Student portfolios for learning, CQI, accreditation, and industrial ties

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Abstract

Student portfolios are defined as "a purposeful collection of materials capable of communicating student interests, abilities, progress, and accomplishments in a given area." The authors have initiated student portfolios in biological and agricultural engineering, and agricultural construction and systems management courses at the undergraduate and graduate level, and are now extending this assessment method across curricula and universities. The core objectives are to (1) enhance student-centered learning, (2) obtain immediate feedback for continuous quality improvement (CQI) in the courses, (3) address accreditation issues that are of great importance as biological engineering programs prepare for new evaluative strategies set forth by ABET EC 2000, and (4) encourage industrial ties and community service such that graduates of biological engineering curricula will have more opportunities for employment. The authors detail their methodologies and discuss progress with regard to implementing portfolios across curricula and universities, addressing accreditation, and building industrial ties.

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