E-portfolios as Tools for Assessment in Health Education

Nicole J. Champagne, Ed.D.

Community Health and Sustainability
University of Massachusetts Lowell

Overview of E-portfolios

- Definition: Web-based tools that enable students and educators to design lessons and units, <u>map and track</u> <u>standards, create rubrics, and develop e-portfolios</u> and web pages, and compile and distribute shared curriculum resource collections.
- Task Stream was chosen due to...
 - Support
 - Innovation
 - Pricing
 - Ease of Use
 - Archiving
 - Customized "standards" feature
 - Continuing education

UML Project

- Funded by the UMass Academic Tech. Council
- Implemented in a Community Health Education Program
 - Preparing entry-level health educators to work in a variety of settings
 - Community Health Centers
 - Non-Profit Organizations
 - Corporate Fitness
 - Healthcare
- Curriculum based on the NCHEC Areas of Responsibility an Competency
- These standards framed the E-portfolio project

Goals of the Project

- Assess programmatic alignment with the Areas of Responsibility through the students' use of the e-portfolio.
- Assess students ability to document evidence of their development in the Areas of Responsibility

CHANGE

- Varying perspectives on change...
 - Fearful of it
 - Embrace it
 - Challenged by it
 - Resistant to it
- This technology changes the way students....
 - Use technology
 - Are evaluated
 - View their college education
- Must be planned for....
 - Stages of Change (Prochaska & Diclemente, 1983)
 - Must engage in a process to succeed in making any behavior change

Pre-Contemplation

(no knowledge, no intention to change in the near future)

- Exemplified by the student saying...
 - "E- what??!!"
- Mentioned the grant on the first ay of class
 - Excited
 - Impressed
- Provided a general description of e-portfolios
- Goal is to move them on to "Contemplation"

Contemplation

(people are aware, seriously thinking about it, have not made a commitment)

- Exemplified by the student saying...
 - "Why should I...."
- Goal is to get them to think of what the eportfolio could do for THEM!
- Reading assignment on e-portfolio, highlighting the benefits (within first month)
- Incentives provided...
 - 1 GB flashdrive
 - I year subscription to Task Stream

Preparation

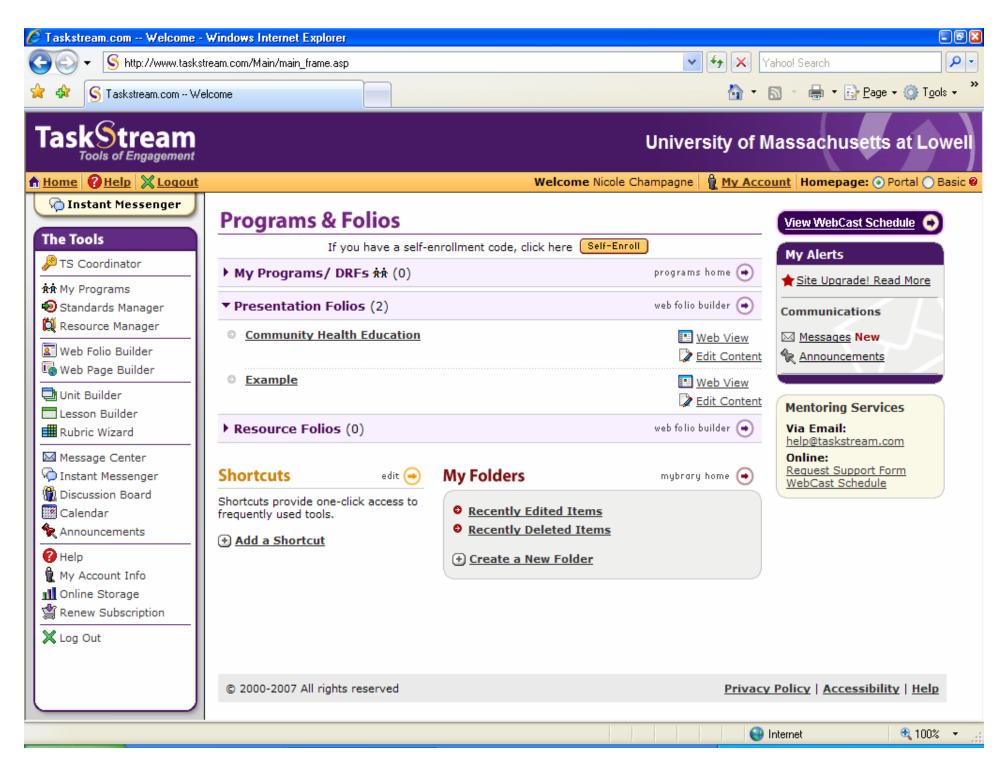
(intending to take action in the next month)

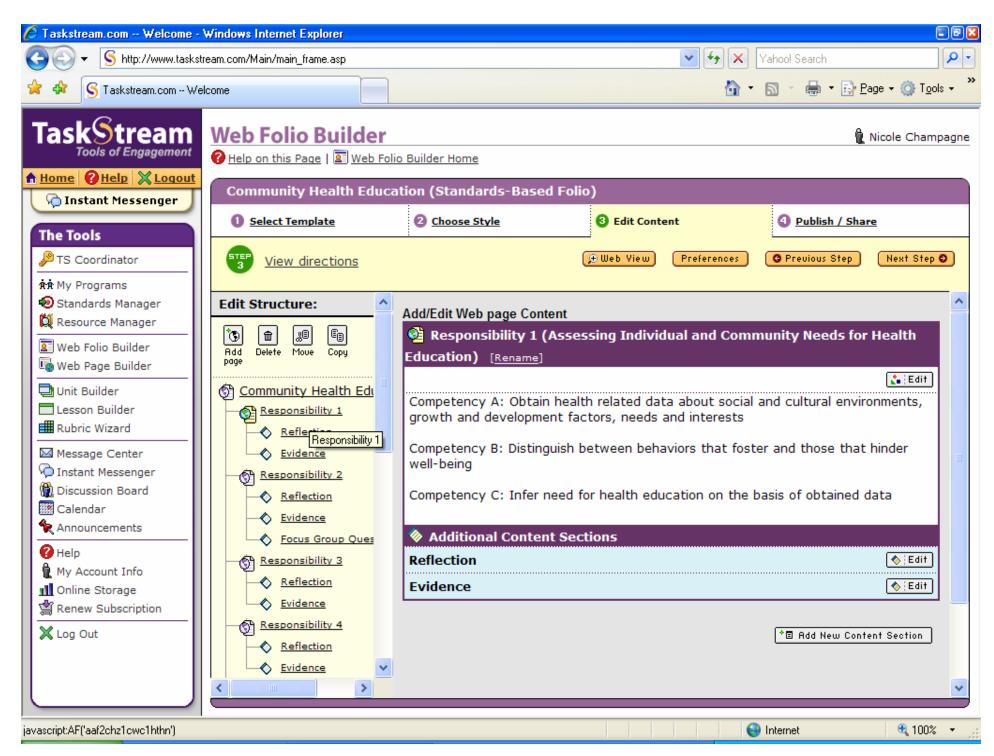
- Exemplified by the student saying...
 - Ideally...."This thing is cool"
 - Realistically...."Ok, this is required!"
 - Typically a combination of ideal and real...
- Two assignments prepared them to use the technology
 - October into November
 - #1- Inventory all projects, papers, etc. from your courses that exemplify your competency
 - #2- Categorize the "inventory" in terms of the Areas of Responsibility
- Important to have the flashdrives loaded with material prior to engaging with the technology
 - Confidence
 - Pride
 - PREPARED

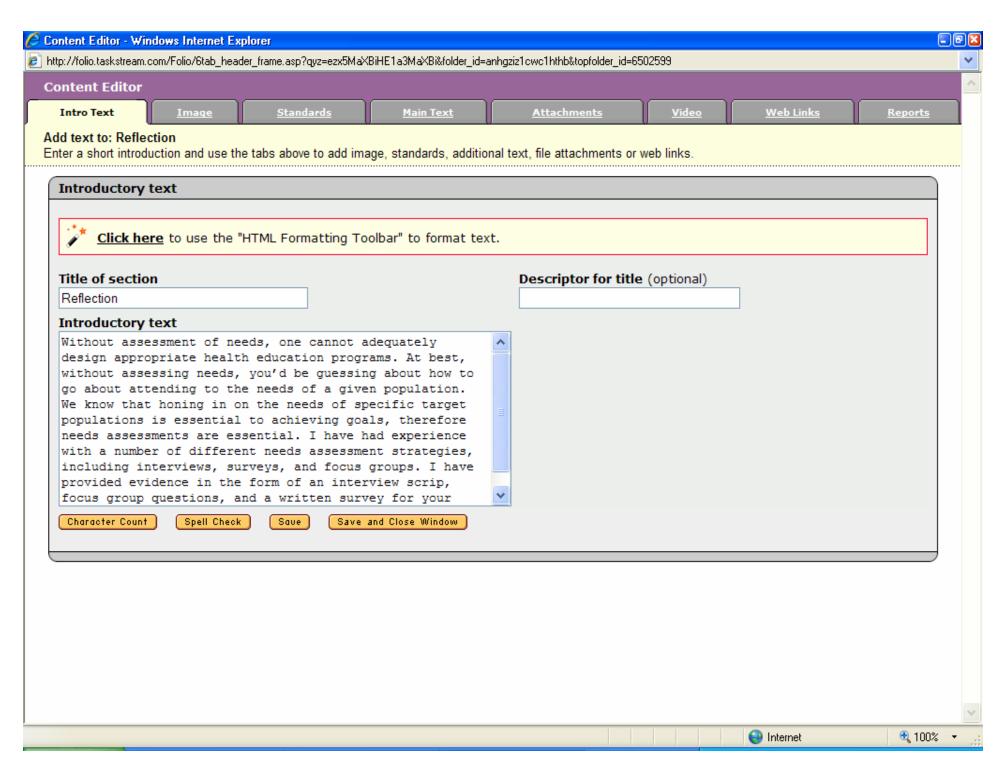
Action

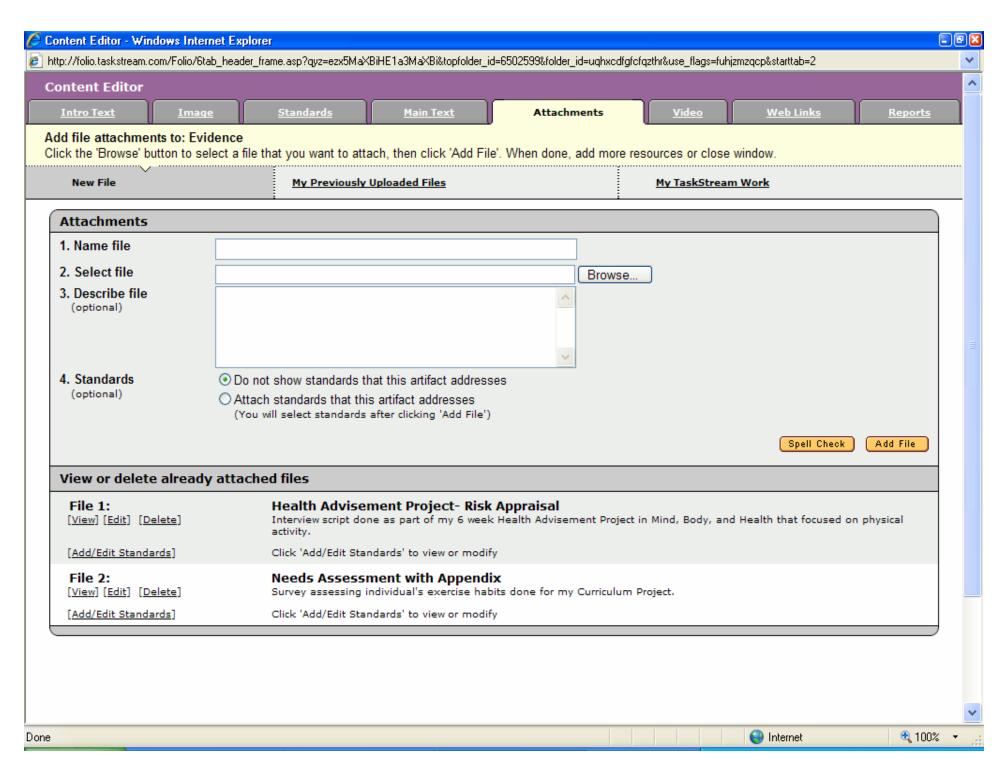
(individuals modify their experiences, requires considerable commitment of time and energy)

- Orientation to Task Stream
 - Early December
 - Students created their accounts
 - Learned how to add the Standards (Areas of Responsibility)
 - Uploaded "evidence" of their competency in each area



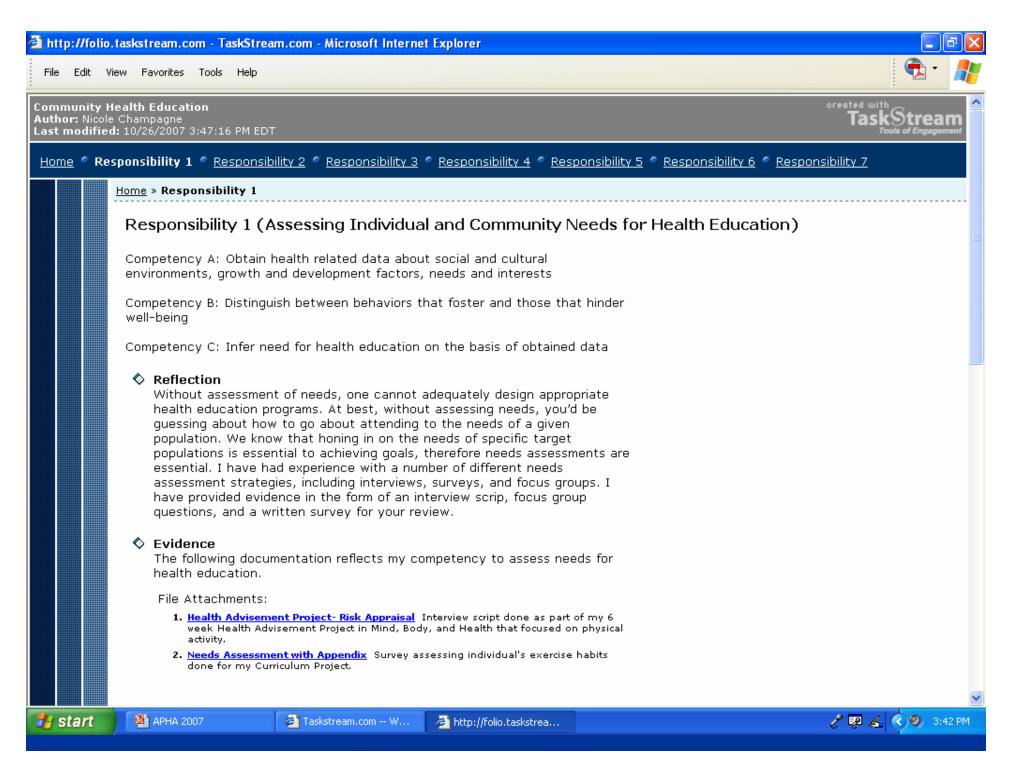






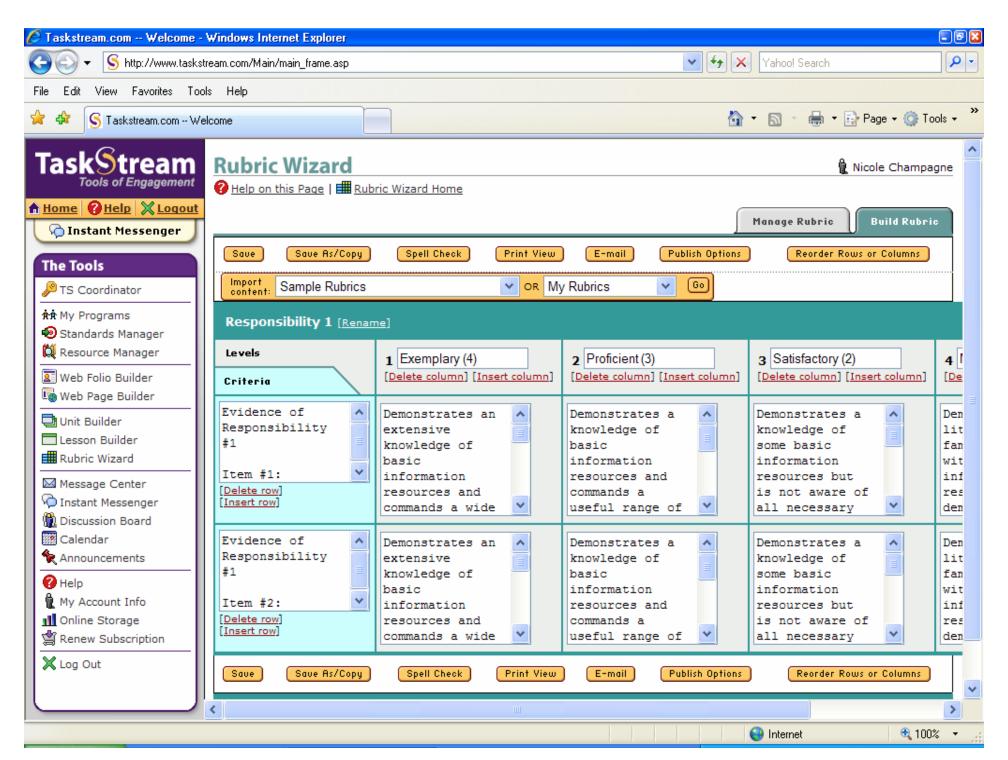
Relapse....Inevitable

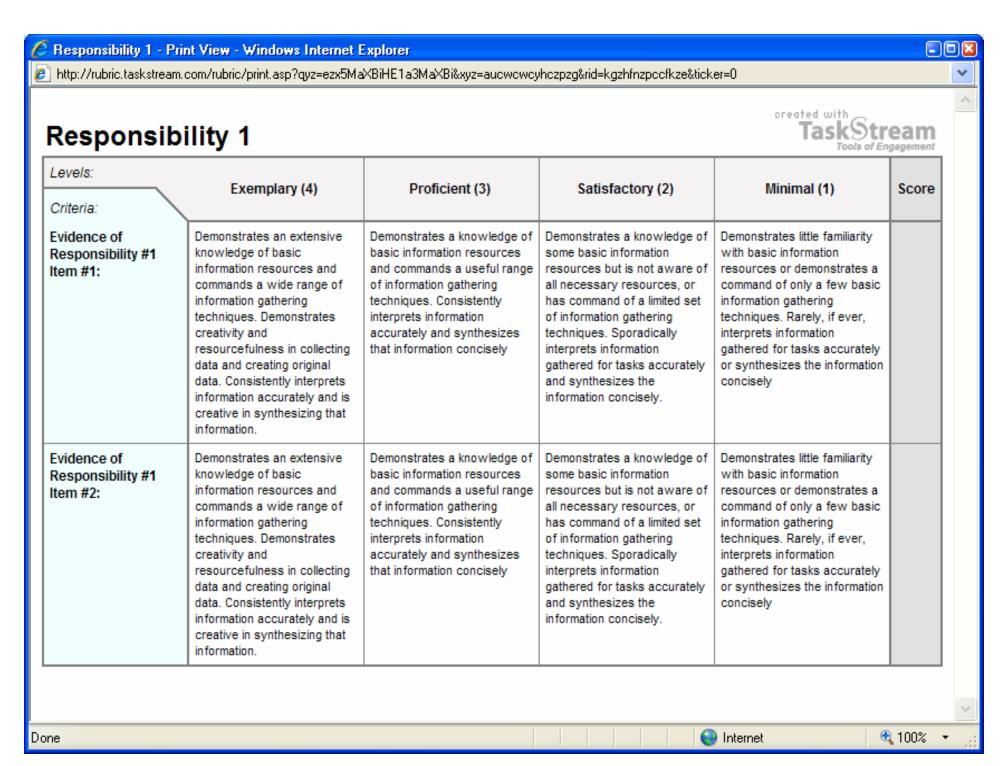
- Students seemed...
 - A bit intimidated
 - "Senior stress" set in
 - Needed additional guidance
- Supplied a model for them



Evaluation

Rubric Wizard





Feedback

Students

- "Easy for me to provide prospective employers with writing samples."
- "Gave me the chance to reflect on my work and realize how "competent I really am!"
- "Helped me to prepare for the CHES exam."
- Issues:
 - Time

Faculty

- Fully embraced by departments' faculty
- Chair has designated funds to subscribe all juniors and seniors in the program
- Issues
 - Time

Challenges

- Implementation with juniors
 - More difficult task
- Communicating the value with no "evidence"
- Varying levels of comfort with technology
 - Faculty
- Currently utilized as an "exit" portfolio
 - Use the technology to track progress over time

Conclusions

- Valuable tool for students and programmatic assessment
- Allows for a program to revolve around a standard set of competencies
- Improves faculty understanding of students' overall development
- Can help to abolish the "silos" of single course evaluation