of a student body of 20,000, or 20%) and 1,262 graduate students (out of a student body of 5,000, or 25%). Since Dr. Yancey had suggested that “critical mass” would occur at 25-30% of the campus participating, the QEP Development Committee concluded that the interest was sufficient to begin the implementation with a focus on professional ePortfolios. The QEP Development Committee asked the University Writing Committee to add a question about the use of ePortfolios to their Review of Writing Plans scheduled for fall 2012 as another way of identifying those already doing ePortfolios and those who might be interest-
ed in doing so in the future. The list of potential participants has continued to grow throughout the process of developing and vetting the project so that it included approximately 150 individuals by October 2012.

In order to capitalize on the initial survey of potential participants, the QEP Development Committee organized a lunchtime forum for interested faculty members on February 16, 2012. Sixteen faculty members and administrators attended the forum, which opened with an introduction to professional ePortfolios (with examples) and a summary of the Committee’s work to date, and then proceeded to small-group discussions. The participants identified other administrators and faculty members who could be invited to future events, shared what they were doing with portfolios or ePortfolios in their colleges and departments, discussed challenges they had encountered or could foresee in implementing ePortfolios, made recommendations for promoting the adoption of ePortfolios across campus, and made suggestions for the QEP Development Committee to consider. Concerns centered on the need for an infrastructure to support faculty and students, the questionable desirability of selecting a common ePortfolio software platform, the importance of encouraging students to start working towards a professional ePortfolio early in their university career, and the difficulty and necessity of achieving faculty buy-in in the face of other, competing demands. As described above, a similar forum was organized when Kathleen Yancey visited campus in March. A third forum was held on July 23 to update the participants about the AAEEBL Boston conference and gather input on the draft implementation plan which was then circulating. A revised draft was released to the University Community on September 10 and a fourth forum was held October 3 to solicit comments on the second draft and answer questions.

In early 2012, the Libraries began hosting a series of Webinars on various ePortfolio software packages and advertising those Webinars to the Auburn community. Entitled “Exploring ePortfolio Technologies: Reviewing Platforms and Approaches for Teaching, Learning and Beyond”, the series was conducted jointly by AAEEBL, ePortfolio Action and Communication (EPAC), and ePortfolio California. It ran from September 2011 through April 2012 and covered 14 ePortfolio software packages, including Digication, Desire2Learn, Mahara, TaskStream, Chalk and Wire, and RCampus.

Finally, members of the QEP Development Committee talked with department chairs and individual faculty members involved with existing ePortfolio courses and attended a seminar conducted by faculty in the Consumer and Design Sciences Department which showcased the ePortfolios being completed and the curriculum which supported ePortfolios in all three tracks of that major: Apparel Design, Interior Design, and Merchandising. Faculty members outside the Committee contributed to the construction of the implementation plan and the final written document by reviewing drafts in process and serving as consultants for particular sections. Gary Wagoner, Chair of the Art Department, for example, helped compose the explanation of design elements and principles in Sidebar 4 and Tracy Donald and Clay Yarbrough, members of the Office of Accessibility, evaluated the four platforms selected for support and recommended that WordPress and Google Sites be listed as most suitable for those who rely on a screen reader.
Public Vetting of the Draft Document

As noted above, a draft of the implementation was posted on the QEP Web site in June 2012 and an email notification was sent to the participant list. On July 23 a participant forum was held to solicit direct feedback and encourage conversation. Throughout the summer and early fall, members of the QEP Development Committee met with individuals who had expressed interest and with campus leaders and opinion shapers. This process led to the identification of the Year 1 Cohort participants as those most ready to join the project. A presentation outlining the process, highlighting the planned actions, and alerting the community to the next steps in the process was made to University Senate at their first meeting of the fall term August 21, 2012. Laura Elmer gave a demonstration of her own professional ePortfolio developed for her dual Master’s degree in English Literature and Rhetoric and Composition. She also showed undergraduate examples from the summer pilot ePortfolio Student Ambassador Program (see Figure 4 for an ePortfolio Student Ambassador example). Finally, a video of student interviews was played. These materials were posted on the Senate Web site and on the QEP site. A similar presentation was made to the University Writing Committee at their first meeting.

Figure 4: Karissa Womack, Auburn University, Creative Writing Senior

I would call myself technically challenged. I can use Microsoft Word, but that’s about it. Creating an ePortfolio is forcing me to learn how to make a Web site, which is really great. I don’t know any HTML coding, so I’m using WIX, but I’m making it all from scratch.
In early September a revised draft of the implementation plan was posted and the entire Auburn University community was invited to make comments. AU Daily announcements and email alerted faculty, students, administrators, and staff to the open-comment period. Throughout this period presentations on the ePortfolio Project were made to inform members of the Auburn community, including the Provost Council, the President’s Executive Group, the Student Government Association, the Academic Deans’ Council, the Academic Advisors’ Council, and faculty, students, and industry advisory groups associated with the Year 1 Cohort participants. A list of Frequently Asked Questions was compiled from these sessions (see Appendix VI). These were incorporated into the Web site as well.
Student Learning Outcomes

The ePortfolio Project has four primary student learning outcomes developed from the institutional data and review of scholarship on ePortfolios previously described. Each outcome can be broken into multiple, measurable components, though these measures will not apply uniformly across all departments and programs. Indeed, different programs will emphasize some outcomes and de-emphasize others. The ePortfolio Project invites participation in ways that meet current capabilities and the objectives of individual programs and/or departments while encouraging growth in the learning outcomes that individual programs and/or departments find initially more difficult to achieve. Based on the review of research and best practices, on input from campus stakeholders, and on the consultation with Dr. Kathleen Yancey, the outcomes are separated into those that will be visible in the final professional ePortfolio and those that are necessary to the completion of the ePortfolio. The outcomes often overlap and specific components will vary across different disciplines. In the case of Technical Competency, for example, the components focus on general competence in the use of technology without requiring specific tools or techniques, but some programs will want students to master specific technologies. The components for Visual Literacy were developed in consultation with faculty members in the Departments of Art, Graphic Design, Architecture, Apparel Design, and Agricultural Communication. Professor Gary Wagoner, Chair of the Art Department, contributed definitions for the design elements and principles provided in the Sidebar 4. Reviewers of early drafts were encouraged to examine these definitions carefully to see if they were accurate for other visually-oriented disciplines.

Design Elements and Principles

Color: harmony and contrast achieved through hue, saturation, brightness
Value: light and dark
Shape: simple and geometric (triangles, circles) or complex and representational or abstract
Space: organization of empty area between shapes
Form: composition and structure of the design to integrate elements into a unified whole
Balance: equilibrium created with similar emphasis of either side of an axis
Hierarchy: emphasis of some components over others
Scale: relative size of design elements
Unity: integration and fluidity, organization of elements to create an effect
Dominance: central importance and strong emphasis; creation of visual focus
Similarity: harmony and unity relying on similarities and repetitions
Contrast: separation through variation of value, color, shape
Movement: lines, shapes, gradations that carry the eye through the composition
Rhythm/Pattern: repetition, alternation, ordering of motifs
Originality: fresh approach achieved through inventiveness and exploration

Sidebar 4: Design Elements & Principles
Outcome 1: Effective Communication

Students will be effective communicators who demonstrate an understanding of rhetorical situations (see Sidebar 5), including addressing audiences beyond the academic community. They will demonstrate their ability to communicate through a variety of artifacts and the multi-media form of the professional ePortfolio as an online Web site.

Components of Outcome 1

Visible in The Final Product of The Professional ePortfolio:

1.1 Students will demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively to an audience beyond the academic community through a variety of artifacts.

   a. If oral presentations are selected to convey a message, students will exhibit their ability to craft and deliver information that is effective and appropriate for the audience, purpose, and situation.

   b. If visual materials (like graphs, charts, photographs, multi-media, etc.) are incorporated into documents, students will demonstrate their ability to use these visual materials to clearly contribute to effective communication while following expectations within their discipline, including appropriate attribution.

1.2 Students will craft different kinds of documents using conventions expected of professionals in their field.

1.3 Students will use appropriate language to address their audiences beyond the academic community.

Processes Necessary in Preparing The Professional ePortfolio:

1.4 Students will seek and use feedback from others to revise documents to include in their professional ePortfolio.

1.5 Students will understand how to work within different rhetorical situations, that is, how different audiences or forms impact the construction, selection, and arrangement of documents.
Outcome 2: Critical Thinking through Reflection

Students will demonstrate critical thinking by synthesizing their learning and experiences across multiple courses and/or activities (see Sidebar 6). They will make an argument about their experiences, learning, and abilities through a final Web-based product aimed toward a specific audience by selecting appropriate artifacts that illustrate those experiences and by revising earlier artifacts as necessary for the professional ePortfolio’s audience. They will include introductions or contextual explanations that frame these artifacts for the audience and create a professional identity (see Figure 5 for a student example).

Components of Outcome 2

Visible in The Final Product of The Professional ePortfolio:

2.1 Students will select appropriate artifacts that illustrate their learning across multiple experiences.

2.2 Students will illustrate connections between various documents, experiences, and projects by composing short introductions and creating links between documents.

2.3 Students will synthesize their learning and experiences across multiple courses by selecting representative artifacts and/or activities and arranging those artifacts in a manner that illustrates the connections.

2.4 Students will craft a professional identity through the decisions they make about selection, presentation, and arrangement of artifacts.

Processes Necessary in Preparing The Professional ePortfolio:

2.5 Students will use reflection in evaluating their experiences, learning, and abilities through their review of artifacts they have collected over the course of their academic careers.

2.6 Students will use reflection to make decisions about how to present their experiences within a professional context.

Reflection in a Professional ePortfolio

A professional ePortfolio is not merely a collection of prior assignments, but an intentional selection of artifacts. Reflection is thus a crucial feature of a professional ePortfolio and may appear in short narratives that explain or describe the artifact, provide the context for the experience, help readers navigate between artifacts or synthesize the evidence provided in various documents for a career objective statement or personal philosophy.

Reflections on earlier experiences may appear in blog postings or self-assessments.

Reflection also occurs outside the final product in process logs, journals or blogs that are not made public but that nonetheless influence the message and design of the final professional ePortfolio.

Sidebar 6: Reflection in a Professional ePortfolio
Outcome 3: Technical Competency

Students will use technology to produce a professional ePortfolio that is appropriate for an audience of prospective employers and/or graduate study committees. They will include a range of artifacts, choosing the best medium for presenting the material.

Components of Outcome 3

Visible in The Final Product of The Professional ePortfolio:

3.1 Students will demonstrate that they are competent with the technology tools (hardware and software) necessary to create artifacts for the professional ePortfolio.

3.2 Students will use appropriate technology to embed and display artifacts appropriate to their discipline and prospective careers/advanced study to create a Web-based professional ePortfolio.

3.3 Students will demonstrate through the way they select and arrange artifacts an understanding of the uses/abuses and the limits/possibilities in the evolving nature of on-line conventions and the differences between professional ePortfolios and social networking sites.

Processes Necessary in Preparing The Professional ePortfolio:

3.4 Students will show proficiency with different technologies to produce and archive artifacts.

3.5 Students will make judgments about the appropriateness of the technologies they use in creating a professional ePortfolio.

I've seen the need for any student to tell their story in a creative, visual way, regardless of major. Why? Because we're all visual people to some extent.

Figure 5: Tara Jones, Auburn University, Accounting Junior
Students will test the accessibility of their professional ePortfolio in various operating systems and browsers and resolve any technological difficulties that interfere with access to and/or display of the ePortfolio.

**Outcome 4: Visual Literacy**

Students will demonstrate an ability to construct documents that combine visual materials of various kinds (charts, graphs, photographs, drawings, etc.) with textual, graphic, and/or audio or video documents and files (see Sidebar 7). They will demonstrate an understanding of how to use visual materials to effectively communicate in electronic media as they construct the Web-based professional ePortfolio.

**Components of Outcome 4:**

**Visible in The Final Product of The Professional ePortfolio:**

4.1 Students will demonstrate an understanding of design principles as they select and arrange visual materials to effectively communicate through a Web-based professional ePortfolio.

4.2 Students will produce a professional ePortfolio with a navigational design that readers can follow.

4.3 Students will demonstrate an understanding of design conventions in the target profession and, where necessary, acknowledge sources and secure permission to use the specific visual materials they include.

4.4 Students will demonstrate an ability to incorporate effective and appropriate visual materials of various kinds (charts, graphs, photographs, drawings, etc.) into both artifacts and the design of the Web-based professional ePortfolio.

**Processes Necessary in Preparing the Professional ePortfolio:**

4.5 Students will make judgments about the visual appearance and effectiveness of their professional ePortfolio for a professional audience.

4.6 Students will understand how to work within different rhetorical situations, that is, how different audiences and purposes impact the selection and arrangement of visual materials.
Literature Review and Best Practices

Why ePortfolios

In the early 90s, when the term “e” was coined to categorize things as “electronic,” an “e” version of the portfolio began to occur in academics. Where disciplines had traditionally used paper portfolios, the transition was more or less natural. However, due to changes in post-secondary learning, as well as curricular and accountability considerations, ePortfolios became, and still are, a growing and evolving practice at many institutions. The growth of ePortfolios can be linked to four major catalysts:

- ePortfolios answered the call for more student-centered pedagogical practices
- ePortfolios focused on student reflection and synthesis across multiple disciplines and experiences
- ePortfolios pointed students toward thinking about life-long goals or to specifically connecting their learning experiences to a real-world audience
- ePortfolios responded to pressure from economic instability that demanded more overt links between education and work-place skills

Thus, the ePortfolio movement was aligned with educational trends occurring at the post-secondary level (Clark and Eynon 2012).

The first three of these catalysts to growth are related to ePortfolios paralleling new pedagogical approaches and the heightened interest in digital communication tools and technology. When other “texts”—like documents, pictures, and music—became digitized, it became easier to imagine that archiving materials should be online as well. And, as consumers of these digital texts began to manipulate their arrangement and experiment with their own multi-media compositions, ePortfolios fit the need for both a place to collect different kinds of artifacts and a vehicle to showcase the educational and professional versions of these texts that composers created. Further, the ePortfolio provided an academic or professional answer to digital identities that students so frequently invest in and engage with in online social communities (Yancey 2009).

The last of the major reasons for the growth of ePortfolios stemmed from the pressure of economic instability. Both the force of increased accountability within higher education and the desire for more stable employment solidified the usefulness of ePortfolios for higher education. Responding to an increased demand for accountability and evidence-based decisions about curriculum, pedagogy, and program development, ePortfolios are often used to facilitate assessment. When students collected and reflected on their work from their own educational experiences and assembled the results into an ePortfolio, faculty were able to use this purposeful collection to derive a deeper understanding of students’ learning experiences. At the same time, ePortfolios allowed students and programs to prepare for the fluidity of the future by showcasing exemplary work to specific audiences like prospective employers. With an emphasis on reflection, ePortfolios also offered a place for students to think about...
multiple disciplines in one space, creating an argument or representation of themselves as a “whole student” (Yancey 2009) with a life that extended beyond classroom instruction to encompass co-curricular experiences that shaped their identity, interests, and values. The influence of these four cultural changes resulted in explosive ePortfolio growth.

Learning Associated with ePortfolios

The simple definition of an ePortfolio is an electronic collection of student work. However, there are three definitions by which most ePortfolios at the higher education level are categorized: 1) a learning-based ePortfolio created to enhance metacognition and deep learning, 2) an assessment-based ePortfolio used to evaluate student competencies, and 3) the showcase or professional ePortfolio built to display student work specifically to an audience outside the immediate academic classroom. Student ePortfolios may be composed of components that fit more than one of these three categories, but these specific terms help educators choose and explain their purposes for using ePortfolios when communicating with students (Clark and Eynon 2012). As ePortfolios grew, the pedagogy associated with helping students create individual artifacts and then assemble them in meaningful ways also grew. Early evidence that reflection was essential to the critical thinking and decision making processes required to synthesize learning experiences into a coherent package, to find connections between disparate activities or experiences, and to reconsider and revise earlier artifacts for a new audience and purpose led to a three-word phrase to describe the three most important practices in student creation of ePortfolios: “Collect, select, and reflect” (Yancey 2009). This mantra of collect, select, reflect allowed educators to distinguish the meaningful learning that occurs in the process and product of an ePortfolio from online databases or “document dumps” where students simply stored their work.

Reflection has been repeatedly shown to be a key element of ePortfolios because of the ways it fosters student learning and self-awareness. In a study of what students valued in the ePortfolio process required of first-year students at the University of Denver since 2007 (Campbell, et al. 2011) students reported that keeping

I am personally really excited about the e-portfolio project at Auburn University and believe it will enhance the students’ learning since it: 1) provides them with a tool that will force them to reflect on some of the material that they have learned, which is something that we do not always do well when teaching classes; 2) provides them with a holistic look at themselves identifying their own strengths and weakness, which is very important for future development.

Fadel Megahed, Assistant Professor, Industrial and Systems Engineering
the ePortfolio helped them achieve one or more of the learning outcomes for the course. In addition, more than half said that the reflection process included in the ePortfolio helped them develop as writers because it provided them with additional insights about their strengths, weaknesses, and changes that had occurred in their writing over the course. Another 25% indicated that reflection-as-presentation required as they introduced or contextualized artifacts in the ePortfolio helped them see how the assignments were designed to teach the learning outcomes of the course. Another study conducted by faculty in different disciplines (economics and business administration, sociology, and consumer sciences) at Framingham State College (2009) hypothesized that students using an ePortfolio to organize written work by cross-curricular skill would have an increased awareness of these skills at the end of the process and be better able to assess their own improvement in these skills than students who did not assemble an ePortfolio. Faculty review of the ePortfolios noted several qualitative differences in the reflections between the two groups, including that those who created an ePortfolio had a better awareness of audience and context compared to those who did not complete an ePortfolio, a conclusion echoed by the student in Figure 6. Likewise, in a study by Acker et al. (2007) students reported that they developed skills in defining and assessing their own learning artifacts, could trace their individual development and growth across different courses and experiences, were able to draw connections across and among different disciplines, and had assumed more responsibility for their own learning and writing.

Though ePortfolios are often associated with meaningful learning experiences for students, research has begun to establish the elements that make creating an ePortfolio valuable. A study at LaGuardia Community College (2006) found that intensive faculty and student support is vital for ePortfolio success, with strong correlations between increased support and increased impact of ePortfolio processes. For example, faculty who engaged in a more sustained faculty development process related to ePortfolios were more likely to increase student engagement in the ePortfolio assignments and improved pass rates for the course compared to faculty who opted for more limited introduction and support. Similarly, students who had support were more likely to report they enjoyed building their ePortfolios and valued ePortfolios as a tool for learning about themselves and preparing for their future careers than were students who only attended limited workshops. It is also clear from a review of the research that there is a good deal of variety in how ePortfolios are introduced and supported. While some programs will find it advantageous to develop new courses to achieve specific outcomes, others will wish to modify existing courses or even to use courses offered by other programs. Alternatively, some programs already offer courses and other experiences that introduce the learning objectives or allow students to practice those objectives in new contexts. The critical point is that flexibility is a very useful best practice in the design and implementation process of documenting relevant learning outcomes associated with ePortfolios (Kleemann 2008).

Scholarship and Best Practices Included in the ePortfolio Project
The implementation plan was created with this research, and that cited elsewhere in this document, in mind. All central components of the plan were informed by scholarship, the review of the institutional assessment data described earlier, consultations with colleagues at other institutions, and discussions
with faculty, students, staff, and administrators at Auburn. Key principles involved in the ePortfolio Project include:

- Identify learning outcomes and embed those in the ePortfolio Project
- Focus on promoting student engagement in the learning that can occur in the process of creating a professional ePortfolio
- Treat the professional ePortfolio as both a process and a product and develop support for faculty and students for both of these components
- Allow for flexibility in achieving the outcomes, but provide guidelines and models for faculty and students
- Stage the implementation to match expectations with appropriate resources that support success for students, faculty, departments, and support units
- Assess the project in multiple ways, monitor that data yearly, and make systemic adjustments in response to faculty, student, and employer feedback and other assessment data
- Encourage research connected to ePortfolios and student learning

Students don’t make that connection (between experiences). They just continue to record, shoot video, or write. But no one will ever see or listen to or read it unless it is presented in a certain way.

Figure 6: Alessio Summerfield, Auburn University, Radio, Television, Video and Film Junior
**Action Items**

**What We Will Do: Staged Implementation**

The ePortfolio Project builds upon the Auburn University Writing Initiative and utilizes academic support units that are already in place to provide workshops for faculty and students to supplement in-class assignments. In our research into other ePortfolio projects, we learned that carefully managing the implementation process to match resources was essential to success. Programs or departments that implement a professional ePortfolio as a graduation requirement need to consider where in their curriculum students will create appropriate artifacts, practice reflection, and learn the technological and visual literacy skills necessary to assemble the final ePortfolio. Adjusting curricular requirements, creating appropriate assignments, providing feedback to students on individual artifacts and on their ePortfolio as a whole takes time and collaboration among several faculty members in a program. Likewise, students who try to assemble an ePortfolio on their own need support to develop the reflective components that promote critical thinking. Simply uploading artifacts into a Web site does not provide the enhanced learning that the ePortfolio Project intends to promote, even if the end result is attractive. Similarly, although uploading artifacts to a central location may showcase student work, such an online collection without written context is unlikely to yield a finished product that promotes student success.

After careful consideration and discussion, we have devised a staged implementation process (see Figure 7) that focuses on: 1) Developing the administrative infrastructure necessary to implement, manage, and grow the ePortfolio Project; 2) Supporting student learning through an expansion of existing academic support programs and increased co-curricular activities like workshops, inter-session courses and expanded on-line resources; 3) Supporting faculty in developing and extending curriculum, mentoring students throughout the process of creating their ePortfolios, and connecting the ePortfolio Project to their teaching and research; and, 4) Conducting assessment of the project to provide data for continued refinement of the project. The ePortfolio Project aims to support all potential users, but has chosen a limited set of participants for Year 1 (2012-13) by considering who is most ready and interest-
ed in doing the ground work necessary for successful implementation, how those who are ready repre-
sent the Auburn University community, and what kinds of models these participants will be able to
provide to subsequent adopters.

Departmental development of ePortfolios fall into three different categories: majors that already require
a type of professional ePortfolio; majors that require paper portfolios or senior projects but are interest-
ed in moving those to be ePortfolios; and, majors that have no requirement either paper or digital, but
have expressed an interest in developing an ePortfolio. Within these three broad stages there is consid-
erable variation in the extent to which curriculum supports the required final product. The emphasis on
visual literacy, technical competence, or critical thinking through reflection is also quite variable across
different disciplines. Though all majors now attend to writing/communication relevant to the disciplines,
the degree of faculty involvement in writing instruction described by the department’s writing plan also
varies. Auburn University includes many professional programs that are influenced by the standards
of professional organizations and accrediting bodies and their needs and curriculum are very different
from majors where students follow multiple paths and pursue different careers upon graduation. Even
where programs are more advanced in the use of ePortfolios and have appropriate courses in place to
support the creation of a professional ePortfolio, there are not always appropriate earlier opportunities
to practice the relevant skills. In such cases, though participation in the ePortfolio Project does not nec-
essarily require equal attention to all four of the learning outcomes, the four learning outcomes provide
a matrix for future development. Thus, there is room for continued growth and refinement to strengthen
existing efforts as well as encouraging the addition of ePortfolios where they do not currently exist. The
staged implementation plan allows us to develop models suitable for these differences. We expect the
cohort groups to be weighted toward academic programs in the initial years and include more student
groups and co-curricular programs as the project progresses.

The level of support offered to students for the processes necessary for creating an ePortfolio also
varies significantly. In some cases, even where there is no current portfolio requirement, course work
throughout the major includes assignments that help students generate appropriate artifacts or pro-
vides instruction relevant to ePortfolios. For example, course assignments may ask students to create
blogs, design Web sites, or compose documents for a future career. Architecture encourages students
to create ePortfolios but provides support only through extra-curricular workshops. Some student
organizations, like the New Media Club, have already been helping each other to create ePortfolios
and we believe working through student groups to ensure the final products have fostered the learning
necessary for success is important. Co-curricular units like Study Abroad, Undergraduate Research, or
Student Affairs are also well situated to support students in creating professional ePortfolios that include
experimental learning. Our staged implementation is designed to develop infrastructure and appropriate
support for students and the faculty and staff involved in co-curricular activities.
### Year 1 (2012–13): Preparation

#### FALL 2012 - SUMMER 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Inform campus community through vetting of implementation plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Form Search Committee to hire Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Hire other personnel for Office of University Writing as required</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Establish Web site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Develop plan for appropriate programs with Support Subcommittee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer ePortfolio grants to Cohort participants based on their identified needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Establish Steering Committee with Subcommittees</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT STUDENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Initiate Student Ambassadors Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Have finalist candidates offer workshop demonstrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer get-started workshops for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Develop introductory in-class demonstrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Develop training programs for peer tutors in existing support units</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT FACULTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Have Cohort 1 participants develop models and refine implementation plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Have finalist candidates offer workshops or demonstrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer get-started workshops for faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Work with Cohort 1 on curriculum, course assignments, and assessment; create models for next adopters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Send faculty to ePortfolio conferences</td>
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<tr>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Monitor participation in programs and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Collect testimonials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Evaluate student portfolios to test rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Collect base-line data from support units regarding requests related to ePortfolios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Collect progress reports from Cohort participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Year 1 (2012–13): Preparation*
### Table 2: Year 2 (2013—14): Initial Launch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FALL 2013 - SUMMER 2014</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Select Cohort 2 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer ePortfolio grants based on identified needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORT STUDENTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Establish ePortfolio Peer Tutors Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Continue ePortfolio Ambassador program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer student ePortfolio grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Develop exemplary ePortfolio awards</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORT FACULTY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Have information fair event where Cohort 1 participants present their work to the campus community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer programs and workshops for faculty through various support units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Develop mentoring awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSESSMENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Monitor participation in programs and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Monitor data from support units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Collect progress reports from Cohort participants; adjust implementation plan</td>
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### Years 3—5 (2014-2017): Growth and Refinement

**THREE YEAR SPAN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
<th>SUPPORT STUDENTS</th>
<th>SUPPORT FACULTY</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Select Cohort 3, 4, 5 participants</td>
<td>■ Expand support through student groups and co-curricular activities</td>
<td>■ Have information fair event where Cohorts from previous year(s) present their work to the campus community</td>
<td>■ Monitor participation in programs and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Monitor new technology</td>
<td>■ Continue ePortfolio Ambassador and ePortfolio Peer Tutors programs</td>
<td>■ Offer programs and workshops for faculty through various support units</td>
<td>■ Monitor data from support units and add peer tutors as required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer ePortfolio grants based on identified needs</td>
<td>■ Recognize exemplary ePortfolios</td>
<td>■ Recognize outstanding ePortfolio mentors</td>
<td>■ Collect progress reports from Cohort participants and grant recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Offer grants to support expansion or refinement of existing ePortfolio programs</td>
<td>■ Continue student ePortfolio grants</td>
<td>■ Develop research connections and plans for supporting those projects</td>
<td>■ Use submissions for exemplary awards for comparative assessment of learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Years 3—5 (2014-2017): Growth and Refinement*
Year 6 (2017—18): Comprehensive Assessment and Revision

### DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE
- Conduct comprehensive assessment including surveys, compiling data from Years 1-3
- Report results of assessment and provide update on project to campus community and senior leadership

### SUPPORT STUDENTS
- Continue programs, presentations, workshops, awards as in prior years

### SUPPORT FACULTY
- Continue programs, presentations, workshops, awards as in prior years

### ASSESSMENT
- Begin to compile report for SACSCOC
- Compile and evaluate data from prior years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL 2017 - SUMMER 2018</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUPPORT STUDENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUPPORT FACULTY</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASSESSMENT</td>
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Table 4: Year 6 (2017—18): Comprehensive Assessment and Revision

### Year 7 and on (2018 and on): Ensuring Success and Sustainability

The comprehensive assessment from Year 6 will serve as the basis for further development or modifications as well as providing the data and analysis for the required report to SACSCOC. While we assume the ePortfolio Project by that point will be well established, it is equally possible that additional refinements or continued support to selected programs will require a continuation of identified yearly cohort...
groups. The ePortfolio Project might also expand to include professional ePortfolios for faculty to be used in promotion and tenure review and such an expansion may well require additional programs for supporting the creation and evaluation of such ePortfolios. We believe this implementation plan needs to remain flexible enough to adjust to the situation that emerges and to utilize the assessment data to make subsequent decisions.

What We Will Do: Description of Action Items

1. Develop the Administrative Infrastructure:

The ePortfolio Project builds on the work begun by the Office of University Writing and is deeply connected to the curricular revisions to embed significant and discipline-specific writing into every major that the Director of University Writing already oversees. The project also requires coordination with other units like the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, the Career Center, the Instructional Multimedia Group, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, the Office of Accessibility, and the Miller Writing Center. But, it also requires dedicated personnel to: manage the logistics and content of faculty and student support; develop advertising and marketing to explain the project, promote its activities, and bring in new participants; and handle assessment data that will inform subsequent revisions and further development.

The Director of University Writing assumes responsibility for overseeing the ePortfolio Project with additional people hired to support the project including: the Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios, an Information Technology Specialist, an Instructional Technology Specialist, a Graduate Assistant for the Assistant Director of ePortfolios, and a student staff worker to assist with the additional administrative work that the Office of University Writing will assume with the addition of the ePortfolio Project. Existing personnel in the Office of University Writing will have some shifts in job responsibility to accommodate the project. See Figure 9 for Organizational Chart.

A. Search Committee to hire an Assistant Director of University Writing for the ePortfolio Project: Year 1 (fall 2012 – spring 2013). The Assistant Director for the ePortfolio Project becomes a member of the Office of University Writing team, but with responsibility for managing the ePortfolio Project. The search committee will be chaired by the Director of University Writing and include two members from the QEP Development Committee, two members from departments selected as Year 1 Cohort participants, one member from the academic support units involved in the project, one student representative, and others as deemed necessary to ensure balance and broad representation. (See Appendix VII for job description as posted). Finalist candidates will be asked to deliver workshops on ePortfolios to faculty and students during their campus visits. Position announcement was posted in October 2012 with a deadline for application materials of November 12, 2012. The Search Committee met on November 30, 2012 to make the preliminary screening cut, assign follow-up interviews with references, and determine the details of campus visits planned for late January, 2013.

B. Steering Committee: Year 1 (spring – summer 2013) – ongoing. The Steering Committee will be chaired by the Director and include the Assistant Director for ePortfolios and faculty
representatives from at least five colleges. The Steering Committee will help promote the ePortfolio Project, finalize the selection of each year’s cohort participants, determine the focus for and review the recommendations of the Grants and Awards Subcommittee for the yearly distribution of grants and awards, and monitor assessment of the project to make decisions about revisions and next steps. The Steering Committee will appoint Subcommittees to focus on specific areas of the project including:

iii. Technology: The ePortfolio Project makes use of technology, but it is not primarily about the technology. In our research and discussions with interested participants it became clear that no single software package would be appropriate for the entire campus. We recognize that technology is changing quickly enough that any program is likely to be quickly out of date. Professional ePortfolios need to move with students when they graduate, yet many commercial products privilege institutional assessment over the look or transferability of the final product. An initial matrix of requirements for an ePortfolio package was created based on comparisons done by AAEEBL, and Webinars on ePortfolio software possibilities were made available to the Auburn Community beginning in January 2012 with AU Daily announcements used to alert the community to these sessions. A student pilot group initiated during the summer of 2012 allowed us to test first-hand several free software packages. Consultations with other institutions about their software choices and the limits of those programs, as well as sessions where vendors demonstrated various packages were a focus for the committee members who attended the AAEEBL National ePortfolio Conference in Boston in July 2012. In the end, we concluded that investing significant resources into software seemed less important than ensuring that faculty and students were well supported. Therefore, no university-wide software package will be chosen. However, students and faculty can expect that the academic support units involved in the project will be able to help with the most common free software packages, including initially: Wix, Weebly, WordPress, and Google Sites. As noted earlier, members of the Office of Accessibility evaluated each of these programs and determined that WordPress and Google Sites were most suitable for those using a screen reader. Faculty and students may use other packages and test programs that have yet to be developed, but they cannot expect the various academic support units to assist with these other options. The Technology Subcommittee is charged with staying abreast of new developments in ePortfolio software, recommending which technology packages might be best suited to cohort participants’ needs, and recommending if any revisions to the initial decisions regarding technology packages are warranted.

iv. Assessment: The Assessment Subcommittee will work closely with the Assistant Director for ePortfolios and with the support units to manage the assessment of the ePortfolio Project as outlined below. This Subcommittee will analyze the data collected and make recommendations regarding revisions to the project. In Year 1 (2012-13) the Assessment Subcommittee will develop the process and form for cohort participants to make
Action Items

reports that provide the data necessary to evaluate and revise the ePortfolio Project and monitor the learning outcomes.

v. Support: The Support Subcommittee will consist of representatives from each of the academic support units involved in the ePortfolio Project. The subcommittee will decide on specific workshops, guest speakers, and other programs that support faculty and students and expand awareness of the project across campus. These ePortfolio-focused programs may be components of existing professional development efforts for faculty or support for students, but may also involve new programs like the ePortfolio Ambassadors and ePortfolio Peer Tutors.

vi. Grants and Awards: The Grants and Awards Subcommittee will be responsible for developing the process for giving recognition to students for exemplary professional ePortfolios and faculty mentors awards. They will also be responsible for determining the process for distributing grants, issuing the call for proposals, and reviewing and recommending to the Steering Committee which proposals should be funded. The Awards Subcommittee may included members of the Assessment Subcommittee when they are reviewing submissions for recognition, or they may arrange to share the submissions with the Assessment Subcommittee so that assessment as described below can be completed.

C. Monitor and Expand Existing Units Where ePortfolios Impact Existing Services: Units that offer support related to ePortfolios for students and/or faculty will be impacted by the ePortfolio Project. Increased traffic, requests for face-to-face or virtual support, expectations for workshops and on-line resources will require some existing support units to expand their current operations. For example, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab expects more students asking for individual help with the technology used for creating ePortfolios, creating audio or video documents, or understanding appropriate use of images. Likewise, the Miller Writing Center expects students will begin asking for help with reflection, with revising documents of all kinds, with blending text and images in documents and in the ePortfolio, and with conventions for referencing the source of visual materials. Since the Miller Writing Center already provides in-class mini lessons on various writing issues or kinds of writing, it will be important for the Assistant Directors for both the Miller Writing Center and the ePortfolio Project to work closely together to develop appropriate in-class mini lessons connected to ePortfolios. Similarly, the Career Center will need to expand its programs for employers to include information about professional ePortfolios and be prepared to include discussions about the differences between paper and online resumes in its programs for students. While staging the implementation to control the number of participants each year should help regulate the demand for support, units may need to add additional positions or combine job responsibilities to ensure more efficient use of resources. The ePortfolio Project is an opportunity for the support units to increase the coordination of their efforts Central to such efforts is the understanding that professional ePortfolios are not simply a final product,
but a set of interconnected practices that support student learning and deepen engagement. The Support Subcommittee described above will be expected to monitor use of these services and make recommendations regarding improving and/or expanding services, but the budget reflects the possibility of such expansion.

D. Select Cohort Participants Each Year to Manage Support Resources and Target Development: One of the reasons ePortfolios was selected as the QEP topic was that so many programs were already interested in them yet facing difficulties because there was no infrastructure of support in place. Beginning with those who are already interested will establish models for different kinds of adoption, across different disciplines and different student or co-curricular groups. For example, Nursing uses ePortfolios to have students demonstrate the required learning outcomes (see Figure 8 for an example), but is interested in expanding this assessment-based use to include more visual literacy. An initial survey of interest identified likely participants and conversations throughout the public vetting period added other interested departments and groups. In our research and discussion with other institutions it became clear that implementation requires preparation, commitment of faculty or staff to think through the issues in that particular location, and the development of a plan for fostering the learning outcomes associated with ePortfolios. During the summer of 2012 while the initial draft document circulated among the likely participants, steps were taken to identify Year 1 Cohort participants. A pilot project for students established the first ePortfolio Ambassadors and set the stage for the development of the ePortfolio Peer Tutors described below. The Director had follow-up conversations with those who made comments on the draft, those who had attended earlier meetings, and those who had expressed the strongest interest. From these activities five departments – Art, Building Science, English, Nursing, and Pharmacy,—as well as one co-curricular program (Study Abroad), and one student organization (the New Media Club) were selected as Year 1 (2012-13) ePortfolio Cohorts. (For a fuller description of the programs in Year 1 Cohort see Appendix VIII). Table 5 provides an overview of the expected models.

From Year 2 going forward, additional departments and programs will be identified to participate as a cohort group in events described below under supporting faculty. The Steering Committee will be responsible for ensuring that each year’s cohort represents the diversity of programs and needs at Auburn University as well as matching the resources and goals of the ePortfolio Project. The vetting process began to identify potential participants for the Year 2 Cohort.

E. Communicate with the Auburn University Community: Keeping the Auburn Community informed about the project is essential to ensuring its success and growth. The Director and Assistant Director for ePortfolios will be responsible for developing appropriate information sessions for faculty and students. The Director, working with the Assistant Director for ePortfolios and the Steering Committee, will provide regular status reports to various leadership groups such as Provost’s Council, Academic Affairs Committee, President’s Council, and University Senate. In addition, two student-based programs will be created.
i. **ePortfolio Student Ambassadors**: Years 1-3 (possibly continuing based on assessment). Up to 25 students will be recruited to serve as ePortfolio Student Ambassadors. These students will assist in making presentations to explain the ePortfolio Project to students and faculty. They will assist in workshops and serve as a focus group for marketing plans. ePortfolio Student Ambassadors must have their own professional ePortfolio and understand the learning goals of the project.

ii. **ePortfolio Peer Tutors**: Year 2 and on. Peer tutors are already an important part of the services provided by the Miller Writing Center, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, and the Career Center. Creating new positions focused on ePortfolios and expanding the training of all peer tutors to include awareness of the ePortfolio Project is essential. Initial seed grants to these support units will focus on developing such components with the expectation that the units will monitor use carefully enough to justify requests for expanding peer tutoring positions.

F. **ePortfolio Grants**: Each year the Steering Committee will identify the areas of need to ensure the success of the ePortfolio Project and issue a call for grant proposals. We expect those grants to vary based on their stage of implementation and the kinds of Cohorts chosen each year. Though the year’s Cohorts will be given priority, we expect some money will be available for individual students and faculty members and for departments and co-curricular programs that are considering whether to become participants in subsequent years. Each recipient of an ePortfolio grant will be expected to a) prepare a written report for the Steering Committee, b) present the results of the grant to the Auburn community, and c) be available as a consultant to subsequent adopters working on similar issues. The Grants and Awards Subcommittee in consultation with the Steering Committee will develop the process, but we have determined grants for at least the following broad areas:

i. **Attending ePortfolio Conferences**: The ePortfolio Project will fund attendance at the AAEEBL Regional ePortfolio Conference and other appropriate opportunities for participants to learn more about ePortfolios and best practices for implementation. Members of Year 1 Cohort participated in the conference at Clemson, November 12-13, 2012. Since the purpose of funding conference attendance is to help participants learn more about how ePortfolios are being used elsewhere and to gather ideas they might use in their own implementation, we invited each Year 1 Cohort group to select 2 participants to attend. Participants were asked to share what they learned with the Auburn community upon their return. The ePortfolio Pre-Conference Symposium Meeting at the AAC&U Conference in Atlanta January 23 was considered another possible conference, but in discussion with Year 1 Cohort the decision was made to substitute an on-campus workshop before the spring 2013 term and invite an ePortfolio expert to campus later in the spring term. Some Year 1 Cohort participants may attend the National AAEEBL ePortfolio conference in Boston scheduled for July.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM OR DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>MODEL EXPECTED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Art</strong></td>
<td>Moving from a tradition of physical portfolios to ePortfolios, with adjustments to course assignments and more collaborative consideration of evaluation/assessment; integration of ePortfolios into instructional practice, attention to revision beyond course assignments, expansion of written artifacts, fostering collaboration and coordination of faculty teaching different courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building Science</strong></td>
<td>Graduation requirement with course-based implementation where considerable prior work focused on assignments and curriculum has been done by faculty members in the department; attention to industry expectations and appropriate technology to capture this discipline’s most typical artifacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English</strong></td>
<td>Extra-curricular support structures for students, earlier start on revising and compiling; graduate level program without a strong association with visual literacy or technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nursing</strong></td>
<td>Implementation expanding from single course through curriculum and with increased attention to visual literacy and technical competency outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pharmacy</strong></td>
<td>Implementation of ePortfolios guided by professional accreditation standards; moving from learning ePortfolios to professional ePortfolios.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study Abroad Program</strong></td>
<td>Co-curricular involvement with students and faculty from multiple disciplines; focus on creating models that faculty can adapt, on including ePortfolio overview in pre-departure orientations, and on helping students reflect during and after their experiences abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Media Club</strong></td>
<td>Student organization not connected to specific curriculum but with students from multiple majors and at different ranks (freshmen through graduate students); focus on developing workshop materials for different platforms.</td>
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*Table 5: Year 1 Cohorts and Models Expected*
ii. **Creating Appropriate Spaces:** Though many students are asked to do oral presentations in courses and will want to include those in their portfolios, few classrooms have the appropriate technology to capture presentations with enough quality that they could become a part of a professional ePortfolio. Likewise, though some courses have students creating multimedia projects, producing high-quality visual and audio artifacts requires equipment for lighting, sound, and photography that are not always available. Initial discussions with interested programs make it clear that some programs have specific needs. Creating spaces where students can interact and peers can help each other is another crucial part of ensuring the success of the ePortfolio Project. The ePortfolio Project will entertain proposals for the creation of specific spaces that support professional ePortfolios. We expect the space and equipment needs to be specifically linked to the needs of the ePortfolio Project, and where that space or equipment will serve multiple functions, the grant request must include significant contributions from the department or college.

iii. **Supporting Curriculum and Course Development:** Designing new courses or assignments, or revising existing ones, requires considerable effort and usually collaboration between small groups of faculty. Since such work takes time away from faculty members' other responsibilities, the ePortfolio Project will consider proposals that help this work to proceed in an efficient and effective way. We expect departments and colleges or co-curricular units to help with these costs, but proposals that lay out specific needs for curricular development will be considered.

iv. **Supporting Individual Students for Professional Success:** Most Auburn students have access to the computer technology they need to create ePortfolios and there are labs, including the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, where students have access to equipment and software they may need. However, we know that some students do not have their own laptops or the money to pay for such equipment. When students are ready to enter the job market, they may not have the funds to secure their own domain name or purchase the upgrade that removes advertising logos from the free ePortfolio services. The ePortfolio Project will accept grant proposals from individual students or groups of students to fund equipment, software, or other materials connected to the presentation of professional ePortfolios. We expect successful grant applicants to share their finished product with the Auburn community, allow their ePortfolio to be used for assessment of the ePortfolio Project, and to submit a report at the end of the grant cycle explaining the results of their job search and their learning experience in creating the professional ePortfolio.

**G. Institute Assessment Components Necessary to Measure Success and Guide Future Decisions:** Assessment is essential for making future decisions about the project and guiding its implementation. The Director and Assistant Director for ePortfolios oversee the assessment components identified below beginning in Year 1, present data to the Assess-
As discussed in the staged implementation section, assessment focus varies each year with a comprehensive compilation of data prepared for the mid-cycle report in 2018.

2. Supporting Student Learning and Success:

A. **ePortfolio Peer Tutors:** Year 2 and ongoing. As noted previously, peer tutors are already an important part of the services provided by the Miller Writing Center, the Library’s Media and Digital Resource Lab, and the Career Center. Creating new positions focused on ePortfolios and expanding the training of all peer tutors to include awareness of the ePortfolio Project is essential.

B. **Create Internships:** Creating internships and other opportunities for students to be involved in the ePortfolio Project adds another layer of learning. The Assistant Director for ePortfolios will manage such projects including interview videos, creation of guideline materials and models, presentations, development of online materials and support tutorials. Internships might also involve students in the assessment process, in communication and marketing activities, and in research projects.

C. **Institute Awards and Recognitions for Exemplary Professional ePortfolios:** Recognition for exemplary portfolios is an important incentive for students, especially as the expectation for a professional ePortfolio becomes commonplace. Because exemplary professional ePortfolios require considerable prior experience in composing individual artifacts, practice in synthesizing for a specific audience and purpose, and considerable visual literacy and technical skills, programs that support that learning process will also be recognized. The Director and Assistant Director for ePortfolios will work with the Grants and Awards Subcommittee and the Steering Committee to develop criteria for selection and establish the submission and review process for both individual awards for students and awards for co-curriculum programs and academic departments for exemplary teaching. Both awards will be linked to learning outcomes and use winners to demonstrate professional ePortfolio concepts to other students. The ePortfolio Project will encourage participation by co-sponsoring awards with colleges.

D. **Create Web-Based Resources:** The Director, the Assistant Director for ePortfolios, and the Instructional Technology Specialist will oversee and contribute to the creation of appropriate Web-based materials to support students. We anticipate at the minimum:

i. Instructional videos that help students begin an ePortfolio or resolve specific technology issues with the various free programs we’ve identified to support.

ii. Written guidelines for saving artifacts, reflective writing that identifies connections and synthesizes experiences, features of exemplary ePortfolios, and strategies for revising for the target audience.
iii. Models of ePortfolios from different disciplines with discussion of why the features are appropriate.

E. **Workshops for Students:** The Assistant Director for ePortfolios will be responsible for designing workshops for students and/or student groups. Some of these workshops or presentations might be done with the assistance of other support units like the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab or the Career Center. Assessment of the workshops and monitoring of attendance will allow revisions and expansion based on student needs.

3. Supporting Faculty:

   A. **Getting Started Workshops:** Each year individuals from that year’s cohort will be invited to participate in workshops designed to help them create their own professional ePortfolio; develop curriculum; revise assignments to include artifacts, reflection, or technological skills; and share ideas with others in the group. These workshops will be opened to others as well, but only as space and resources permit. Year 1 (2012-13) the workshops will make use of the campus visits of final candidates for the Assistant Director for ePortfolios position.

   B. **Conference Attendance:** Cohort participants will be encouraged to attend conferences identified as relevant to ePortfolios with the ePortfolio Project sharing the cost. Others will be allowed to apply for conference grants as those resources permit.

   C. **Expansion of Existing Faculty Support:** The Office of University Writing and other support units have existing programs to support faculty including individual consultations, in-class mini-lessons tailored to specific needs, workshops, guest speaker programs, and events that showcase faculty’s work on curriculum and teaching. The Assistant Director for ePortfolios and the Director will work with the Support Subcommittee to develop appropriate support for ePortfolios within these existing programs and create new programs as needs are identified. In particular, the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning’s Preparing Future Faculty and New Faculty Scholars program can be expanded to introduce ePortfolios and the four learning outcomes to graduate student teachers and faculty new to Auburn. The Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning will assume responsibility for the delivery of this addition with the help of other partners and the Assistant Director for ePortfolios. Likewise, the programs offered through Career Center and through individual college or department industry advisory boards can be expanded to solicit input from potential employers on the components of effective professional ePortfolios in various fields. Employers will need to become familiar with ePortfolios and the goals of the project and may need help in evaluating the artifacts and skills on display in professional ePortfolios.

   D. **Invite Experts to Campus:** Each year scholars with expertise in ePortfolios or some component of ePortfolio adoption will be invited to Auburn to deliver lectures and/or workshops on topics relevant to the learning outcomes of the ePortfolio Project. The Assistant Director for ePortfolios will handle the logistics for these visits with support from the Administrative
Associate for the Office of University Writing. The Steering Committee and that year’s Co-

horts will identify appropriate external experts and suggest topics or formats for those visits.

E. Provide Incentives for Faculty Serving as Mentors/Advisors to Individual Students or Groups of Students: Since some programs will not want to require professional ePortfolios but individual students in those programs may still be interested in creating a professional ePortfolio, recruiting and training faculty to be effective mentors will be an essential element to ensure that all who wish to do so have the support necessary to produce an effective pro-
fessional ePortfolio. Likewise, for individual faculty whose courses become places for pro-
ducing and collecting artifacts, synthesizing experiences, or learning the visual literacy and technical skills required to produce an ePortfolio, extra work is very likely. This work needs to be recognized, valued, and rewarded.

i. The Director, the Assistant Director for ePortfolios, the Grants and Awards Sub-
committee, and the Steering Committee will Develop Appropriate Incentives and Recognitions. Possibilities include: named professorships; guidelines for recognizing quality work in tenure and promotion or merit review; fellowships or stipends; teaching/mentoring awards. One or more existing awards (Leischuck Award for Teaching Excel-

lence, or the Shug Jordan Professor of Writing, for example) might also include recogni-
tion of work associated with ePortfolios.

ii. Work with the Provost and Deans to consider ePortfolio work in tenure, promotion and merit review. Provide appropriate guidelines for evaluating the quality of such work.

iii. Create categories in Digital Measures, the database that records faculty achievements, to capture data about faculty involvement in the ePortfolio Project or components within courses that contribute to students’ opportunities to learn and practice the learning out-
comes and collect, select, or reflect on artifacts.

F. Engage Faculty in Research and Scholarship that Connects Their Interests to Their Work with ePortfolios: As a Research University, Auburn will need to become connected to the Inter/National Coalition of Electronic Portfolios Research, the leading organization for scholarship about ePortfolios. In undertaking the ePortfolio Project, Auburn will also prepare to contribute to the knowledge about ePortfolios’ connection to student learning, and connect that research to the interests of individual faculty and programs.

i. Fund travel to appropriate conferences. The Director, Assistant Director for ePortfolios, members of the various cohort groups, and other administrators will be expected to at-
tend appropriate conferences and participate in the broader national conversation about ePortfolios.

ii. Auburn University will submit a proposal to join a cohort group with the Inter/National Coalition of Electronic Portfolio Research.
The Director and Assistant Director for ePortfolios will develop modules connected to the ePortfolio Project's learning outcomes that can be adapted to REU's or other grant applications.

Educational Outcome Mastery

Below are six curricular outcomes the Auburn University School of Nursing handbook believes to be essential for successful and quality nursing practice. My education at AUSON was shaped around these principles in many different areas of the classroom and clinical practice. I have given you insight as to what these outcomes mean to me and I have also provided examples of how I have mastered each of the outcomes.

Communication and Collaboration Skills

1. Collaborate and communicate effectively with health care team members, patients and patients' support networks to implement patient-centered care including appropriate teaching for developmental stage, age, culture and health literacy to ensure high quality outcomes.

2. Use information technologies to assist in effective communication, facilitate patient care, and integrate evidence from all relevant resources to promote high quality patient outcomes within microsystems and greater healthcare systems.

My training at Auburn University has taught me that communication and collaboration are vital to nursing practice, and to health care as a whole. I have been prepared with good communication techniques and have utilized SBAR when communicating with nurses and physicians. I had Synergistic Medical and Resource Team (SMART) Training which focused on communication and quality communication skills. I have learned communication is not what is said, but what is heard by the listener. Not only have I learned how to communicate with health care professionals, but I understand the importance of therapeutic communication between a nurse and patient. I have had the opportunity to interact and communicate with a variety of patients of all ages. I have provided an example of a communication exercise I completed during my psychiatric rotation. I completed an Interpersonal Process Recording of a conversation I had with a young adult and focused on therapeutic communication throughout the conversation.

Critical Thinking and Clinical Judgment in Clinical Practice

3. Demonstrate clinical judgment grounded in theories and concepts from liberal and nursing education in the delivery of efficient, safe, compassionate, and evidence-based care.

4. Exhibit ethics, caring and accountability for patient outcomes in all aspects of professional nursing practice.

Critical thinking and clinical judgment skills are what separates nursing from other professions. Throughout my nursing school experience I have been pushed and challenged to think critically and put forth my clinical judgment. My lectures and clinical experience have allowed my to put my knowledge into action. Critical thinking and judgment was put into practice during many Simulation exercises through the Baptist South Simulation Center in Montgomery, Alabama as well as the school's personal Simulation Lab in Auburn Alabama. Here I completed a Mock Hospital scenario in which I was taking care of four patients on my own. During this time I was really challenged to think critically and to use my clinical judgment to prioritize and delegate responsibilities throughout the day. I have also completed many concept maps that required my knowledge and critical thinking skills to come up with nursing diagnoses for particular patients. I have provided a concept map that I completed during my clinical rotation at a long term care facility.
Several organizational structures were considered and structures for implementing a QEP and/or an ePortfolio project at other institutions were investigated. Various organizational structures for the different units that will be involved in implementing the ePortfolio Project were studied. Because the ePortfolio Project builds on Auburn’s Writing Initiative, the decision was made to place the project within the Office of University Writing to avoid duplication of efforts and conserve resources. Though the project will need dedicated personnel, directing the project fits well with the current responsibilities of the Director of University Writing. The impact of the ePortfolio Project on other units was also considered once the primary implementation responsibilities were assigned to the Director of University Writing. Figure 9 below shows the impact of the ePortfolio Project on the Office of University Writing. Figure 10 illustrates the potential impact on other support units.
**Description of Responsibilities for Key Positions**

**Director of University Writing:** Existing position will assume responsibility for overseeing the ePortfolio Project implementation. Continue to work with faculty and departments on embedding significant writing experiences, broadly defined, in the major. For many departments, professional ePortfolios will be a natural addition or have already been planned in their approved writing plans. For others, adding ePortfolios will support their efforts to embed significant writing relevant to the major across the program’s curriculum. In either case, the Director will work with faculty to develop appropriate assignments, rubrics, and a deeper understanding of writing pedagogy appropriate for their discipline.

**Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios:** A new Non-tenure Track Faculty position to 1) manage day-to-day implementation tasks including workshops and other programs for students and faculty, 2) coordinate assessment, and 3) manage logistical coordination with other units offering support to students and faculty. Job descriptions for similar positions at other institutions were collected and a draft job description was prepared to parallel similar positions already in existence at Auburn, for example, the Assistant Director of University Writing for the Miller Writing Center. In order to implement the ePortfolio Project, a search committee was established in October 2012 and a final job description posted. Review of applicants is scheduled for November 15 with a target start date of June 1, 2013. See Appendix VII for the draft job description.
Intern or Graduate Assistant to the Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios: A .5 (20 hours per week) graduate assistant position to assist with all ePortfolio Project events and implementation tasks. This position has been budgeted to be similar to other graduate assistantships associated with the Office of University Writing.

Student Employee(s) for Staff Support: A new 20 hours/week receptionist-type student employee position which might be occupied by more than one student to help with secretarial tasks.

Information Technology Specialist: A new position to support the work of the Office of University Writing and the ePortfolio Project. Will manage and design Web site, design or administer a system to automate the writing plan review process, work with students to expand the video resource library to serve students and faculty, ensure Web site resources are accessible through different platforms, compile data for assessment, ensure appropriate support for distance courses, and coordinate technology issues with Office of Information Technology and other units. In the initial year, a paid student intern will create the initial Web site content and incorporate it into the existing Office of University Writing site until the search for this position can be completed.

Instructional Technology Specialist: A new Non-tenure Track Faculty position with pedagogical and technical expertise to provide direct support to faculty in incorporating components of ePortfolios into courses. Will also coordinate with the staff from Instructional Multimedia Group, Biggio Distance Component, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, and the Office of University Writing.

Student Interns: As the ePortfolio Project matures, we expect a number of different tasks might be best handled by student interns and have budgeted for such assistance. Student interns currently work in the Office of University Writing to create Web content, manage the Facebook and twitter accounts, contribute to instructional videos, conduct research, and work on special projects. We expect similar work will emerge for the ePortfolio Project and that such internships might be located and supervised by any of the academic support units involved in the project.

Student ePortfolio Ambassadors: Students play an important role in helping to explain ePortfolios to others. A pilot project in the summer of 2012 invited several student volunteers to develop professional ePortfolios of their own in preparation for serving as the initial ePortfolio Ambassadors in Year 1. These students will make presentations to student groups, participate in similar sessions with faculty and administrators, and help explain and market the ePortfolio Project in preparation for the SACSCOC site visit in March 2013. In subsequent years, Student ePortfolio Ambassadors will serve as leaders in promoting and explaining the ePortfolio Project (see Figure 11 for a graduate student example).

Student ePortfolio Tutors: Like the tutors in the Miller Writing Center or in the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, students will play an important role in helping other students and faculty assemble professional ePortfolios. We expect the first of these tutors to emerge through existing peer tutoring programs that exist in the academic support units involved in the project or through the
Organizational Structure

Student ePortfolio Ambassador program. In either case, the Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios will take primary responsibility in developing an appropriate training program for these students and assigning them to workshops.

Figure 11: Laura Elmer, Dual Master’s Degree in English Literature and Composition and Rhetoric
Resources

Auburn University is committed to providing the necessary resources to successfully implement the ePortfolio Project. To support the staged implementation plan set out above, the following resources are required to develop the infrastructure necessary for success:

Space

The ePortfolio Project will be administered through the Office of University Writing. The Office of University Writing is currently located on the third floor of the Ralph Brown Draughon (RBD) Library. This space provides approximately 1050 square feet of space and provides dedicated office spaces for the Director of University Writing and the Assistant Director of University Writing for the Miller Writing Center; an open reception area with dedicated desk space for the Staff Associate and a shared work station used by student workers, Graduate Assistants, and student interns; a conference room that seats eight; and a kitchen/storage space.

To administer the ePortfolio Project within the Office of University Writing approximately 350 square feet of additional space is required to accommodate dedicated office spaces for the Assistant Director for ePortfolios and the Information Technology Specialist with space for future addition of an Instructional Technology Specialist; dedicated workspace for graduate assistants and undergraduate interns; a larger conference room; and additional storage space.

The Director of University Writing and the chair of the QEP Development Committee met with the Director of Campus Planning to discuss space requirements to accommodate the additional activities associated with the ePortfolio Project. After investigation of possibilities, a proposal to expand the existing space occupied by the Office of University Writing to accommodate the ePortfolio Project and the new personnel it will require was approved by the Dean of the Libraries, the Director of University Writing, and the Provost. Staying in the current location but modifying the space by adding an additional 350 square feet keeps the Office of University Writing centrally located and allows for the continued use of conference rooms, classroom space, and the open Learning Commons for meetings, workshops, and presentations. An initial floor plan has been created and is included as Appendix IX. All paperwork (AU Facilities Project Number 12-250, “RBD Library Suite 3436, Interior Renovations and Provide New Office Space”) to initiate the project has been completed. Construction is expected to begin in early January, 2013 with a target completion date of March 15, 2013.

Budget

Auburn University has allocated approximately $500,000 in continuing dollars annually to support the implementation of the ePortfolio Project and its ongoing administration in order to achieve the student learning outcomes associated with the project. The staged implementation plan set out above will require significant funds to: hire new personnel; expand existing support units as necessary; provide workshops for faculty and staff; market the program; provide awards and grants; develop research connected to ePortfolios; provide adequate space; and assess and evaluate the project. We expect any
Table 6: Staged Implementation Budget Items

unspent funds each year to be rolled over to the next year’s budget. The annual expected expenditures are set out in Table 6.
Assessment

Auburn University has used systematic assessment to inform curricular and institutional decisions for some time. In developing the implementation plan for the ePortfolio Project, the Development Committee sought to:

■ Develop a systematic approach to meaningful data collection and assessment by:
  ■ Avoiding duplication with existing assessment processes and instead collecting information relevant to the identified professional ePortfolio learning outcomes through existing instruments wherever possible
  ■ Separating assessment of the student learning outcomes from assessment of the impact of the ePortfolio Project
  ■ Including multiple measures
  ■ Collecting data systematically over time
  ■ Including data from all stakeholders
  ■ Using data to inform continuous improvement at all levels – student, faculty, departments, support units, and the program administration

■ Focus on relevance at the department level by:
  ■ Keeping assessment of student portfolios in the departments or co-curricular units where faculty reviewers will have the best knowledge of the expectations of their disciplines and of future employers their students are most likely to encounter
  ■ Allowing for flexibility in the kinds and numbers of artifacts assembled in professional ePortfolios in order to reflect disciplinary expectations
  ■ Asking departments to focus their assessments on the professional ePortfolio even though some will begin with preliminary assignments that generate artifacts or provide opportunities to practice skills and may not have students completing the professional ePortfolio for several years

In keeping with our staged implementation model, we have chosen assessment measures appropriate for the activities of each year of implementation with a more comprehensive compilation of data in Year 6.

Staged Implementation of Assessment

As described in the Action Items section, the ePortfolio Project has been designed to manage resources and build capacity. By using cohort groups selected to create appropriate models and reflect the diversity of academic and co-curricular programs and by offering ePortfolio grants, we will be able to collect appropriate data to inform subsequent decisions. We will also work with existing assessment reports to avoid duplication of efforts. The assessment measures we have chosen for each year will allow us to 1) determine the development and growth in the identified learning outcomes, and 2) monitor the impact of the ePortfolio Project. A comprehensive assessment is planned for Year 6.
### Year 1 (2012—13): Preparation

**ASSESSMENT MEASURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>IMPACT OF EPORTFOLIO PROJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Collect student and faculty testimonial</td>
<td>■ Collect numbers and evaluations from those who participate in programs and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Test ePortfolio rubric with cohort groups and grant recipients</td>
<td>■ Compile evaluations and use of conference information from those who attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Include data about the four student learning outcomes in cohort progress reports</td>
<td>■ Collect base-line data from support units regarding requests related to ePortfolios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Examine assessment reports for overlap with ePortfolio learning outcomes</td>
<td>■ Monitor and adjust budget</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 7: Year 1 (2012—13): Preparation*

### Year 2 (2013—14): Initial Launch

**ASSESSMENT MEASURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>IMPACT OF EPORTFOLIO PROJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Use ePortfolio rubric and report results in progress reports from cohort groups and grant recipients</td>
<td>■ Continue collection of data as appropriate from Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Assess ePortfolios submitted by ePortfolio Student Ambassadors using the sample rubric and refine the process for use with exemplary award submissions</td>
<td>■ Conduct initial survey of faculty and students to gauge awareness of the ePortfolio Project and the range of ePortfolio outcomes included in curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Use ePortfolio rubric for departmental assessment of ePortfolio graduation requirement where applicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 8: Year 2 (2013—14): Initial Launch*
### Years 3—5 (2014—17): Growth and Refinement

#### ASSESSMENT MEASURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Continue to collect data from cohort groups and grant recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Use rubric on ePortfolios submitted for exemplary award submissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Collect student (Year 4) and faculty (Year 5) case studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT OF EPORTFOLIO PROJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Continue to collect data as in prior years as appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Pilot assessment survey of industry advisory board and/or potential employers and administer in subsequent years with different disciplinary groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Collect data from Digital Measures on faculty scholarship related to any of the learning outcomes and to ePortfolios.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Years 3—5 (2014—17): Growth and Refinement

### Year 6 (2017—18): Comprehensive Assessment and Revision

#### ASSESSMENT MEASURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Compile multi-year data on student learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Compare ePortfolios from Year 1 to Year 5 in cohort group programs and submissions for exemplary awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Compare graduate survey and exit interview data across Years 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Compare assessment reports Years 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Compare NSSE and CCSW data across life of writing initiative and ePortfolio Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Conduct focus groups with faculty and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Compile multi-year data on ePortfolio Student Learning Outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT OF EPORTFOLIO PROJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Repeat faculty and student survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Conduct survey of alumni from cohort groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Conduct survey of employers and/or industry advisory boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Compile multi-year data on ePortfolio Project impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Year 6 (2017—18): Comprehensive Assessment and Revision
Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The four learning outcomes are: **effective communication, critical thinking through reflection, technical competency, and visual literacy.** The components listed under each learning outcome are examples of how departments or courses can work toward the larger learning outcome. To participate in the ePortfolio Project cohort groups do not have to include all of the components under any specific outcome, nor do they necessarily have to work on all outcomes simultaneously or equally. They do, however, need to include some attention to all four learning outcomes at some point in their implementation of ePortfolios. Professional ePortfolios will reflect these four learning outcomes, even though the specific components that are appropriate and reasonable will vary from program to program.

The assessment at the course and departmental levels is limited to the cohort groups, and to those who receive ePortfolio grants. We expect each year’s cohort group to assess their progress at the end of the first year of participation, and at appropriate points after that. For example, since the Building Science program is requiring a senior capstone ePortfolio beginning with the entering class of 2012, they can expect to have ePortfolios to evaluate at the departmental level in the spring of 2014. However, the Art Department, which is also in the Year 1 Cohort, will spend at least the first year planning curriculum and designing the specific implementation process for their majors. They may not have professional ePortfolios to assess until the spring of 2017, depending on decisions they will make during the first year of planning. The Director and Assistant Director in connection with the Steering Committee and the Assessment Subcommittee will monitor the assessment expected of each cohort group and create an assessment schedule with the Cohorts as they are selected.

The following chart provides an overview of the assessment methods for each learning outcome, how often those assessments occur, and who is responsible for them. The chart also separates each outcome into those that will be visible in the professional ePortfolio itself (the product) and those that are necessary for success but occur in preparatory experiences or earlier reiterations (the process).

---

*At career exposé and such you have one single piece of paper that’s supposed to represent you, and that’s it. But you could possibly use something more visual to differentiate yourself instead of just a single piece of paper. I don’t want to be looked at as just a piece of paper.*

Jamie Boudreaux, Business Administration
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional ePortfolio Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Course Embedded</th>
<th>Departmental Review</th>
<th>Graduation Survey/Exit Interview</th>
<th>Alumni Survey</th>
<th>Employer/Industry Survey</th>
<th>Core Curriculum Assessment</th>
<th>AU Program Assessment</th>
<th>Exemplary Portfolio Awards</th>
<th>Writing Plan Assessment</th>
<th>CCSW</th>
<th>NSSE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective Communication</td>
<td>Visible in final product</td>
<td>Y 1► Y 2► Y 1► y 6 Y 3► Y 2► Y 1► Y 3► Y 1► Y 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Necessary to process</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td>Y 4</td>
<td>Y 6</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y 1► Y 3 Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Visible in final product</td>
<td>Y 1► Y 2► Y 1► Y 6 Y 3► Y 1► Y 3► Y 1►</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Necessary to process</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td>Y 6</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y 1► Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Competency</td>
<td>Visible in product</td>
<td>Y 1► Y 2► Y 1► Y 6 Y 3► Y 1► Y 3►</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Necessary to process</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td>Y 6</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Literacy</td>
<td>Visible in Product</td>
<td>Y 1► Y 2► Y 1► Y 6 Y 3► Y 1► Y 3► Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Necessary to process</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td>Y 6</td>
<td>Y 1►</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsible Unit(s)</td>
<td>CI</td>
<td>DL</td>
<td>DL;Col;OIRA</td>
<td>DL;Col;OIRA</td>
<td>DL;Col;OIRA</td>
<td>DL;Col;ePA</td>
<td>DL;Col;OIRA;ePA</td>
<td>ePA</td>
<td>DL;ePA</td>
<td>OIRA</td>
<td>OIRA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responsible Units: CI = Course Instructors; DL = Department Leadership; Col = College Leadership; OIRA = Office of Institutional Research; ePA = ePortfolio Assessment Subcommittee; Y = Year; ► = continues each year or through year 6.

Table 11: Overview of Assessment Activities for Student Learning Outcomes
Description of Assessment Activities

Though implementation of the professional ePortfolio will vary depending on the stage of development of the department (see description above), we will be able to compile data on student learning outcomes and determine the degree of progress for each of the learning outcomes using a number of existing instruments, modified to incorporate the learning outcomes of the ePortfolio Project.

Departmental Activities

We believe faculty in departments and co-curricular programs are in the best position to do direct assessment of professional ePortfolios from students in their programs. Direct assessment will happen either: 1) By course instructors when the professional ePortfolio is compiled, skills are practiced, or artifacts are created in a course; and/or 2) By departmental or co-curricular committees when the professional ePortfolio is compiled outside of courses or submitted as part of a graduation requirement for that program/department. Whether a course is a senior capstone project or occurs elsewhere in the curriculum, the course instructor is best situated to determine whether the student has demonstrated specific learning outcomes. Likewise, it is the course instructor who can determine whether an assignment provides an opportunity to create an artifact or practice skills like reflection that are essential to creating a professional ePortfolio at a later date. Though the ePortfolio Project encourages departments to provide many opportunities across a variety of courses for creating artifacts and practicing the selection and arrangement necessary for an ePortfolio, assessment of the student learning outcomes associated with the ePortfolio Project need not occur in every course where some component is included. We believe the cohort participants will need to think carefully about what questions they are trying to answer as they undertake assessment, how they can sustain their assessment efforts, and how they can best provide information to the ePortfolio Assessment Subcommittee that will inform subsequent decisions about the ePortfolio Project. The range of specific components in each outcome will vary across different disciplines so faculty in the disciplines will need to determine which components of each outcome are appropriate for their students. The year-end reports from the cohort participants will include course embedded assessment data as well as departmental level assessments. The cohort participants in collaboration with the Assessment Subcommittee will test the ePortfolio evaluation rubric in Year 1 and make recommendations for revisions.

Sample Evaluation Rubric for Professional ePortfolios

The specific features for a professional ePortfolio must be adjusted to fit the expectations of different disciplines, but the sample evaluation rubric in Table 12 illustrates how a department can differentiate levels of proficiency across the four learning outcomes associated with the ePortfolio Project. This rubric must be tested and revised with the cohort participants in Year 1, but such a rubric should allow the Assessment Subcommittee and the Grants and Awards Subcommittee to assess sample portfolios created by students in different disciplines or programs.

Some departments will choose to use professional ePortfolios as part of their program assessment. In such cases, the portfolios, or representative sample portfolios, will be evaluated by faculty mem-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISUAL LITERACY</th>
<th>EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH REFLECTION</th>
<th>TECHNICAL COMPETENCY</th>
<th>VISUAL LITERACY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some of the documents are appropriate for the audience and/or purpose, but there are either too few to gauge proficiency or are inappropriate for a professional audience</td>
<td>The portfolio follows a very rigid template showing little awareness of the technology</td>
<td>The portfolio demonstrates a very limited technical skill</td>
<td>The portfolio is rarely visually effective</td>
<td>The portfolio is rarely visually effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual materials are not well handled</td>
<td>The overall effect of the portfolio creates some concern about the student’s communication skills or ability to move across a range of genres</td>
<td>Links are often broken and artifacts sometimes will not open</td>
<td>The site mixes features of a social networking site and a professional portfolio enough that viewers wonder if the student understands the difference</td>
<td>Some artifacts include visual elements but the overall effect is that little attention has been paid to the design elements or the effectiveness of any visuals that are included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number and kinds of documents suggest little awareness of the audience’s expectations</td>
<td>The number and kinds of documents do not interfere with the message</td>
<td>The number and kinds of documents are appropriate but in some cases could be better handled</td>
<td>The overall effect of the portfolio is often present but is not consistent suggesting a more limited understanding of these principles and how to execute them</td>
<td>The portfolio is usually visually effective but some flaws in the design occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The identity created is insufficiently professional</td>
<td>Visual materials within documents are appropriate but in some cases could be better handled</td>
<td>The overall effect of the portfolio suggests good communication skills across a limited range of documents and/or genres</td>
<td>Attention to design principles is often present but is not consistent suggesting a more limited understanding of these principles and how to execute them</td>
<td>The portfolio is usually visually effective and well designed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The portfolio is usually visually effective</td>
<td>The overall effect of the portfolio creates some concern about the student’s communication skills or ability to move across a range of genres</td>
<td>The portfolio shows little attention to selection and arrangement of artifacts</td>
<td>The selection and arrangement of artifacts often demonstrates careful synthesis and connecting of experiences</td>
<td>The selection and arrangement of artifacts and the contextual information provided with the individual artifacts demonstrates careful consideration of the connections across time and experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality and effectiveness varies depending on the platform used to access the portfolio</td>
<td>Contextual material is usually missing and/or does not contribute to the demonstration of critical thinking abilities</td>
<td>Contextual information is inconsistent and/or missing</td>
<td>There is some inconsistency in the professional identity</td>
<td>A professional identity is consistently present throughout the portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where visual materials are included in these documents, they are appropriate and well done</td>
<td>The identity created is insufficiently professional</td>
<td>Visual materials are not well handled</td>
<td>Visual materials within documents are appropriate but in some cases could be better handled</td>
<td>Visual materials within documents are appropriate but in some cases could be better handled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overall effect of the portfolio is often present but is not consistent suggesting a more limited understanding of these principles and how to execute them</td>
<td>The overall effect of the portfolio suggests good communication skills across a limited range of documents and/or genres</td>
<td>The overall effect of the portfolio shows inconsistent attention to audience expectations</td>
<td>The portfolio is usually visually effective and well designed</td>
<td>The portfolio is usually visually effective and well designed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Sample Evaluation Rubric
bers other than the course instructor. Some departments already include their industry advisory board or selected members of representative industries in senior project evaluations and these processes can easily be adapted to the assessment of professional ePortfolios. Where departments do not include a designated course for the compilation of the ePortfolio, a departmental assessment will be essential. We expect that departments will be able to use the ePortfolio Rubric in their ePortfolio assessments.

**College-level Assessment Activities**

Several existing assessments conducted at the department and/or college level will be modified to include information about professional ePortfolios. The Graduating Senior Exit Survey administered by the Office of Institutional Research will include questions about ePortfolios beginning fall 2012 in order to provide baseline data. Exit surveys, which exist in several colleges, can also be easily modified. Data collected in these instruments will be aggregated and tracked by college both for efficiency and to protect individual student identity in small programs. Interviewing seniors as they graduate is a routine practice for some departments and colleges. Department Cohorts will include questions about the ePortfolio and the process of completing it to existing interviews or surveys (see Sidebar 8 for examples). Department Cohorts that do not have such a process in place will be encouraged to add it as another indirect measure of students’ learning. Likewise, some colleges have a process in place for surveying alumni and questions about professional ePortfolios will be added to those survey instruments. Though the return rate is often quite poor, asking alumni about the professional ePortfolio will add an additional opportunity for reflection and provide a check on their intentions to maintain the ePortfolio after graduation. Even alumni who did not create a professional ePortfolio can provide information about whether ePortfolios are becoming expected in specific professions. Alumni surveys will be modified in Year 1 of the ePortfolio Project in order to establish preliminary baseline data. Subsequent surveys will be administered on the schedule used by individual colleges. In addition, a more elaborate alumni

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**Sample Senior Exit Interview or Survey Questions**

1. What did you learn from the process of completing the professional ePortfolio that you had not learned in previous classes or co-curricular experiences?

2. What kinds of support did you receive for creating artifacts or assembling the final product?

3. How could the expectation to create a professional ePortfolio in this major better contribute to your learning?

4. How much time did you spend assembling the final professional ePortfolio?

5. Are you satisfied enough with the result of your professional ePortfolio that you will continue to update it with new experiences?

**Sample Alumni Survey Questions**

1. Did you maintain your professional ePortfolio after graduation?

2. How frequently do you see ePortfolios in your current position?

---

Sidebar 8: Sample Senior Exit Interview or Survey Questions
A survey focused only on ePortfolios will be developed to administer in Year 6 to students who have been a part of the project either through their enrollment in a cohort department or co-curricular unit, because of their attendance at a student ePortfolio workshop, or because they participated in the ePortfolio Student Ambassador or ePortfolio Peer Tutor programs. The objective of such a survey will be to collect data on whether students who participated in the ePortfolio Project have continued their professional ePortfolios and what they think or value about the project post-graduation. Finally, many programs or colleges have Industry Advisory Boards or are in regular contact with employers, and these individuals and groups can provide important information about how professional ePortfolios are perceived in general and how specific examples from Auburn students are being read.

In Year 3 the Assessment Subcommittee will develop and pilot a survey on ePortfolios with one or more of the employer groups or industry advisory boards associated with the cohort groups. The survey will be modified and then used with appropriate employer groups or industry advisory boards associated with subsequent cohort groups.

**Institutional Assessment Activities**

Departments already conduct different kinds of assessment and report their findings and the decisions they have made based on that data to various institutional units or faculty committees. Several of these existing reports include information relevant to the learning outcomes of the ePortfolio Project. The assessment of the ePortfolio Project is structured to collect as much of this existing data as possible without asking faculty to spend time repeating details they have already reported. The Assessment Subcommittee will be responsible for compiling this data from existing reports and making recommendations that will enable better monitoring of the ePortfolio Project. For example, departments offering Core Curriculum courses collect, analyze, and report information on how fully students are attaining the General Education Learning Outcomes identified for that course, and departments teaching Core Courses submit periodic assessment reports to the Core Curriculum and General Education Committee. These documents contain information about where in the curriculum students are being given opportunities to create artifacts or practice skills necessary for the creation of a professional ePortfolio and thus will answer assessment questions about the depth of engagement, scaffolding across the curriculum, and connections between earlier courses and final professional ePortfolio requirements. Though an indirect measure, the reports will be read by the Assessment Subcommittee to extract relevant data about effective communication, the learning outcome shared by both the Core Curriculum and the ePortfolio Project. The General Education Learning Outcome of aesthetic appreciation will, in some cases, overlap with the visual literacy outcome of the ePortfolio Project, so the Assessment Subcommittee will review the reports for such matches.

Critical thinking through reflection and technological competence is not currently a part of the General Education Learning Outcomes.

Likewise, all departments submit annual reports on the learning objectives they have identified for their program to the Office of Institutional Research. Many of these departments have objectives that overlap with the student learning outcomes that have been identified for the ePortfolio Project. As departments join the ePortfolio Project they will likely modify their program outcomes to include...
outcomes associated with the ePortfolio Project. The Assessment Subcommittee will work with the Office of Institutional Research to extract relevant data from the Program Assessment reports. In addition, the University Writing Committee reviews the writing plans and the departments’ assessment of those plans on a three-year rotation schedule. Since many programs include or will include professional ePortfolios as part of their capstone experience, these writing plan review reports will include information relevant to the ePortfolio Project. The Assessment Subcommittee will extract relevant information from the writing review reports and correlate the information with the ePortfolio Project Student Learning Outcomes. Those departments coming up for review in 2012-13 were asked whether they currently use ePortfolios and if so, to provide a brief description. That information will be used by the Assessment Subcommittee to request that the University Writing Committee include a modification of the question for subsequent years if necessary.

The ePortfolio Steering Committee will establish Exemplary ePortfolio Awards by Year 3 of the project and advertise the criteria for these awards in advance. In reviewing the submissions for the awards, members of the Grants and Awards Subcommittee will be asked to use a standard rubric linked to the student learning outcomes. Though the submissions will come from multiple disciplines, the sample evaluation rubric (Table 12) will provide the necessary consistency to gain a more university-wide perspective.

**National Assessment Activities**

Auburn University has administered the NSSE since 2002 and will continue to do so. Some of the questions on the survey overlap with the ePortfolio Project Student Learning Outcomes. In particular, questions on the NSSE about making class presentations, preparing drafts, integrating information from different sources, synthesizing information or experiences, making judgments, acquiring job skills, writing clearly and effectively, thinking critically and analytically, speaking clearly and effectively, using computing and information technology, and understanding yourself are relevant to the ePortfolio Project. The Assessment Subcommittee will work with the Office of Institutional Research to analyze the relevant survey questions and track changes over the course of the ePortfolio Project. In 2010 Auburn administered the 27 additional questions about writing developed by the Consortium of Colleges Studying Writing (CCSW) as a part of the NSSE. The CCSW survey asks questions about including visual materials in documents, creating projects with multi-media, addressing a real audience, using language and genres of the discipline, and creating a portfolio that collects work from more than one class. As part of a longitudinal study undertaken by the Office of University Writing, the faculty version of the CCSW survey was administered in fall 2010 to all faculty who were teaching or who had taught an upper division course in the previous three years. Auburn will administer both the student and faculty versions of the Consortium questions in 2015 and analyze the change in answers from 2010 to 2015 to key questions relevant to the student learning outcomes for the ePortfolio Project. The Assessment Subcommittee will recommend whether the CCSW survey should be repeated during the Comprehensive Assessment in Year 6. It may also be possible to delay the planned administration of the CCSW survey to better capture information relevant to both the writing initiative and to the ePortfolio Project.
Assessment of Impact of the ePortfolio Project

In addition to the assessment of the student learning outcomes identified within individual professional ePortfolios, it is important to assess the impact of the project itself. Assessment of impact can occur by monitoring the expansion of involvement in ePortfolios in general and completion of a professional ePortfolio in particular (quantitative measures) and by attending to the depth of engagement of various stakeholders (qualitative measures). Using Light, Chen, and Ittelson’s (2012) suggestions as a guide, the following benefits are expected from the ePortfolio Project:

**Impact on Students**
- The number of students completing professional ePortfolios will increase
- The number of majors including professional ePortfolios as a final learning experience will increase
- Students will have more confidence in their ability to communicate, think critically through reflection, use technology, and/or use or create visual materials
- Students will be willing to continue to use and maintain their professional ePortfolios

**Impact on Faculty**
- The number of faculty (both departmental and co-curricular) involved in using any type of ePortfolios in their courses or programs will increase
- Faculty will have more interest in using ePortfolios of all kinds within courses and/or promoting ePortfolios within the major and in their co-curricular programs
- Faculty will have more confidence in their ability to assess their students’ use of writing, reflection, technology, and/or visual materials
- Faculty will develop scholarly projects connected to ePortfolios, including making presentations, writing for publication, conducting research, and submitting grants for internal and external funding of such projects
- Faculty will be willing to continue to use ePortfolios

**Impact on Curriculum**
- The number of majors and co-curricular programs including preliminary opportunities for creating artifacts or practicing skills essential to producing a professional ePortfolio will increase
- Visual literacy will become expected of, used, and taught in more majors and programs
- Expectations that students will use technology effectively will increase
- ePortfolios will spread to other uses such as course or learning portfolios, program assessment portfolios, professional portfolios for faculty, etc.
- Scaffolding of learning experiences across the major will be stronger and more visible; that is, faculty will become more aware of how expected end-of-career abilities can be developed by more and earlier opportunities for instruction and practice
Communication activities will be incorporated into more courses and with more sophisticated expectations for attention to the rhetorical situation, appropriate genre, adherence to disciplinary expectations, and critical judgment.

Critical thinking through reflection will be expected, used, and taught in more majors and in more co-curricular activities.

**Impact on other (or all) Stakeholders**

- Employers will come to expect Auburn students to have a professional ePortfolio.
- Stakeholders of all kinds will gain sophistication in assessing ePortfolios.
- Stakeholders of all kinds will be satisfied with the experience of ePortfolios and willing to continue to use them.
- ePortfolios will support development of a co-curricular transcript.

The following chart provides an overview of the assessment methods for each of these levels of impact. The chart also separates the impact into a) expansion of involvement (quantitative measures) and b) depth of engagement (qualitative measures).
## Overview of Assessment of Impact of the ePortfolio Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence of Impact of the ePortfolio Project</th>
<th>Environmental Methods</th>
<th>Indirect Methods</th>
<th>Direct Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: # completing, # of majors requiring/using</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 3 ►</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: level of confidence, willingness to continue</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: # of faculty involved, interest and awareness</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 2, 6</td>
<td>Year 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: level of confidence in using, willingness to continue, scholarly projects connected to ePortfolios</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 2, 6</td>
<td>Year 3 ►</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: # of preliminary opportunities, expectations for visual literacy, expectations for technical competency, expansion of use</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: scaffolding across the major, expectations for communication, expectations for critical thinking through reflection</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: employer expectations, # of workshops and events offered by support units</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes: assessment of ePortfolios, willingness to continue, support for co-curricular transcript</td>
<td>Year 1 ►</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

► = going forward

*Table 13: Overview of Assessment of Impact of the ePortfolio Project*
Description of Assessment Activities for Impact

In addition to the assessment of student learning outcomes, assessing the impact of the ePortfolio Project will provide important information for guiding subsequent decisions. We have determined several such assessment activities to monitor impact.

Environmental Assessment Methods

Light, Chen, and Ittelson (2012) provide several examples of assessing the impact of an ePortfolio project using “environmental” methods and we have designed the assessment plan to include many of these methods. We also believe a successful project must manage its resources effectively. The Director and Assistant Director will prepare a yearly report detailing allocation of funds for review by the Senior Leadership Team and the Steering Committee. The Miller Writing Center, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, and the Career Center all keep usage data that details student use of these services. Requests for help with professional ePortfolios will be added to these existing usage forms and usage will be reported annually to the Assessment Subcommittee. A baseline for future comparisons will be established beginning in Year 1 (2012). Since the number of portfolios is expected to increase over time even though professional ePortfolios are not mandatory and will not be adopted by all programs as a required component of the major, tracking the number of professional ePortfolios completed by students enrolled in programs that do require professional ePortfolios will provide important data about impact. We will need to work with students in the cohort groups, the ePortfolio Ambassadors and Peer Tutors, and the applicants for ePortfolio student grants to track numbers, but we cannot expect to have comprehensive numbers when students will use multiple ePortfolio packages and do so without necessarily seeking support or being required to do so. The Assessment Subcommittee will work with the Office of Institutional Assessment to determine how the data we do collect might best be compared over time. Since a variety of workshops and training sessions for faculty and students are planned, keeping attendance records for all events will provide another measure of the expansion of participation. Sign-in sheets will be collated into a single database in order to measure the depth of involvement of individuals and/or programs by the pattern of repeat participation. Faculty who publish work or make professional presentations connected to ePortfolios will record such activity on their annual report of faculty activity in Digital Measures. This database can be searched to track such additions to faculty profiles. Finally, the Office of University Writing will be responsible for collecting news stories about the ePortfolio Project. In the case of the writing initiative, articles have appeared in the campus newspaper, in the student year book, and in the monthly Auburn Report which is distributed to faculty and staff. Similar interest and coverage of the ePortfolio Project is expected. Indeed, the student newspaper, The Plainsman, sent a student to conduct an interview about the project immediately after the August 21, 2012 presentation to University Senate, and a student from the Glomerata, Auburn’s Yearbook, interviewed the Director of University Writing and students involved in the project in October. Other kinds of communication about the use of ePortfolios will appear over time, including reports of faculty presentations or publications, announcements of grants received and exemplary awards given, and features on innovative classroom practices connected to ePortfolios. Numbers will indicate the
general interest in ePortfolios, but analysis of shifts in focus or expansion of topics over time will show the depth of impact of ePortfolios.

**Indirect Methods**

Again relying on Light, Chen, and Ittelson (2012), the Assessment Subcommittee will work with the Office of Institutional Research, colleges, and departments to modify existing surveys of students, faculty, departments, and other stakeholders to track satisfaction and depth of engagement. In addition, reports from programs and the number of submissions for awards and grants will provide numerical data about the impact of the project. As discussed in the Assessment of Learning Outcomes, existing surveys of students will be modified to include questions related to professional ePortfolios. Responses will provide another picture of the numbers of students involved, their experiences, their satisfaction with the products they produce, and the level of support they received both in courses and from support units. Focus groups with students in Year 6 will provide additional information about the depth of these experiences. Similarly, surveys of faculty were used to help identify the QEP topic and the likely first adopters. Subsequent surveys will measure faculty understanding of the project, establish their degree of interest, and monitor their depth of involvement in the project. Surveys will also track faculty satisfaction with the quality of products students produce, the support they and their students have received in adding ePortfolios to their courses, and their general satisfaction with ePortfolios and the ePortfolio Project. Focus groups with faculty in Year 6 will provide additional information about the depth of engagement and recommendations for further development. Surveys of individual faculty members provide a close-up view of faculty perspectives, but departmental data suggest the larger picture. For example, surveys of department chairs or others who are in a position to know what is happening with ePortfolios across the entire department will be useful in gauging not only expansion of interest, but the depth of engagement. We expect returning to all cohort participants in Year 6 will provide important supplementary information about how the ePortfolio Project has evolved and impacted departments, co-curricular programs, and student groups. Surveys of alumni, parents, advisors, administrators, support units, and employers will provide another perspective on the impact of ePortfolios, but identifying the appropriate individuals to survey will be challenging. The return rate of surveys is often low, especially when the same people are surveyed repeatedly. The Assessment Subcommittee will need to identify appropriate and feasible ways to survey other stakeholders, develop and test such instruments, and consider whether the data gained is useful enough to continue. We believe the co-curricular Cohorts will be in a good position to consider other such stakeholders and we expect potential models to emerge as similar programs are included in the ePortfolio Project.

As outlined in the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes, a number of reports are already produced by programs/departments on a regular basis. The Assessment Subcommittee will be able to analyze these reports to provide documentation of both expansion and depth of impact. For example, as more students produce professional ePortfolios, the number and variety of submissions to the Exemplary Portfolio Awards will increase. Likewise, applications to faculty awards that include evidence of ePortfolio use will increase. Because action items that connect ePortfolios to research
and scholarship have been included in the ePortfolio Project, an increase in grants, presentations, and publications is expected as well. The Assistant Director of ePortfolios will work with the Office of Institutional Research to monitor reported activity in Digital Measures and with the Office of Research to collect information about grants connected to ePortfolios and report such data to the Assessment Subcommittee for analysis.

**Direct Methods**

Case studies, examples of assignments and reflective prompts, faculty assessment results, and testimonials about how ePortfolios are being used are all mentioned by Light, Chen, and Ittelson (2012) as possible direct methods for assessing the impact of an ePortfolio project. Three of these methods will be used as direct measures of the impact of the ePortfolio Project.

First, in addition to the growth in the number of submissions for the Exemplary ePortfolio Awards, the quality of those submissions is expected to improve over time. As the Awards Subcommittee evaluates the submissions, they will keep rubrics and have discussions that will provide evidence of how reviewers assess the quality of professional ePortfolios. A careful analysis of these documents will provide direct evidence of depth of impact of the project.

Second, what people say about ePortfolios in general or the ePortfolio Project specifically will naturally guide interventions and decisions. Some faculty members initially believed the ePortfolio Project was another mandate like the Writing Initiative and some believed that ePortfolios were merely another assessment device. Steps were taken to correct these misperceptions and action items include further informational sessions for fall 2012. On the other hand, there is some anecdotal evidence that students think creating ePortfolios will be an enjoyable and innovative way to work on their writing, thinking, visual, and technical skills. Collecting reactions from individual students...
and faculty began in summer 2012 with a series of informal interviews and the compilation of a short video of students involved in the initial ePortfolio Student Ambassadors program (see Figure 12 for another student example). Students have suggested creating additional videos to capture the advice of students who have completed professional ePortfolios and making those videos available on the Web site along with answers to Frequently Asked Questions. The Office of University Writing will undertake such a project in conjunction with the Student Writing Council beginning in fall 2012. SGA Leadership has expressed interest in the ePortfolio Project because it fits so well with their mission to “serve and promote the individual student; unifying all that is Auburn.” Analyzing what such evidence means and any changes in reactions over time will be an important component of the comprehensive assessment scheduled for Year 6.

Third, more formal case studies are one of the ways that faculty will connect ePortfolios to research. While it is impossible to determine precisely what case studies will emerge, it is reasonable to anticipate and encourage studies focused on students, on faculty, on one or more of the learning outcomes, on specific departments or programs, on the connections between courses and co-curricular activities or academic support units, and on employers. Because Student Affairs has already expressed interest in professional ePortfolios in relation to their existing efforts to develop leadership programs and a co-curricular transcript, case study interviews with Student Affairs personnel designed to gauge the impact of ePortfolios on non-classroom learning will be conducted by the Assistant Director for ePortfolios beginning in Year 4. Study Abroad is a member of Year 1 Cohort and case studies of students and faculty involved in these programs will be undertaken. The action items and budget reflect the expectation that some of this work will be undertaken by faculty members or advanced graduate students whose research agendas can be advanced by such case studies, and that such work might well lead to a proposal for Auburn University to join the Inter/National Coalition of ePortfolio Research.

Figure 13: Gabe Gentle, Auburn University, Building Science Senior
APPENDIX I: Auburn’s General Education Goals and Outcomes

Auburn University has identified seven General Education Goals, representing the knowledge, skills, and perspectives graduates will attain through their academic programs, including the Core Curriculum. These goals and associated student learning outcomes are listed below.

**Information Literacy**
- Students will be information literate

**Analytical Skills and Critical Thinking**
- Students will be able to read analytically and critically
- Students will be able to critique and construct an argument effectively
- Students will be able to apply simple mathematical methods to the solution of real-world problems
- Students will be able to select and use techniques and methods to solve open-ended, ill-defined or multi-step problems

**Effective Communication**
- Students will be able to write effectively
- Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills

**Informed and Engaged Citizenship**
- Students will be informed and engaged citizens of the United States and the world

**Intercultural Knowledge and Diversity Awareness**
- Students will understand and appreciate the diversity of and within societies of the United States and the world

**Scientific Literacy**
- Students will understand and appreciate methods and issues of science and technology

**Aesthetic Appreciation and Engagement**
- Students will understand and appreciate the arts and aesthetics as ways of knowing and engaging with the world
# APPENDIX II: QEP Committee Rosters

## Auburn University QEP Exploratory Committee, 2010-11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME:</th>
<th>UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bernard, Nancy</td>
<td>Director of Career Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bhavnani, Sushil**</td>
<td>Professor of Mechanical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Boosinger, Marcia</td>
<td>Associate Dean of the Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Boston, Katelyn*</td>
<td>Undergraduate Student, Biosystems Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Burk, Thor</td>
<td>Administrative Support Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Chaudhury, Raj</td>
<td>Associate Director of the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Clark, Drew***</td>
<td>ACS Liaison &amp; Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. DeTure, Monica</td>
<td>Director of Distance Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Dowdle, Deedie</td>
<td>Exec. Director of University Communications and Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Duffy, Patricia</td>
<td>Professor Agricultural Economics &amp; Rural Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Eick, Charles</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Curriculum and Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Erath, Stephen</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Human Development &amp; Family Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Flowers, George</td>
<td>Dean of the Graduate School</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Flynn, Kathryn</td>
<td>Director of Interdisciplinary Studies Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Harris, Paul</td>
<td>Associate Director of the Honors College</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Gillespie, Andy</td>
<td>Assistant Provost for International Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Hecht, Amy</td>
<td>Assistant VP of Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Hendricks, Constance</td>
<td>Professor of Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Inabinet, Steve</td>
<td>Aviation Management Alumnus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Jarvis, Kathryn</td>
<td>Director of Student Academic Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Johnson, Iryna</td>
<td>Associate Director of Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Josephson, Missy</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Anatomy, Phys. &amp; Pharmacology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Key, Kim</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Marshall, Margaret</td>
<td>Director of the Office of University Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Mathies, Brittny*</td>
<td>Graduate Student, Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Oleinick, Thereza</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Phelps, Kevin</td>
<td>Professor of Mathematics and Statistics</td>
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<td>28. Rogers, Tom</td>
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<td>29. Scott-Harris, Shirley</td>
<td>Director of Alabama Power Academic Excell (Engineering Administration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Weaver, David</td>
<td>Professor of Agronomy &amp; Soils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Student Representatives ** Chair of the QEP Exploratory Committee, *** Ex officio member, non-voting
Auburn University QEP Development Committee, 2011-12

1. Bailey, Bliss  Executive Director of Office of Information Technology
2. Burt, Richard**  Professor and Head of McWhorter School of Building Science
3. Elmer, Laura*  Graduate Student Representative, Department of English
4. Lock, Leonard  Coordinator of Assessment and Evaluation, College of Education
5. Marshall, Margaret  Director of University Writing, Professor of English
6. Phelps, Kevin  Professor of Mathematics and Statistics
7. Relihan, Constance  Associate Provost of Undergraduate Studies
8. Sanderson, Bonnie  Associate Professor of School of Nursing
9. Stamm, Pamela  Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice, Harrison School of Pharmacy
10. Trehub, Aaron  Assistant Dean for Technology and Technical Services, Auburn University Libraries

* Student Representative ** Chair of the QEP Development Committee
APPENDIX III: Bibliography

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**Works Consulted**


1. **Reflection Is Key**: Effective reflection was defined in one conference session as: 1) present; 2) systematic and disciplined; 3) analytic; 4) a social process; and 5) supportive of student growth (though growth in what depends on the specific context and the structure provided by that context) (Eynon and Gambino 2011). Faculty tend to need help seeing the value of this activity; some disciplines react negatively to the word “reflection” and understand the value of reflection better when other words are used to name this practice, e.g. “analysis,” “self-assessment,” “synthesis,” or “application to lived experience.” Faculty also need help identifying strategies to help students learn to reflect through structured assignments and intentional prompts. Adding the social interaction dimension to reflection is rare, even when faculty have already incorporated reflection into their courses.

2. **Don’t Lead With Assessment**: According to a presentation done by students at Clemson University (Wallace and Ellis 2011; Ellis, et al. 2011), buy-in by students and faculty is lacking because the perception is that the project is driven by bureaucratic, top-down concerns about assessing core curriculum. The result is a “document-dump” approach to ePortfolios; the integrative or professional ePortfolio is an afterthought that most students don’t do and don’t see as relevant to their learning even though the assessment ePortfolio is a graduation requirement. Considerable frustration was expressed by undergraduates and by graduate students who are involved in the project or teach courses in departments where portfolio components are supposed to be taught. The university uses undergraduate peers as “evaluators” of the portfolios in addition to designated faculty, and there is skepticism about how those evaluations work. Apparently, some faculty members tell students not to bother with doing the portfolio even though it’s a graduation requirement; and the students reported that, after the initial orientation week introduction to the system and the requirement, no faculty member or advisor ever mentioned ePortfolios again.

3. **Technology Is Not as Important as Pedagogy**: Because many commercial ePortfolio platforms are designed around assessment, they aren’t always easily adapted to the professional or integrative portfolio. Those that are (e.g. DigiCation) have two separate components: one for assessment purposes and one for creating professional ePortfolios. Students can create different career and professional portfolios for different audiences in these systems; and the ability to easily move documents back and forth is an important feature. Many commercial products that are assessment-based reflect specific kinds of professional accreditation assessment, so one product rarely works for all programs/needs.

But having too many different platforms to support isn’t useful either. Tying the ePortfolio initiative to a specific ePortfolio software package may lead faculty and students to say “ePortfolios don’t work” when that package fails to meet their needs. Almost everyone we talked with said that the
technology issues will evolve as the program expands and needs become clearer. However, such evolutions don’t have to be missteps if the technology does not become the focus of the ePortfolio project.

Multipurpose ePortfolio platforms can help faculty create interconnected learning experiences across multiple courses and course project sites for shared group projects. Such platforms allow faculty to easily model the creation of shared work spaces (as in a learning portfolio) or finished documents (as in a professional portfolio). These kinds of assignments can move students out of classroom-only work and into the real world and foster collaboration, peer review, and reflection. When done on the same platform, documents can be moved by students into their own professional portfolios or into department-required assessment portfolios. Doing similar work on other systems seems to be more problematic. For example, using Facebook for ePortfolios blurs the distinction between personal space and professional/academic work. Similarly, blogs, wikis, and discussion threads seem not to be as flexible or adaptable and aren’t as easily integrated with these other uses. An especially good presentation by faculty in different disciplines at La Guardia Community College illustrated the use of ePortfolios in individual courses, in projects shared across several courses, and in final professional ePortfolios (Bhika, et al. 2011).

Faculty need time to adjust to ePortfolios and to work with other faculty on how best to use the technology and how to alter their curricula and revise their pedagogy in order to achieve the integrative thinking that is the goal of ePortfolios.

4. **Starting Small Is Essential to Success:** Pedagogy and curriculum have to change in order for “deep learning” to happen with ePortfolios. As one presenter put it, “ePortfolios will change your college” (Eynon 2011). In many conversations with directors and faculty participants it became clear that the administrative structure can start with a single ePortfolio coordinator and work with existing structures (in our case, units like the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, the Office of Information Technology, the Instructional Multimedia Group, the Writing Center, Learning Communities, Sustainability, Service Learning, Undergraduate Research, and the Office of Accessibility). However, plan for additional personnel as the program is implemented, gathers momentum, and expands. Virginia Tech's program grew in much this way.

5. **Awards or Recognitions For Students Who Do Outstanding Portfolios Are More Productive Than Cash Incentives:** This approach was mentioned in several of the presentations, including the student panel from Clemson and in personal conversations with the directors of various programs.

6. **Some of the Most Interesting Work in e-Portfolios Seems to Be Happening at Community Colleges.** Example: LaGuardia Community College in New York.

7. **ePortfolios Aren’t Just for Undergraduates:** Graduate students can create ePortfolios too. In fact, Virginia Tech has an NSF CAREER grant to do this with graduate students in Engineering (McNair and Garrison 2011).
8. There are Research Possibilities in ePortfolios: ePortfolios are a good vehicle for helping undergraduate and graduate students to learn research methods like interviewing, document analysis, literature review, IRB processes, the standards for human subjects research, and so forth (Eynon 2011).

National Conference
July 15-19, 2012 Boston
Prepared by Margaret Marshall and Laura Elmer

1. ePortfolios Are About Student Learning: Reflection and the habits of mind necessary to assemble an ePortfolio are not automatic. Students need opportunities to practice reflection and will develop deeper thinking over time. Faculty can help develop these abilities by providing prompts that encourage students to consider what they’ve learned, how their experiences connect, and how they might use the information or skills they are learning in the future. Because reflection is a learned skill, it’s important to embed opportunities for practice across the full process (whether within a course or across an entire curriculum program). Students should be encouraged to think about their own growth, not just their best work. Programs that include occasions for social interactions around ePortfolios report more engagement and deeper learning.

2. Staged Implementation (the go slow approach): This implementation strategy seems to be essential to success. Matching expectations to resources, growing resources and capacity with momentum simultaneously, and insisting that programs identify their goals and align these to their curriculum are also key elements of success (based on research studies both in the US and in UK, Australia, New Zealand, and in the numerous sessions we attended where institutions talked about their implementation strategies and lessons learned). Faculty, students, and departments need support if they are to implement an ePortfolio project effectively; letting everyone do ePortfolios however they wish and without adequate planning creates frustration for everyone. Virginia Tech initially encouraged lots of different versions of ePortfolios (course centered, Career, tied to learning communities, focused on program assessment, etc.) and had to restart with a more strategic and focused selection of projects that met their goals. Calling the initial implementation “pilots” seems to be counterproductive because it encourages faculty to believe that after a short set of tests, the ePortfolio project will go away. In a session called, “Promoting ePortfolios through Digital Storytelling,” Kristin Norris from IUPUI also mentioned that taking implementation slow is important because the shift is not simply about going from print to the digital realm, but there are pedagogical shifts that must happen. ePortfolios will change the way faculty and students see learning and the boundaries of the classroom must completely change. This is why people talk about the “disruptive” power of ePortfolios. Making ePortfolios optional for faculty or programs is fine. But once an ePortfolio assignment is in a course, making it optional for students will be disastrous.

3. Leading with Assessment Doesn’t Work: As we’ve heard before, some institutions that have been doing ePortfolios for several years report that eventually faculty come to see assessment as more useful because working with students on ePortfolios is more authentic.
4. **Establish a Common Understanding of ePortfolios:** Definitions can vary greatly and what faculty and students think ePortfolios are can be quite divergent. Wende Garrison of Virginia Tech provided a useful illustration of the difference between paper and ePortfolios, blogs and other network-based profiles. For Garrison, and it seemed many others, ePortfolios have to have three key components: artifacts, reflection that creates connections and synthesis of learning, and on-line presence.

5. **Stakeholders:** Identifying the opinion leaders is as important to successful implementation as identifying the early adopters. Wende Garrison offered these two questions to guide implementation: With whom can I collaborate across the intuition to ensure greater relevancy for my ePortfolio project? How do I foster excitement while managing expectations? Research also suggests that campus leadership, student stakeholders, and high impact programs (ex. capstone courses) play important roles in making the project successful. Also, with these first adopters, a few institutions have begun using a mentor or buddy system to help hold one another accountable.

6. **On Software:** Most of the software packages are focused on assessment, and many of them began as Learning Management Systems. In both cases, the usefulness to ePortfolios is limited because they aren’t flexible enough to serve students’ needs for a professional ePortfolio and may not allow easy exporting to a system students can use post-graduation. With inflexibility as a factor, it is also harder to make the students’ audiences for the portfolio genuine. Some new programs are emerging that are cheaper and address these needs while still providing easy assessment at the departmental or institutional level. More than one university recommended choosing software that is agile to change. Presenters often mentioned feeling tied to a dying system that did not predict technological change well or committing to a system that was not interconnected with other technology sources. Several universities mentioned the importance students place on their ability to move freely between different technology sources to collect artifacts and suggested being cautious with using system that do not transfer information back and forth well.

Students Are Not as Worried About the Technology as Faculty Are: So, faculty need opportunities to experiment with creating ePortfolios of their own, structures that give them peer support, and time to complete the tasks they are asking students to do.

7. **Research:** Research on implementation is happening in multiple institutions both in the US and abroad. Key principles that emerge from these studies are a) identifying the purpose of the project; b) designing learning activities that align with that purpose; c) developing a process for staged development and support; d) thinking through ownership issues; and e) recognizing that ePortfolios can be both transformative for learners and disruptive to the usual pedagogical practices. A research project across multiple institutions focused on graduate teaching assistants in Engineering created teaching portfolios provided a staged approach with lots of feedback on each step. Students were in different kinds of groups – cohort groups, volunteers, in the same course but the ePortfolio was not an assignment of the course, or paid. The paid students were the most engaged, but the students in cohort groups were close behind.
APPENDIX V: External Consultant Visit

Introduction Prepared for March 27, 2012 Meeting with Early Participants

We are very fortunate to have with us today KATHLEEN BLAKE YANCEY, the Kellogg W. Hunt Professor of English at Florida State University and a renowned scholar whose work with writing, reflection, writing assessment, and ePortfolios is well known and highly regarded. In fact her work led to her being named a Distinguished Research Professor at Florida State where she serves as Director of the graduate program in Rhetoric and Composition. Earlier this spring she was recognized with Purdue University’s 2012 Distinguished Women Scholars Award, the first such award Purdue has given to a woman from the liberal arts.

Dr. Yancey is the co-founder of the journal Assessing Writing, which she co-edited for seven years. She is currently the editor of College Composition and Communication, the premier journal in composition and rhetoric. In addition, she has authored, edited, or co-edited eleven scholarly books and two textbooks as well as over 70 articles and book chapters. Her latest book, the co-edited Electronic Portfolios 2.0, highlights the research on electronic portfolios conducted through the Inter/National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research, an organization with over 60 institutional partners from around the world which Professor Yancey co-leads.

Dr. Yancey has served as president or chair of several scholarly and professional organizations including the National Council of Teachers of English, the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the NCTE College Section and the College Forum, and the Council of Writing Program Administrators. Currently, she is second vice-president for the South Atlantic Modern Language Association (SAMLA) and will succeed to the presidency in 2013. She also serves on the National Board for Miami University of Ohio’s Howe Center for Writing Excellence and on the Steering Committee for the Association for Authentic, Experiential, and Evidence-Based Learning (AAEEBL). She was involved in the Steering Committee of the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress and the Steering Committee for the American Association of Colleges and Universities VALUE project focused on electronic portfolios. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Kathleen Blake Yancey.

Key Points from the Visit

- Don’t make ePortfolios compulsory, at least not to start with
- Highlight ePortfolio as a set of practices and not just a product
- ePortfolio creation is a social, face-to-face activity, and portfolios are “living documents”
- Focus on the learning outcomes at all points in the process—use them as guides, to promote consistency
- Separate the outcomes you can see in the final ePortfolio from those that are necessary to the process of creating the ePortfolio
Visual design is not the same in all disciplines; balance decentralization with uniformity

If you require an element or outcome, you have to have an assessment rubric for it

Provide guidelines for students about selecting artifacts or they will choose their favorites, not necessarily their best or most appropriate work

Use the ePortfolio project to get departments thinking about artifact creation early in the curriculum

Keep the ePortfolio project separate from the Writing Initiative, in order to avoid tying the fate of one to the other, but use the lessons you’ve learned from other initiatives to inform the ePortfolio Project

Have a working definition of an ePortfolio that addresses seven aspects: collection, selection, reflection, development, diversity, evaluation, and audience

Involve students in the evaluation of learning outcomes

Technology—the choice of ePortfolio software, for example—is important but not the primary focus of the project; therefore, adjust the budget accordingly

Identify and focus on “pockets of prestige” at Auburn

“Critical mass” will occur when 25%-30% of departments, faculty, and students at Auburn are doing ePortfolios

Help students think about what employers will want to see and how many artifacts are enough; help employers learn to read ePortfolios. Use the experiences with both to inform the project

Use alumni and existing industry advisory boards to help identify the useful components and expectations for an ePortfolio within specific disciplines

Move timeline up: get started in early 2013 or fall 2012

Define the role of employers in the ePortfolio Project and how to involve them in it

Form a Steering Committee or Council and appoint members to it by January 2013 earlier if possible

Consider forming an Industry Advisory Board (IAB)

Build on existing initiatives and supporting units

Involve students in promotion of and communication about ePortfolios

Define the role of graduate students in the project

Do awards and recognize winners (e.g. at an awards dinner), include awards for different categories. Follow winners beyond Auburn

Define what a “quality” professional ePortfolio looks like

Put more resources into workshops for both faculty and students
APPENDIX VI: Frequently Asked Questions

During the public vetting of the draft implementation plan in Fall 2012, the QEP Development Committee collected suggestions for frequently asked questions. These will appear on the Web site as well.

Who’s in charge of the ePortfolio Project?
The Director of University Writing will oversee the ePortfolio Project as an extension of the writing initiative. An Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios will be on campus by June 1, 2013. A Steering Committee, with several Subcommittees focused on specific aspects of the project, will be in place by early spring 2013 to provide on-going broad-based input into the project and the decisions that will need to be made regarding the implementation and assessment of the project.

Who can participate in the ePortfolio Project?
Anyone can participate in the ePortfolio Project, but we recognize that doing ePortfolios well requires time and support. We’ve chosen to do staged implementation in order to build some of that support into the curriculum by beginning with programs that see the value of helping students create ePortfolios as they do class assignments or senior projects. Co-curricular groups and students organizations will also be included in each year’s cohort groups so that students will have an alternative system of support if their major department is not involved in the ePortfolio Project. Existing support units like the Miller Writing Center, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, and the Career Center as well as workshops for students arranged by the Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios will provide additional support for students who wish to complete an ePortfolio on their own.

Why would programs that already have a capstone ePortfolio in place want to participate in a cohort group?
Programs that are already requiring ePortfolios for their students might want to participate in order to share what they’re doing with other departments. They might want to expand their work and involve additional faculty by introducing elements of ePortfolios earlier in the curriculum so that the capstone course is not the first time students encounter ePortfolios. Some programs will want to expand the way they’ve been doing ePortfolios by including reflection, additional types of artifacts, or more attention to visual literacy. Programs or individual faculty members might want to undertake research about ePortfolios and student learning, or connect ePortfolios to other research activities. Programs are not required to be members of a cohort group in order to participate in the ePortfolio Project, but doing so does give them priority in applying for grants.

What is involved in being a member of a cohort group?
Cohort members get priority in applying for grants and in having access to support from the Office of University Writing. In exchange, they agree to participate in workshops, share what they are doing with others on campus, and contribute to the assessment of the ePortfolio Project. Year 1 Cohort participants are serving as advisors to the project until the Steering Committee can be established. The Steer-
The Committee will set the priorities for selecting cohort participants each year and announce those to the campus community.

**How will the Cohorts for each year be chosen?**
The Director of University Writing is collecting names of programs and groups that want to be involved and will present those to the Steering Committee so that they can make the final decision. In general, cohort groups will be selected to balance resources, ensure that different disciplines and groups are represented, and allow the ePortfolio Project to systematically expand and deepen.

**How will the grant application process work?**
The Grants and Awards Subcommittee and the Steering Committee will work out the process for grants and awards over the next several months. If you have ideas about how the process should work, please do let us know. In general, we expect each year’s cohort participants to have priority, but others will be able to apply for grants as well. Details will be distributed to the entire campus community as they are developed.

**If individual faculty members want to use ePortfolios in courses that aren’t capstone courses and so students won’t be producing professional ePortfolios, can they still be a part of a cohort or apply for resources?**
Absolutely! Individual courses are a great place for students to begin learning artifact creation or collection, to practice the skill of reflection, and to learn technical skills. Such courses could be a place where faculty help students practice building ePortfolios through the use of other types of ePortfolios such as learning ePortfolios. We chose to begin the implementation with departments that were ready to make professional ePortfolios a requirement for graduation, but even those departments will have course-level ePortfolios or have students practice components of a professional ePortfolio in earlier courses.

**Can programs like first-year Composition or Learning Communities participate?**
Of course. Though we aren’t implementing the ePortfolio Project by beginning with an entering class, students will be in a better position to collect artifacts if they are thinking about ePortfolios from the beginning of their academic careers and actively practicing the critical thinking required to produce an ePortfolio. We expect that at least one first-year program will be added to the Year 2 Cohort group.

**How can fields that aren’t visually oriented participate?**
The ePortfolio Project is certainly not just for disciplines commonly thought of as “visually oriented.” As a matter of fact, almost any skill or experience can be represented visually and learning to do so is important in our highly visual world. We encourage fields that are not visually oriented to participate in the ePortfolio Project and the Office of University Writing is prepared to help faculty and students from such fields brainstorm ways to represent their expertise online. Year 1 Cohort includes both Nursing and English, departments that are more often known for producing text-driven materials in their courses. Nonetheless, students in those departments are already thinking through the knowledge and experiences they have gained through their programs in visually stimulating ways. Not every ePortfolio
will include the same number of visual artifacts, but every discipline produces documents that include graphs, tables, illustrations, and other visual material, and every student has co-curricular experiences that lend themselves to visual representation.

**If I’m a student in a major that doesn’t require ePortfolios, how can I get support for creating an ePortfolio on my own?**

ePortfolios will also be supported through student organizations and co-curricular programs. In addition, workshops for students will be available and support units like the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, the Miller Writing Center, and the Career Center will be prepared to offer support to individuals.

**Could ePortfolios be offered as an elective course (1 credit hour) like a UNIV course?**

This is an interesting idea, but it is more complicated than it seems. The Steering Committee will investigate the possibility of offering credit for ePortfolios, but for at least the next year credit is not possible.

**Why are we calling this “ePortfolios” instead of using terms like “digital” or “multi-media?”**

The term “ePortfolios” is linked to a body of research and an international consortium that studies how these practices and technologies are tied to learning. Because Auburn hopes that this initiative will lead to opportunities to involve students and faculty in this community of research, the QEP Development Committee decided to use the term and language already associated with international research. We understand that “digital” and “multi-media” may be appropriate in specific disciplines, but “ePortfolios” seems to be the more all-encompassing term.

**How are ePortfolios different from Facebook, LinkedIn, or blogs?**

The digital identity and learning represented by an ePortfolio is very different from other online Web-based services that may seem at first to be similar. For example, though LinkedIn is an online system, it generally doesn’t allow users to include a variety of artifacts and it doesn’t allow the user to contextualize those documents for the viewer. Instead of simply listing a discipline-specific conference presentation as on LinkedIn, an ePortfolio allows students to include a poster or audio/video recording to capture that presentation. Adding contextualization gives students the opportunity to make connections, synthesize their experiences, and reflect on their learning and doing so helps viewers understand what was learned and how students are thinking about that learning. Similarly, blogs can demonstrate reflective thinking and showcase a particular kind of writing, but they generally don’t show a range of skills or include multi-media documents. Facebook is probably the online identity that is farthest from an ePortfolio. Researchers tell us that although employers are using Facebook to learn more about applicants, most often it is not to find out about their positive qualities but instead to assess the applicant’s personality traits. (Kluemper, Rosen, and Mossholder 2012). Instead of having employers analyze casual pictures and online conversations to make conclusions about Auburn students, the ePortfolio Project aims to teach students the importance of building a unified and professional online identity.
**Will students be required to use a standard platform to create ePortfolios?**

Because technology is always changing and being updated, because not every discipline at Auburn has the same needs, and because we want our students to be able to keep their ePortfolio Web site as they move away from Auburn, the development committee identified four free platforms that students and faculty can expect the support units to know. A Technology Subcommittee will monitor changes in technology and recommend appropriate platforms should that become advisable in the future. Our research taught us that the success of an ePortfolio Project is less about the specific technology used than it is about developing an infrastructure to support faculty and students. Using free software allows us to use our resources in ways that more directly support students and faculty.

**Will we have sufficient server space for students to collect and archive work, especially where documenting the process of creating artifacts is as important as the final product?**

Since we are encouraging the use of cloud-based programs, server space isn’t really an issue. Students also have free access to their own personal cloud-based storage as a part of the Microsoft Live system, and the Office of Information Technology has recently created a mechanism for departments and colleges to purchase additional server space at rates that are competitive to commercial services.

**How will programs capture ePortfolios at a particular moment in time when students will continue to change them after submitting them for assessment purposes or consideration for awards?**

Depending upon what a program needs to capture and what they are hoping to assess, there are different free online programs such as “Site Sucker,” “HTTrack” and “Evernote” that have the ability to download either a local version of a Web site or create PDFs of the pages of Web sites that have not been hard-coded with HTML/CSS. Where students have coded the ePortfolio Web site, keeping copies and access to the site is a much easier process.

**What are the ethical issues students need to consider in creating a professional ePortfolio?**

The ePortfolio Project offers many opportunities for students and faculty to consider the ethical issues of our digital age. Crediting sources of visual material and acknowledging others in collaborative projects are just two examples of common ePortfolio practices that demonstrate a student’s understanding of specific disciplinary conventions. We expect faculty using ePortfolios will include discussion and examples of such ethical issues and workshops for students will do so as well.
APPENDIX VII: Job Description

Assistant Director of University Writing for ePortfolios (as posted)
Auburn University seeks a non-tenure track faculty administrator to serve as Assistant Director of University Writing with primary responsibility for the new ePortfolio Project which is the university’s Quality Enhancement Project required for SACSCOC accreditation. This is a continuing 12-month, non-tenure track faculty position with faculty benefits and a salary commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Auburn University is one of the nation’s premier land, sea, and space grant institutions. In the 2013 edition of U.S. News & World Report ratings of undergraduate programs, it was ranked 37th among public universities. Auburn is a high research activity institution, offering Bachelor’s, Master’s, Educational Specialist, and Doctor’s degrees. In fall 2011 Auburn University had 1,196 full-time faculty, 159 part-time faculty, and enrolled 25,469 students from all fifty states and approximately 81 countries, including 20,446 undergraduates and 5,023 graduate students.

We seek an individual who understands the potential of ePortfolios to promote student learning across multiple disciplines and co-curricular programs to implement an ePortfolio Project focused on career/professional ePortfolios. We need a dynamic champion for our ePortfolio Project which builds on the writing initiative established in 2010 and includes support to faculty in adding ePortfolios into departmental and co-curricular programs and support to students through workshops, face-to-face tutoring, and on-line resources. Primary responsibilities include:

- promoting and encouraging the adoption of ePortfolios university-wide
- coordinating the six-year campus-wide implementation plan (available at www.auburn.edu/ePortfolios)
- overseeing student volunteers/interns associated with the project
- collaborating with other university support units like the Career Center, the Libraries’ Media and Digital Resource Lab, the Miller Writing Center, and the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning to arrange and deliver workshops for students and faculty and expand peer-tutoring programs
- working with the Steering Committee to develop awards, incentives, and other infrastructure components that will sustain the program
- working closely with the Director of University Writing to support curricular revisions that embed ePortfolios in departments and co-curricular programs and designing and delivering appropriate faculty support for such efforts
- monitoring assessment of both the student learning outcomes associated with the project (effective communication, visual literacy, critical thinking through reflection, and technical com-
petence) and the impact of the project on the campus and then generating reports for various stakeholders.

We expect the individual in this position to be involved in and able to represent Auburn’s ePortfolio Project at regional and national conferences and to have a demonstrated professional interest in the larger conversations about ePortfolios and their impact on student learning.

**Required Qualifications:** Master’s degree in an appropriate field with course work and experience in teaching, writing pedagogy, integrative learning strategies, and technology-enriched learning. Demonstrated knowledge and experience in using ePortfolios to enhance student learning in various disciplines. Demonstrated ability to work in a collaborative team and to design and deliver instructional support to faculty and students. Ability to communicate effectively to multiple audiences.

**Preferred Qualifications:** Ph.D. preferred. Experience and/or course work related to visual literacy, critical thinking, and/or the transition from college to career. Experience and interest in Writing in the Disciplines, faculty development, assessment, and/or program administration are advantageous.

Starting date by June 1, 2013 is preferred.

The candidate selected for this position must be able to meet eligibility requirements to work in the United States at the time appointment is scheduled to begin and continue working legally for the proposed term of employment.

Please send your letter of application, curriculum vitae, the names and contact information for three professional references, and a position statement about the connections between ePortfolios and student learning to: Dr. Margaret J. Marshall, Director of University Writing and Chair of the Search Committee, 3436 RBD Library, Auburn University, AL 36849-5279. Electronic submissions to: ouwjobs@auburn.edu. Review of applications will begin November 12 with campus interviews and workshop-type presentation expected in January – February, 2013. Auburn University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.
APPENDIX VIII: Year 1 (2012-13) Cohort Participants

The focus of Year 1 is to develop models for both departmental and co-curricular programs at different stages of adopting ePortfolios.

**Art:** The Department of Art, and the professions to which its students aspire, rely heavily on portfolios for presentation and evaluation of visual art production. Students in Studio Arts routinely collect the physical artworks representative of their accomplishments and present them in portfolios for faculty critique, discussion, and grading. Digital documentation of artwork is now the accepted means of presentation for many career-focused portfolio applications. The faculty in this department have recognized the necessity for instruction in career-focused portfolio production as students complete their degrees, and they developed ARTS 4850 Professional Practices course in part to facilitate such a portfolio. In that course, required of all Studio Arts majors, faculty provide basic instruction in photographic technique, image composition, and content selection. Limited instruction in Web site design for portfolio presentation has been included in the course as well. The department has discussed and reached consensus on significantly expanding the use of, and instruction in the creation of, ePortfolios. Significant benefit from participation in the university ePortfolio Project is anticipated, with support for faculty and student instruction in use of design software, in the creation of images, and in the composition and organization of the portfolio. An ePortfolio ad hoc committee has been established to develop plans for implementing and coordinating ePortfolio use across our curriculum. A flexible, individualized, and media-rich examples, with photographs, video, and critical, research-based, and reflective writing is imagined. ePortfolios will help the department illustrate and underscore varieties of professionalism in the discipline. The department will seek frequent opportunities for students to formally and informally share the content they have created with each other and with faculty. Students in the Department of Art have particular needs for photographing two and three-dimensional objects, and for video recording of time-based work. The department hopes to gain support for conversion of an existing space to a dedicated photo studio equipped to create professional-quality images of student artwork.

**Model expected:** moving from a tradition of paper portfolios to ePortfolios, with adjustments to course assignments and more collaborative consideration of evaluation/assessment; integration of ePortfolios into instructional practice, attention to revision beyond course assignments, expansion of written artifacts, fostering collaboration and coordination of faculty teaching different courses.

**Building Science:** The McWhorter School of Building Science at Auburn (BSCI) established in 1947, is the second oldest construction education program in the United States. Students learn the basic principles of science, architecture, engineering, business, and construction. The four-year curriculum leads to the Bachelor of Science in Building Construction, accredited by the American Council for Construction Education. The vast majority of the students go to work in the construction industry in a management capacity upon graduation. The program and the discipline have no tradition of portfolios. The school has developed and approved a plan to integrate professional ePortfo-
lios into the final two years of the four-year undergraduate program. The proposal sets out a three-stage process to research, develop, and finally implement professional ePortfolios into a series of junior and senior classes. Research will focus on identifying construction industry expectations and appropriate technology for developing ePortfolios. Curriculum guidelines and possible templates will be developed and faculty will attend appropriate conferences and workshops in order to integrate ePortfolios into their curriculum. The first class to expose students to ePortfolios will be BSCI 3500 – Construction Information Technology (see Figure 13 on page 73). Students taking this class will develop their ePortfolio and begin the process of reflecting on their experiences and adding artifacts. Additional courses are selected with the considerations of 1) richness of the multi-media artifacts that can be generated from students projects/assignments; and 2) continuation of developing and revising the student ePortfolios at least once a semester in their junior and senior years.

**Model expected:** graduation requirement with course-based implementation where considerable prior work has been done by faculty members in the department to modify assignments and develop curriculum to accommodate ePortfolios; attention to industry expectations and appropriate technology to capture this discipline’s most typical artifacts.

**English:** The Department of English requires all students seeking the MA degree to submit a portfolio during the final semester of their coursework. The portfolio has two primary objectives: to offer a retrospective analysis of work completed for the degree and to look ahead to the student’s longer-term academic and professional goals. Students develop the portfolio in consultation with a faculty advisory committee and defend the portfolio during an oral exam conducted by the committee. The specific materials included in the portfolio vary by the student’s concentration within the degree. Students concentrating in **literary studies** submit a cover letter that discusses major issues in the field and how their own work addresses those issues; a substantive revision of a seminar paper; a mid-length writing project, such as a conference paper, grant proposal, or teaching portfolio focusing on a specific course; a brief writing project, such as a statement of purpose for a PhD application or annotated book review; and an updated resume or CV. Students concentrating in **rhetoric and composition** also submit a cover letter addressing major issues in their field; a teaching portfolio; a revised seminar paper from a course in rhetoric and composition; an additional writing project that can take the form of a grant or conference proposal, designed document, or Web site; and an updated resume or CV. Students concentrating in **creative writing** submit a 30-50 page sample of creative work composed of short stories, poems, or a mixture of both; a craft essay that explains the thematic concerns and stylistic techniques evident in their creative work; and an updated resume or CV. Students in all three tracks have the option to submit the portfolio as a paper document or PDF or as a usable Web site (in effect, an ePortfolio). The number of students who choose the latter option has increased each year the portfolio requirement has been in effect, and the program continues to encourage students to opt for the ePortfolio. Additional training and support and integration of the portfolio into coursework, will allow the department to switch completely to an ePortfolio format. Some of the advantages to this change include: providing students with additional skills in the creation of Web-based designed writing projects; enabling students to include hyper-linked and more
visually-oriented documents in their portfolios, including video of teaching or seminar presentations; and creating greater ease of navigation and usability. Overall, the ePortfolio should serve students as a “living document” that can continue to grow and evolve along with their professional needs and aims.

**Model expected:** extra-curricular support structures for students, earlier start on revising and compiling; graduate level program without a strong association with visual literacy or technology.

**Nursing:** The integration of a Baccalaureate of Nursing Graduation Portfolio as a “capstone” assignment within the final senior course was established years ago. In 2009, students were given an option of providing a paper or electronic portfolio in the course. Due to the overwhelming positive response to the electronic option, ePortfolios are now the required format. The purpose of the Nursing ePortfolio is to help students synthesize their learning experiences in their professional program. Students reflect on their achievement and growth specifically related to the six nursing program learning outcomes: communication and collaboration, clinical practice and clinical reasoning, prevention and population health, diversity, scholarship for evidence-based practice, and leadership. The student provides a brief reflective narrative, includes reflection on how the outcome ability was achieved, and may attach an example of a specific learning activity to further illustrate achievement of the outcome. Other components of the portfolio include individualized short-term and long-term career goals, professional resume and letter to prospective employees, and examples of their teaching project created during their clinical preceptorship experience. The current teaching emphasis for the ePortfolio is directed to the content rather than to the technical or visual literacy aspects of creating an ePortfolio. No specific Web-based platform is required, but examples of previous students’ ePortfolios are shared and the majority of students select either Weebly or Wix templates. This is a graded assignment with the majority of points directed at content. The ePortfolios are generally creative and informative, but the department recognizes the need to expose students earlier in their learning experiences to help them “collect and reflect on” artifacts throughout the curriculum, instead of waiting until the last semester. There also is a need for more direction related to technical competency and understanding the principles of visual literacy among students as well as faculty. Despite the early success with ePortfolios within the School of Nursing, targeted faculty development is needed to help integrate the principles of ePortfolio development throughout the curriculum instead of a single capstone assignment.

**Model expected:** implementation expanding from single course through curriculum and with increased attention to visual literacy and technical competency outcomes.

**Pharmacy:** The Accreditation Council on Pharmacy Education (ACPE) recommends the use of portfolios to document learning, growth, and achievement through the use of artifacts and reflective statements. Student Learning Portfolios are an important step toward the creation of Career Portfolios. Career Portfolios communicate achievements and student skills in a written and visual way and enhance communication of these achievements and skills to prospective employers. The Harrison School of Pharmacy expanded its use of ePortfolios in the fall of 2012. The School has implemented a three year plan for development of student learning portfolios with the expectation that stu-
Students will then elect to produce a career portfolio during their final year of study. The portfolio, as currently designed, consists of 5 sections: course related materials, curriculum vita, annual and long term career and personal goals, self-assessments of professionalism, and reports on growth toward and achievement of the School’s eight curricular outcomes. Students are assigned faculty mentors who will provide feedback and guidance at a minimum of twice yearly with revision expected at least twice yearly. Students will use reflection as a method of critical thinking as they communicate how their coursework has helped them progress toward achievement of the curricular outcomes and map their coursework to these outcomes. They will evaluate and synthesize their learning across multiple courses. They will make decisions on how to present themselves by selecting appropriate artifacts that demonstrate their learning as well as justify their self-assessment. They will be required to effectively communicate their self-assessments on learning using appropriate tone, writing mechanics, and technical language for the discipline. They must justify their self-assessments through the written word and the selection of artifacts that demonstrate an understanding of the discipline. For these reasons, the HSOP ePortfolio program aligns with the ePortfolio Project.

Model expected: implementation of ePortfolios guided by professional accreditation standards; moving from learning ePortfolios to professional ePortfolios.

Study Abroad Program: The Office of International Programs, Auburn Abroad and Exchange Program assists academic departments in all colleges in their efforts to develop study, internship, and exchange programs abroad. In response to Auburn’s updated strategic priorities, the Office of International Programs with Provost support, purchased StudioAbroad, an on-line search and application system that allows the staff to handle the increasing demand from departments developing programs abroad and the increasing number of students applying to programs abroad. The online search site, maintained by this office, provides students with essential information on programs abroad from all colleges. It provides 24/7 access to students to search and apply to programs and includes student conduct and GPA reviews of all applicants. As part of the student application process for programs abroad, the staff and study abroad student interns also provide orientation sessions, application and travel materials, advising, and pre-departure sessions. At the conclusion of a departmental program abroad or individual student’s abroad experiences, students are invited to join the Global Tiger Peer Advisory group or to apply for one of the office internships. In both roles students assist in marketing Auburn Abroad to other students interested in going abroad through presentations and testimonials and thus gain additional leadership experiences. The Office has set as a goal doing more to assist students in processing their experience abroad and in representing that experience during employment interviews and in graduate school applications. They aim to do more before students ever leave campus to help them be prepared to capture their experiences and engage in reflective thinking that will deepen their learning. ePortfolios provide a way to work on these pre- and post- experience goals. Because the program works with faculty and programs across campus, they are in a position to support the curricular goals of departments that adopt ePortfolios as well as to assist students in representing this important co-curricular experience whether their major includes an ePortfolio or not.
Model Expected: Co-curricular participation extending across several years; in the first year the focus is on creating structures to support faculty and students by 1) forming an ePortfolio advisory group to assist the staff in developing appropriate programs and structures, 2) identifying faculty who can create or adapt artifact-generating assignments that can serve as models for other faculty taking students abroad, and 3) offering workshops and creating other structures (like online resources) that help students prepare for and then capture and reflect on their experiences abroad.

New Media Club: The Auburn University New Media Club aims to increase the knowledge and appreciation for types of new media and through doing so, stimulate a hands-on approach to learning both pre-existing technologies and newer mediums through projects deemed interesting and pertinent by the organization as a whole. The organization also aims to promote production work and facilitate this work both for students and faculty. Two members of the New Media Club participated in the initial summer 2012 Student ePortfolio Ambassador Program and created and/or expanded their existing professional ePortfolios. As members of the Year 1 Cohort group, the club will work closely with the Office of University Writing to hold workshops to help other members of the Club from a range of disciplines create ePortfolios. They will hold peer review sessions and make suggestions for online resources that will help other students with ePortfolios. They will devote portions of regular meetings to creating content for ePortfolios, designing effective layouts, resolving technology issues, or writing reflective pieces to synthesize and contextualize the documents they select. Because of their experience with technology and new media, they will experiment with different platforms and provide a summary of their experiences/recommendations for use with other student clubs.

Model expected: student organization-based adoption with appropriate support structures to ensure success.
APPENDIX IX: Modification of Office of University Writing


Figure 25: Space Expansion for Office of University Writing