

# Moving Forward: Using eFolios for Program Assessment and Accreditation in an Elementary Education Teacher Preparation Program

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**Abstract:** The use of eFolios in the College of Teacher Education and Leadership (CTEL) results from collaborative efforts of faculty over the past seven years. Elementary Education has aligned state teaching competencies and NETS-T with program course requirements. Throughout their teacher preparation program preservice teachers create and collect artifacts that align with standards and integrate personal teaching video and action research to produce multiple eFolios. They are built using web-based software, allowing preservice teachers and faculty easy access and manipulation of documents. The Elementary Education Program is evaluating these rich resources and collecting data about student performance, which provides information used for course and program evaluations and revisions as well as provides support for accreditation. This study describes the use of preservice teachers' eFolios for these purposes and raises questions about the possibilities and implications of assessment using eFolios.

Arizona State University (ASU) College of Teacher Education and Leadership (CTEL) has been actively striving to integrate technology into its preservice teacher preparation programs. Our current electronic portfolio project allows students to collect and evaluate learning experiences over their progression through the teacher preparation program. Additionally, faculty have opportunities to view students' work and track academic content, technology, and professional teaching standards that are being represented by the artifacts. Elementary Education preservice teacher preparation program has begun using these eFolios for program evaluation and accreditation.

## Context

In the spring of 2003, ASU CTET began using a proprietary web-based system, *TaskStream*, to facilitate the creation of electronic portfolios. The tools accessible through *TaskStream* allow students to create electronic lesson plans and curricular units as well as organize multiple document types using the *Webfolio* building tools. The preservice teachers' development of a reflective electronic teaching portfolio requires students to document their progress toward the teacher competencies. The competencies addressed through the portfolios include Arizona Professional Teaching Standards (APTS), ASU CTET Goals, and National Technology Standards for Teachers (NETS-T). Preservice teachers collect artifacts to illustrate their competency throughout the four-semester teacher preparation program. Reflections of learning are the underpinnings that give value to the electronic portfolio over other collections of digital media. Reflection allows preservice teachers to demonstrate growth over time and faculty opportunities to assess student performance and growth throughout the preservice teacher program. Tools within *TaskStream* allow faculty members to track the work of students across all semesters of their pre-service program and across multiple content and technology standards as well as certification requirements.

Two primary assumptions in the portfolio development process are: 1) a portfolio is not a haphazard collection of artifacts (i.e., a scrapbook) but rather a reflective tool which demonstrates growth over time; and 2) as we move to more standards-based teacher performance assessment, we need new tools to record and organize evidence of successful teaching, for both practicing professionals and student teachers (Barrett, 2001).

The process followed in guiding pre-service teachers electronic portfolio development includes: