

РОССИЙСКИЙ ВЕСТНИК ПРОГРАММЫ ФУЛБРАЙТА
NEWSLETTER OF THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM IN RUSSIA



HIGHER EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW'S PROFESSIONALS

Fulbright Alumni Conference Hosts U.S. Community College Administrators and addresses the role of universities and colleges in meeting tomorrow's employment needs.

В ЭТОМ НОМЕРЕ:

From the U.S. Embassy to the Russian Federation
Cynthia Ehrlich, Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer

ВЕСТНИК

ПРОГРАММЫ

ФУЛБРАЙТА



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Issue 9, summer 2010
Выпуск 9, лето 2010

Научно-публицистическое издание



Издание осуществлено при финансовой поддержке

Бюро по образованию и культуре Государственного Департамента США

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При перепечатке материалов ссылка на «Российский Вестник Программы Фулбрайта» обязательна.

Отпечатано в типографии «ЭйБиТи групп». Заказ №

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International Dual Degree Programs (IDDPs) have a positive impact on the academic process at a Russian college/university. The benefits include but are NOT limited to: valuable experience in international cooperation, use of educational and teaching practices that meet international standards, professional development for professors and administrators who get international experience, enhanced prestige and competitiveness of the

institution in the regional educational market.

In fact, prospects of international cooperation depend on willingness of the university administration to focus on long-term cooperation and sufficient investment in the IDDP development, the willingness to be flexible, to look for new models of cooperation, and to introduce required changes promptly. It is highly important that IDDPs must be viewed as new opportunities for co-

operation, as international projects that facilitate integration processes in education and improve quality of educational services provided by the educational institution rather than a source of huge extra earnings.

If approached properly, international dual degree programs give valuable benefits to students and universities, promote close ties between partner institutions and professionals, and help all the sides successfully meet the challenges of tomorrow.

E-portfolio in training bachelors of education at the Siberian Federal University

TEXT> OLGA SMOLYANINOVA, Professor of Pedagogy, PhD (Education) The Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk, Russia, Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program, 2001-2002

Olga Smolyaninova described the benefits of introducing student E-portfolios to motivate students to set clear goals for their education and to prepare themselves for their future careers. Such portfolios can be integrated into university study programs to track and assess student progress and to better link university studies with career objectives and workforce needs. Following is a case study from Siberian Federal University.

The scheme of using e-portfolio for training Bachelors in Education at the Siberian Federal University has been piloted for three years. The aim of piloting e-portfolios for Bachelors training is to help future educators to develop their professional identity and to teach them to use a reflective approach to self-evaluate their educational outcomes and achievements.

The Russian Higher Education community is actively debating some fundamental principles related to aims and objectives at pre-service level training. We believe that except vocational training per se the Higher Education system should be aimed

at preparing undergraduates for a smooth transition from University to a working place, for future employment and career development, for post-graduate education, and for establishing their social identity. Having said that we must confess that the current higher education system reluctantly identifies the above-mentioned positions as its priorities; thus it fails to motivate students to shape their future and to collate evidence of their personal and professional achievement. We are looking at e-portfolios as a repository of one's evidence of their personal development and achievements of various kinds (academic, scientific and professional).

E-portfolios have been long and successfully used at U.S. universities, but they are only entering the Russian higher educational system¹. According to Helen Beetham, e-portfolios are used for «enabling the learner to identify and reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, making use of formative feedback, and enabling professionals to support learners in ways appropriate to their achievements and preferences, by drawing on information in the profile»².

At Siberian Federal University, E-portfolios were initially piloted for training Bachelors in their early years with the aim of assessing students' progress in Computer sci



ence courses, such as 'Multimedia in Education', 'Informatics' and in hands-on training on computer use. E-portfolios were then launched for Bachelors in Education students. This was done through a professional orientation game that had been developed for the students to help them identify their study and research priorities and to help them plan their individual routes for achieving success.

The students were trained in using a reflective approach for determining their professional position, in evaluating personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to professional skills and competences which are demanded for successful career development. E-portfolio was presented as a method most suitable for gathering evidence for one's reflective observations, self-evaluation, career planning and for compiling student success stories. Into the reflective part of their portfolios the students were encouraged to place their reports on participation in the game, professional pedagogical principles they had worked out, philosophy of education and analysis of their individual resources. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the e-portfolio was used in the described context as a means of promoting one's reflective development.

Moreover, managing Bachelor's e-portfolio content can facilitate

focusing on the development of specific skills and competencies (i.e. computer competence, communicative competence, etc.) by encouraging students to collate their individual ICT projects. As a by-product of developing e-portfolios one can mention an increased level of students' proficiency in multimedia competence which demonstrated itself in students' better performance in presenting audio and video projects, which were then stored in the portfolios.

The Bachelor student portfolios for students in their first year of study each included the following sections:

- **introduction** (pictures or video about the author, a short introductory text);
- **resume** (aimed at potential employers);
- **philosophy of education** (professional positions, reasons for choosing the profession; individual learning route, expectations for major courses);
- **private** (life values, autobiography, picture albums);
- **achievements** (learning, professional, personal);
- **reflection** (reflection on a students' participation in the business game, self-analysis of professional ambitions, critical analysis on one's suitability for academia);
- **resources** (useful links);

— **contacts** (a student decides on the amount of information they are ready to share, personal information and information about their contacts).

Thereby, e-portfolios for future Bachelors were targeted at two main points: developing reflection and assessment of learning achievements. The students were involved in negotiating portfolio content assessment criteria related to every course in ICT they took. The availability of video reports, animation, interactive tests, and graphics produced by students for a broader public has enhanced student learning motivation and helped them identify and specify their educational expectations and demands. In addition, the students could expect a higher level of objectivity in evaluation of their successes as the evaluation was multifaceted and was made not created solely by their tutors. The content of e-portfolios was made accessible to their peers and to teaching staff from other related departments. This served a twofold purpose because results were not only made available to university administration but could also be used by the students to highlight their achievements to prospective employers. In the future, it would be beneficial to further compare the experiences of Russian and U.S. universities in using e-portfolios for training Bachelors of Education.

¹ — Smolyaninova, Olga G. Using e-portfolios at universities abroad: good practice. INFO, 11, 2009, pp 111-124

² — Helen Beetham, E-portfolios in post-16 learning in the UK: developments, issues and opportunities — A report prepared for the JISC e-Learning and Pedagogy strand of the JISC e-Learning Programme// <http://electronicportfolios.org/blog/2006/06/new-eportfolio-articles.html>