

GSOLE Webinar Reflection(s)

For this month's module of the GSOLE certification, I elected for my deliverable to be the webinar reflection. My original plan was to attend the April 5th WAC Roundtable featuring Elizabeth Wardle, Mandy Olejnik, Aimee Maps, and Emily Jo Schwaller. While I did attend this webinar, like most things in April of the academic calendar, I was simultaneously in this meeting and another one, and my often ill-attended office hours were, much to what would have typically been a delight, quite 'poppin,' as the youth say these days. Thus, my actual engagement in the webinar was lackluster. To make up for this, however, I have also chosen to reflect on a webinar from the archives: Megan Mize, Kristina Hoepfner, Sarah Zurhellen, and Kevin Kelly's *Considering Digital Ethics in Post-Pandemic Pedagogy and Curricula: The Case for ePortfolios*. This webinar and the application of #DEIBD was of particular interest to me because in February I had the privilege of being the Zoom Moderator for several of the same speakers during the 2023 GSOLE Conference during their panel *Digital Literacy Includes your Data: Helping Students, Educators, and Administrators Teach with Data Responsibility in Mind*. Given that each of these three panels in some way had to do with data safety and digital ethics, and given that I am about to wade through another batch of 100 ePortfolios for my composition students as we barrel towards the end of term, I find this to be a perfectly kairotic moment in which to reflect upon these issues. I am also quite privileged to be spending this summer on a committee at UCF where I will be participating in the norming of ePortfolios for the Composition Program and overall programmatic assessment, which means that in addition to evaluating many of my own students' portfolios during this time, I will be granted access to an even larger population of student's work, and as a result, their data.

ePortfolios themselves present a whole host of issues in terms of both privacy and student assessment. In Witte's 2018 piece, they make an argument for LMS literacy as a mode of genre learning. In doing this, they also insinuate that instructors themselves must possess that same LMS literacy.

“Instructors must consider not only what the interface looks like and that it completes particular classroom/administrative functions like record-keeping and assignment submission, but also how their design and use are communicating the roles students should take within the interface and how students should use the interface,” (Witte 57).

This is particularly interesting to me when it comes to the concept of LMS literacy because quite frankly, not only are we often not scaffolding this kind of literacy within the LMS, but also, not within the tools we use for ePortfolios as well. I am specifically speaking of my experiences within the First-Year Composition Program. At UCF, most of our composition students are using external tools to develop their ePortfolios, including Wix, Weebly, Wordpress, or GoogleSites. While there are ways to encourage students to think critically about their data privacy when scaffolding these sites, we are nonetheless asking students to post their developmental work within the public sphere. Few students per term elect to password protect their sites even when given the option due to the issues this can present in terms of grading and assessment if an instructor cannot open their work. It is, while perhaps less safe digitally, safer in the student opinion because by making it public, they can assure the professor will find the assignment and not give them a 'zero.' The intentions here on all sides are good, however, the outcome is not fantastic. This leads to numerous extra issues by default. We are also, at least in my institutional and class-specific context, having students post these sites while simultaneously telling them that the web design aspect of their public site is less important, perhaps the least important part of our actual grading process, when we know full well that if this site were to be

found out of context, the design aspect that we deem as unimportant is likely what an unintended audience would focus on. In many ways, this feels no different than feeding student work into software like TurnItIn, which as I learned in the *Digital Literacy Includes your Data: Helping Students, Educators, and Administrators Teach with Data Responsibility in Mind*, is part of how we have created the issue of ChatGPT that we face now.

This in many ways feels like being caught between a rock and a hard place. How can we conduct assessment in a meaningful way while also managing this data better, but also, give students opportunities to conduct authentic genre analysis and practice when we know full well that students will seldom interact with our LMS softwares again in the professional world unless they happen to become educators? Canvas now offers an ePortfolio option, but the design properties it affords us are limited. Students also have the option of marking these ePortfolios as public, but it's unclear exactly how public they are if they do this.