

A Review of Freshman Electronic Portfolios for Prediction of Student Success and Persistence

Contexts

SHU's Retention Committee

- ♦ 2000: Retention is a SHU Priority President Sheeran charges cmte campus wide effort - Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Enrollment Services
- ♦ 2001-2002: SHU Retention Reviews
 - Identified "At Risk" populations
 - Researched National Best Practices
 - Began speaking in a language of "Pillars of Retention"

NCEPR Nat'l Coalition for ePort Research Faculty and other researchers from ten campuses in successive cohorts meet to share designs for campus-based research projects involving student ePortfolios 2006: SHU joins NCEPR Cohort III

SHU Freshman Studies

As both **advisors** & **ULIFE instructors** **FS Mentors** help first year students to

- ♦ **Locate and use academic resources**
- ♦ **Adjust to new surroundings**
- ♦ **Develop networks of friendships**
- ♦ **Clarify personal and career goals**

SHU NCEPR Team

- ^ **Janet Easterling**, IR Associate
- ^ **Paul Fisher**, Director, TLT Center
- ^ **Tracy Gottlieb**, Dean Freshman Studies
- David Middleton**, Asst VP Fin & Technology
- Danielle Mirliss**, Assoc Dir, TLT Center
- Martin Sandler**, Asst Dir, TLT Center
- ^ **Mary Zedeck**, Instructional Designer

^ indicates a current Seton Hall NCEPR team member (other names are earlier year planners or participants)

Category	4 - Exemplary	3 - Good	2 - Minimum	1 - Less than
Reflections of the Student's Experiences	All required categories covered, full completion with appropriate clear explanation of effort.	All required categories covered, good completion with appropriate clear explanation of effort.	All required categories covered, adequate completion with appropriate clear explanation of effort.	Less than 1 required category covered, or no clear explanation of effort.
Organization	Organization is very clear, easy to follow throughout. e.g., logical use of paragraphs, e.g., use of subheadings.	Organization is clear, easy to follow throughout. e.g., logical use of paragraphs, e.g., use of subheadings.	Organization is adequate, easy to follow throughout. e.g., logical use of paragraphs, e.g., use of subheadings.	Organization is poor, difficult to follow throughout. e.g., no logical use of paragraphs, e.g., no use of subheadings.
Writing Style	Writing style is clear, easy to read, and free of errors. e.g., correct use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	Writing style is clear, easy to read, and free of errors. e.g., correct use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	Writing style is adequate, easy to read, and free of errors. e.g., correct use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	Writing style is poor, difficult to read, and full of errors. e.g., incorrect use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.
Goal Clarity / Academic Goals	Clear, specific, and measurable goals are stated. e.g., "I want to be a nurse" or "I want to be a doctor."	Clear, specific, and measurable goals are stated. e.g., "I want to be a nurse" or "I want to be a doctor."	Clear, specific, and measurable goals are stated. e.g., "I want to be a nurse" or "I want to be a doctor."	Goals are not clear, specific, or measurable. e.g., "I want to be successful" or "I want to be happy."
Academic Engagement	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a weak commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study" or "I am going to get by."
Perceived Support from Family and Friends	Student strongly expresses support from family and friends about going to college, continuing college studies, and also of the choice of going to or continuing at SHU. The student clearly expresses any positive/probative support.	Student strongly expresses support from family and friends about going to college, continuing college studies, and also of the choice of going to or continuing at SHU. The student clearly expresses any positive/probative support.	Student strongly expresses support from family and friends about going to college, continuing college studies, and also of the choice of going to or continuing at SHU. The student clearly expresses any positive/probative support.	Student does not express support from family and friends about going to college, continuing college studies, and also of the choice of going to or continuing at SHU. The student does not express any positive/probative support.

"Pillars of Retention"



Research Questions

- ♦ As repositories of student reflections on first year experiences can ePorts be a source of non-cognitive student data?
- ♦ **What data can be extracted that may connect to first year success?**
- ♦ Which data extracted from ePorts help most in predicting success and return to second year in good academic standing?

Methodology

- ♦ Researchers → meaningful & useable rubrics via crafting plus testing & refining w Mentors
- ♦ Mentors → score representative ePort sample
- ♦ Scores merged w success & persistence data
- ♦ Analysis of merged data using correlation* and hierarchical linear regression**
- ♦ Findings reviewed with Dean and Mentors
- ♦ Freshman Studies work informed & changed

Results

- ♦ Used 5 retention factor rubrics to score **373 ePortfolios** on presence/level of: **Perceived Supports, Goal Clarity, Academic Engagement, Social Integration, Quality of Effort**
- ♦ **Found** all 5 scores associated statistically significantly ($p < .01$) with student success*
- ♦ **Found Quality of Effort** scores added** most in predicting first term GPA and sophomore return with cum GPA 2.5+
- ♦ **Found Social Integration** a significant** predictor for return with cum GPA 3.2+
- ♦ **Extracted & used** non-cognitive ePort info

*correlation (r) between score & return with **gpa 2.5 or more**
**demographics and HS ssa/SAT all in as block 1 candidates

4 - Mature focus of academic and career goals, anticipating and realistic.	3 - Clear expression of academic and career goals	2 - Elements of career exploration, some sense of career goals or academic goals	1 - Lack of focus or clarity of purpose expressed about college (academic and/or career goals), goal uncertainty
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Category	4 - Engagement + Challenge	3 - Much Academic Engagement	2 - Some Academic Engagement	1 - Some No Evid Acad Engagement
4 - Engagement + Challenge	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a weak commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study" or "I am going to get by."

Category	4 - Leadership Role	3 - Much Integration	2 - Some Integration	1 - Some No Evid Social Integration
4 - Leadership Role	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a strong commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study hard" or "I am going to get good grades."	Student shows a weak commitment to academic success. e.g., "I am going to study" or "I am going to get by."

The complete set of Seton Hall's non-cognitive (persistence) rubrics is provided on the back of this sheet.

Persistence Project Non-Cognitive Attributes Rubrics

Rubric: ePort Quality of Effort (QE)

Category	Score Guidelines			
	4 – Exemplary	3 – Good	2 – Minimum Adequate	1 – Less than Adequate
Fulfillment of the Assigned Elements	All required components created; full compliance with assignment sheet instructions on all or most components.	All required components created; good compliance with assignment sheet instructions on at least half .	No more than 1 required component missing; however less than full compliance on more than half .	Missing 2 or more required components OR poor fulfillment of assignment sheet instructions on many.
Organization	Information is very well organized throughout •e.g., frequent use of paragraphs •e.g., use of subheadings	Information is fairly well organized throughout •e.g. well constructed sentences •e.g. paragraphs where needed	Information is somewhat organized •e.g., paras used rarely or without adding to flow •e.g., inconsistent organization	Information is disorganized, or is in places difficult to find, hard to follow or sketchy. Overall poor or sketchy design.
Mechanics meaning: Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation	Virtually error free - ie, no more than 1 or 2 grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors	Few grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors – ie, few in number, mostly minor	Numerous Errors mostly minor – ie, while highly visible, not so severe that interfere with flow	Frequent or severe grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors; interfere with flow
Readability / Aesthetic Quality meaning: Text Elements / Layout - examples •fonts, point size, bullets, italics, bold, .. •white space •background colors	Consistently easy to read information. Portfolio is easily navigated. Reader is compelled to read. Text and other elements are used well and consistently.	Generally easy to read in most areas. Reader is able to navigate through, find and read material easily enough.	Layout is planned though not always consistent. Some areas may be lacking in design; but overall, there is adequate attention given to the 'look and feel' of the portfolio.	Few, if any design elements present. OR Design efforts are inadequate or inconsistent.

5% of scored ePortfolios had average QE score less than '2', 33% less than '3'

Rubric: Perceived Support from Family and Friends (FF)

4 – Student strongly expresses support from friends and family about going to college, continuing college studies, and also of the choice of going to or continuing at SHU. The student clearly expresses very positive/enthusiastic support.

3 – Student clearly expresses support from friends and/or family about going to college and continuing college studies.

2 – Student mentions friends and/or family but without indication of support about going to college and continuing college studies expressed.

1 – There is no mention of family or friends in the e-Portfolio relative to student's first year college experience.

16% of scored ePortfolios given FF score of '1', 41% FF score '2' or '1'

Rubric: Academic Engagement (AE)

Score Guidelines			
4 – Engagement + Challenge	3 – Much Academic Engagement	2 – Some Academic Engagement	1 – Scant/No Evid Acad.Engagemnt
Much Engagement (as described for score 3) PLUS evidence that at SHU this student is experiencing a good level of (positive) academic challenge	2 or more SHU professors / courses portrayed as a definite positive experience – i.e., as enjoyable, engaging or of high quality •e.g., 2 or more courses portrayed this way •e.g., description includes these attributes as an overall for courses, major program, or intended major	At least 1 course or professor described as a definite positive experience for this student •e.g., enjoyable, engaging student's interest, or very meaningful or of value to student personally OR statement of being helped or supported academically well by SHU course or resource	Student includes no descriptions of positive experiences of a course or professor ie, characterized as stimulating, interesting or of particular value AND no mention of SHU academic supports as helpful resources

18% of scored ePortfolios given AE score of '1', 58% AE score '2' or '1'

Rubric: Social Integration (SI)

Score Guidelines			
4 – Leadership Role	3 – Much Integration	2 – Some Integration	1 – Scant/No Evid Social Integration
Much Integration (as described for score 3) PLUS either in a leadership role at Seton Hall or expresses interest in a leadership role next term/next year examples: position in FLC, SGA, SAB, SHU team or club	Regular and/or Intensive involvement in 2 or more SHU activities, clubs or groups. •e.g., high frequency •e.g., strong identity potential examples: SHU team, SHU intramural or high involvement SHU club	At least 1 student-selected SHU activity or experience involving regular (at least monthly) participation that is viewed positively by student •e.g., described as pleasing/engaging/of value OR ALTERNATIVELY expresses a clear intent to participate next term/next year	Student shares none or few instances of SHU activities, clubs or group participation levels beyond assigned. AND no statements suggesting an intent to join an activity, club or group in the near future.

22% of scored ePortfolios given SI score of '1', 60% SI score '2' or '1'

Rubric: Goal Clarity (GC) Academic and Career Goals

4 – Mature focus of academic and career goals, enterprising and realistic

3 – Clear focus of academic and career goals

2 – Elements of career exploration, some sense of career goals or academic goals

1 – Lack of focus or clarity of purpose expressed about college (academic and/or career goals), goal uncertainty

13% of scored ePortfolios given GC score of '1', 42% GC score '2' or '1'