A Living Laboratory: Activity Template

We are creating a cross-disciplinary collection of teaching activities that use the best practice approaches fostered in the "Living Lab": adoption of City Tech's General Education Student Learning Outcomes, George Kuh's High Impact Educational Practices, place-based learning, open digital pedagogy (the OpenLab), and formal assessment methods.

Share your best practices with your colleagues! Use this form to record a favorite activity; an activity can be as small as an in-class exercise or as large as a semester-long project. Your description can be short or extensive – take as much space as you need.

Activity Title:	Introducing eportfolio for FYLC use
Your Name:	Mária I. Cipriani
Department:	English
Course:	ENG 1101
Email:	mcipriani@citytech.cuny.edu

Activity Description:
Provide a brief description of the activity.

This a three-step process introducing eportfolios to first year learning community (FYLC) students. The eportfolio will be integral to the group work necessary for completion of the final class projects. Step One, which takes place prior to the first class meeting in the e-portfolio lab, gives students time for the hands-on experience of accessing the City Tech eportfolio platform and evaluating already-existing student portfolios. This experience is enhanced by class discussion and examples prior to the lab meeting. Students will choose two portfolios and write a short response to each, stating what they did and did not like about the portfolio and how that portfolio has given them ideas for their own eportfolio presentation. In Step Two, students sign on to eportfolio and begin to create their eportfolio; for Step Three, which will occur after the lab class, students personalize their eportfolio, minimally creating the Final Project work page.

Learning Goals:
What do you aim to achieve with this activity?

The first step is designed to introduce eportfolio and (a) demonstrate the potential of eportfolio, (b) emphasize the necessity of the platform for successful completion of the final class project, and (c) spark creative interest in students' self-expression through the enhancement of their own eportfolio.

Timing:
At what point in the lesson or semester to you use this activity? How much classroom time do you devote to it? How much out-of-class time is expected?

This activity will take place during the first or second writing lab of the semester (during the new fourth hour of ENG1101). Dates of eportfolio lab time are scheduled into the syllabus to coincide with individual and group project due dates. If Step One is successful, students will be

inspired/encouraged to devote a significant amount of out-of-class time to enhancing and embellishing their eportfolios.

Logistics:
What preparation is needed for this activity? What instructions do you give students?

Prior to meeting in the eportfolio lab, students will be asked to log on to the Open Lab site and create an account. They will be asked to sign on to the FYLC's class page and they will be shown how to navigate between Blackboard and Open Lab. In class, prior to meeting in the eportfolio lab, the instructor's eportfolio will be shown, and a consideration of ways in which eportfolios can be used to demonstrate a student's interdisciplinary learning, scholarly maturation process, and creativity will be discussed. While in the lab, after the initial instruction by the eportfolio lab staff, students will be encouraged begin to create their portfolios (including at the very least the Final Project space on their page) and to assist each other in the portfolio creation process.

General Education SLOs:
Which of City Tech's General Education Student Learning Outcomes does this activity address?

- Use creativity to solve problems.

- Understand and navigate systems.

- Resolve difficult issues creatively by employing multiple systems and tools.

- Make meaningful and multiple connections among the liberal arts and between the liberal arts and the areas of study leading to a major or profession.

- Demonstrate intellectual agility and the ability to manage change.

- Work with teams, including those of diverse composition. Build consensus.

- Communicate in diverse settings and groups, using written (both reading and writing), oral (both speaking and listening), and visual means.

- Derive meaning from experience, as well as gather information from observation.

- Respect and use creativity.

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High Impact Educational Practices:

Which of [George Kuh's High Impact Educational Practices](#) does this activity incorporate? Does it use the [OpenLab](#) for [open digital pedagogy](#)? Does it include [place-based learning](#)? Choose all that apply and/or add your own.

George Kuh's High Impact Educational Practices:

X *First-year seminars and experiences*	X *Common intellectual experiences (core curriculum)*
X *Learning communities*	X *Writing-intensive courses*
X *Collaborative assignments and projects*	☐ *Undergraduate research*
☐ *Diversity and global learning ("difficult differences")*	☐ *Service- or community-based learning*
☐ *Internships*	☐ *Capstone courses and projects*

X *Open Digital Pedagogy (the OpenLab)*   ☐ **Place-Based Learning**

X Other (please describe): eportfolio

Assessment:

How do you assess this activity? What assessment measures do you use? Do you include your evaluation in grade calculations?

The learning community (with Computer Systems and Computer Design) of which this course is part is designed to encourage students to think cross-disciplinarily. The title is "Story-Telling in Action-Adventure and Role-Playing Games," and the finished product of the combined courses is a joint research paper presenting a design document and describing the research that went in to writing that design document. The students' eportfolios will be evaluated using a rubric; they will also be required to submit a finalized learning log. This activity, which is a foundational scaffolding assignment, is low-stakes in terms of grading, but important in the overall scheme of the class—if students do not succeed in creating their eportfolios early on, they will not have access to the platform at the end of the semester when they are required to submit their individual semester's work for final evaluation. They will also need to complete the task successfully in order to write the first (high stakes) essay.

Reflection:

How has this assignment impacted your teaching? What challenges did you encounter and how did you address them? What feedback did students provide? How would you imagine this activity being used in different disciplines?

I have not yet used this assignment in my class. This assignment was created because I have attempted on several occasions to introduce and include eportfolios in my ENG 1101 classes with limited success. The FYLC that I will be teaching in the Fall 2015 requires a platform that students can use for the creation of a group project. I am hoping that with my growing understanding of eportfolio and Open Lab, I can spark student interest in this platform by introducing it early in the semester, making it relevant to students' involvement in the FYLC throughout the semester, and connecting it to students' ever-growing concern with the ROI (return on investment) of their education by emphasizing and modeling professional utilization of an existing eportfolio.

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Additional Information:

Please share any additional comments and further documentation of the activity - e.g. assignment instructions, rubrics, examples of student work, etc. These could be in the form of PDF or Word files, links to posts or files on the OpenLab, etc.

Preparatory Assignment Handout is on the next page

Link to Instructor's grad school eportfolio: https://stonybrook.digication.com/micipriani/Welcome/published

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ENG1101 meeting in the Eportfolio lab—G600 [date]

Before class:

1. Log on to https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/ . If you have not already done so, create a user name and password (I suggest that you use your first initial, last name, or your first and last name—remember this is a step into a professional representation of yourself.)
   a. Click on sign up link under the "Join Open Lab"
   b. Choose a username (your City Tech user ID would also work) and password that you will remember quickly and easily as we will be accessing Open Lab often throughout the semester
   c. Send an email to yourself immediately with the subject "Open Lab user name"—in the email send yourself your chosen user name and password.
2. Once you have logged on to Open Lab and joined our Learning Community's class page, click on the Portfolios tab.
3. From the list of 3,000+ portfolios, choose two student portfolios which have a personalized image (not the standard grey-and-white anonymous icon) and make some notes in preparation for creating your portfolio and for writing Essay #1.
   Include:
   a. The student's name and portfolio url;
   b. Overall observations or impression about the portfolio's execution;
   c. Something particularly good or effective about the portfolio that might give you an idea for your portfolio;
   d. Something that does not work particularly well or that you would do differently from the portfolio in question;
   e. Any other observations that might enhance your own portfolio-building.

On Thursday during class, you will use the notes to start creating your own portfolio. At the end of class, I will be asking you to reflect on your vision for your own portfolio and what you have created so far on your portfolio in your learning log.