This roundtable session will discuss how to motivate graduate faculty who are reluctant to utilize technology in any aspect in their teaching or evaluation of student progress. In today’s world that is filled with technology, there still are those individuals who use only e-mail as their link to the e-world. These faculty members have not mastered the skills to use technology at its full potential. This includes teaching courses online, using Blackboard as a teaching tool or utilizing e-portfolios to evaluate student artifacts.

At Northeastern Illinois University, accreditation bodies require that students develop portfolios that include artifacts from all graduate courses that are taken in order to complete a master’s degree. Recently, the organizations that accredit the programs in special education require that the student portfolio transition from paper to electronic form. Of the fifteen faculty members in the department, only two have been trained in this process. Many of the remaining faculty express little interest in taking their knowledge of the application of technology to new levels. It is incumbent, however, that all faculty members in the department know how to teach graduate students to use an electronic portfolio and demonstrate to them how to upload the required artifacts.

This is only one process of using e-portfolios. Evaluation by faculty members of student work found in the e-portfolio is also necessary. This evaluation includes the ability to access a student’s e-portfolio online while using an electronic rubric to measure the content of the submission. What is most interesting is that faculty in the department must include assistive technologies into the courses they teach because this information is found on the certification tests that the graduate students must pass in order to receive their certificates as well as be able to graduate from the program.
It is essential that all faculty members in the Department of Special Education at Northeastern Illinois University become comfortable with the use and implementation of e-portfolios both for their own personal use and for that of the students. The institution is also moving toward the use of electronic portfolios for promotion, retention, and tenure. Without this knowledge, faculty will not be able to remain at the university longer than five years from their start date.

This session will focus upon how the remaining faculty members were encouraged rather than threatened to utilize more technology in their teaching. A review of how the uses of electronic portfolios were presented to these individuals will also be covered. It is so important that all faculty feel comfortable with using the basic tenets of technology while incorporating “higher level” use in their everyday teaching. This session will describe how to turn the most computerphobic professor into one who has learned to appreciate all technology has to offer to the field of education.