

Project Name

E-portfolios to Engage Student Veterans at Suffolk County Community College

Principal Investigator Susan P. Lieberthal

Campus Suffolk County Community College

Year of Project 2013

Tier Tier One

Project Team

- Krista Gruber, Suffolk Community College
- Paul Basileo, Suffolk Community College
- Meridith Leo, Suffolk Community College
- Danna Prather Davis, Suffolk Community College
- Nancy Wozniak, Consultant, Stony Brook University

Overview Summary

E-portfolio training to veterans returning as students that integrates writing, video editing and information literacy. The project will strengthen student academic engagement and result in individualized electronic presentations for job interviews or college transfer.

Outcomes Summary

Outcomes TBD.

Project Abstract

Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) seeks funding for equipment, software and training to support the creation of an e-portfolio program which will develop writing skills and increase information and visual literacy among student veterans. The project will promote the use of emerging technologies and computer applications for use in future job interviews or college admissions beyond SCCC. Student veterans have many

issues to contend with when returning to civilian life, including PTSD, difficulty adjusting to a less structured lifestyle, and the mazes of paperwork needed to qualify for the GI Bill and to migrate medical records from the Armed Services to the VA. The design of this IITG project focuses on supporting veteran students' needs and is based on recent literature that suggests "the goals of a student veteran organization should include aiding veterans with the adjustment to campus life and using group influence to advocate for changes that will help student veterans achieve their academic goals." (Summerlot, 2009). In addition to the social aspects of belonging to the Student Veterans Association, SCCC's IITG project will foster academic success among student veterans by helping them encourage each other's academic goals in a dedicated and supportive environment. This objective is supported by Rumann, who notes that "proactive efforts should include creating ways for student veterans to connect and interact with other veterans on campus". (Rumann 2011, p. 56)

The Ammerman Campus Library will provide a designated space for use by the Student Veterans Association (SVA) which will be equipped with laptops and an editing desktop. This space will provide an area for student veterans to receive training and assistance and work together to enhance their presentation skills. The space will be used by the SVA twice a week exclusively and at other times when available. A consultant will be hired to train the project facilitators and students using the Google Sites application. Faculty in the English Department, Library, and Educational Technology Unit (ETU), together with the SVA Club Advisor, will also provide training and student support through face-to-face assistance and short video tutorials. Additional College staff and faculty will be invited to address the group, including the Director of Career Services and Cooperative Education. Students will gain knowledge of cloud computing, professional self-promotion, and how skills learned in college can translate to useful tools to be used outside of the classroom.

The project will include the following components:

- Creation of short videos demonstrating how to register for a Google Sites account, how to use Camtasia, YouTube, and other visual resources;
- Creation of a SVA students' Facebook page to enable posting of videos;
- Videos posted on the library's YouTube account and on the library's webpage within the Virtual Learning Commons (VLC);
- Every other Wednesday, Gruber and Lieberthal will assist with student projects;
- The SCCC Media Center will support students' use of desktops;
- The external consultant will inspire students and make them aware of the importance of self-expression and several Stony Brook students involved in e-portfolio will come to assist SCCC students and will earn community service hours;
- Equipment and support for video editing will be available Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Library's Media Center;
- A dedicated room and laptops will be available all day Wednesday and Thursday with laptops to be signed out using regular library rules and with the room and laptops available at other times according to regular student rules;
- The project will culminate with a College-funded reception and an electronic poster session where student veterans will present their e-portfolios and discuss the process with fellow students, faculty and administrators.

Training will consist of the following courses and instructors:

- Overview: Susan Lieberthal, Danna Prather Davis;
- What is an E-portfolio and How it Works on Other Campuses: Nancy Wozniak, Stony Brook University (consultant);
- Signing Up for an E-portfolio Account: Paul Basileo;
- How to Present Yourself: E-portfolio vs. Facebook vs. LinkedIn: Sylvia Camacho, Director of Career Services;
- How to Write a Descriptive Paragraph: Meredith Leo-Rowett;
- What is an Annotated Bibliography and Why Should I Care: Gruber/Lieberthal;
- How to Make a Professional Video or Camtasia: Danna Prather Davis, Paul Basileo.

Funding through IITG will enable Suffolk to reach the following project goals and outcomes:

Goal #1: Increase the number of students trained in e-portfolios. Objective: Develop and implement a training program for student veterans using the latest technologies and computer applications. Outcomes: At least 10 student veterans will participate in training.

Goal #2: Improve writing, information and visual literacy levels of student veterans. Objective: Develop and implement training that incorporates the three elements of an e-portfolio. Outcome: Each e-portfolio will have a visual learning object (video, animated PowerPoint, Camtasia presentation), a writing sample with correct grammar and spelling, and an annotated bibliography in MLA style on the student's topic of choice, incorporating valid articles, citing them correctly, and annotating them in his/her own words.

Goal #3: Increase student engagement. Objective: Develop outreach strategies and support services that assist in recruiting participants who ultimately complete an e-portfolio. Outcome: SVA member involvement increases and students have e-portfolios that are ready to be demonstrated at the culminating event and to external organizations. Overall, 80% of students who start with the group will stay with the group and complete an e-portfolio project that he/she can continue to use and enhance.

SCCC's IITG project is in direct alignment with SUNY's core value of student-centeredness and promotes the Big Idea of "SUNY and the Seamless Education Pipeline," in that it promotes job readiness, ease of educational transitions, and student participation in initiatives such as SUNY Works. The project will also play a key role in meeting Suffolk's priorities of fostering student success and addressing employment skills gaps. The College believes that this IITG project can serve as an innovative model for delivering training that incorporates technology, writing and presentation skills into real-world applications, while fostering students' academic and career success. The College commits to presenting its findings at upcoming SUNY CIT and SUNYLA conferences.

Reports and Resources

- [Project outcomes report](#)
- [Mid-project report](#)

Assessment, Understanding, Monitoring Student Progress

- E-Portfolios

Instructional Design

- Student Learning Support

Organizational Issues: Teaching & Learning

- Under-Represented or At-Risk Groups