

# ePortfolios and Assessment: Making Meaning from Reflection

By Albertine De Leon, Instructional Designer, CTLI

Last February, we had the opportunity to participate in one of PebblePad's Coast2Coast Workshop Series offered to those partners in the Americas. A Lunch, Learn & Share webinar series that hosts, Melissa Shaquid Pirie, Implementation Specialist, and Gail Ring, Director of Learning Partnerships, began in 2020, this session focused on developing assignments that deepen ePortfolio learning.

Melissa and Gail invited Dr. Candyce Reynolds, Director of University Foundations and Professor of Psychological Sciences at Boise State University, to present her talk called, ***Reflection on Reflections: Developing Assignments that Deepen ePortfolio Learning***. Dr. Reynolds has had a wide variety of experiences in higher education and beyond, working in student affairs, departments of psychology, business and management consultation, general education, a peer mentoring program and in faculty development. Her scholarship has primarily focused on student centered pedagogy, authentic student learning assessment and the role of reflective practice in facilitating student learning. In recent years, her work has focused on the use of the ePortfolio to promote student learning and program assessment.

In her presentation, she covers what the problems are with incorporating ePortfolios into courses going so far as to call them glorified filing cabinets when not used correctly. Meaning students put in the things that they've learned into their ePortfolios without actually reflecting on what it is they've learned. She presents the idea that it's not hard to implement ePortfolios as part of your assessments, but faculty need to build their skills on applying reflective questions that are effective and meaningful. She goes on to talk about the importance of reflection as a major piece of the scaffolding in creating truly reflective and integrative ePortfolios.

She introduces the idea of skills being neither hard nor soft, but rather *durable* or *perishable*, and emphasizes that reflection is a durable skill that students need to learn and practice how to do well.



Skills aren't  
"hard" or "soft."  
They're **durable**  
or **perishable**.



### Durable

Half Life =  
> 7 years or lifetime

- Teachable and measurable **mindsets and dispositions** are highly transferable
- What we **KNOW, DO, BECOME**



### Semi-Durable

Half Life =  
2.5 - 7.5 years

- Often related to knowledge in the **major**
- **Likely to be replaced** as the field grows and evolves



### Perishable

Half Life =  
< 2.5 years

- **Specialized** & related to **specific** vendors, platforms, coding languages, & org policy and process
- Dependent on **fluid** tools and organizational structures

Overall, it's an interesting and educational presentation for those of you curious on how to incorporate reflection and ePortfolios meaningfully into your courses.

You can watch the full recording of the presentation by checking out Melissa and Gail's [Coast2Coast Workshop Series ePortfolio on PebblePad](#).