

ePortfolios and the First-Year

Best Practices for Student Learning & Success

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One student's perspective

“So you get here and they start asking you, ‘What do you...want to major in? ...what courses [do] you want to take?’ and you get the impression that’s what it’s all about - courses and majors. So, you take the courses. You get your card punched. You try a little this and a little that. Then comes GRADUATION. And you wake up and you look at this bunch of courses and then it hits you: **They don’t add up to anything. It’s just a bunch of courses. It doesn’t mean a thing.**”

electronic Personal Development Plan (ePDP)

A tool for **making meaning** of
educational progress and career planning
throughout the college experience.

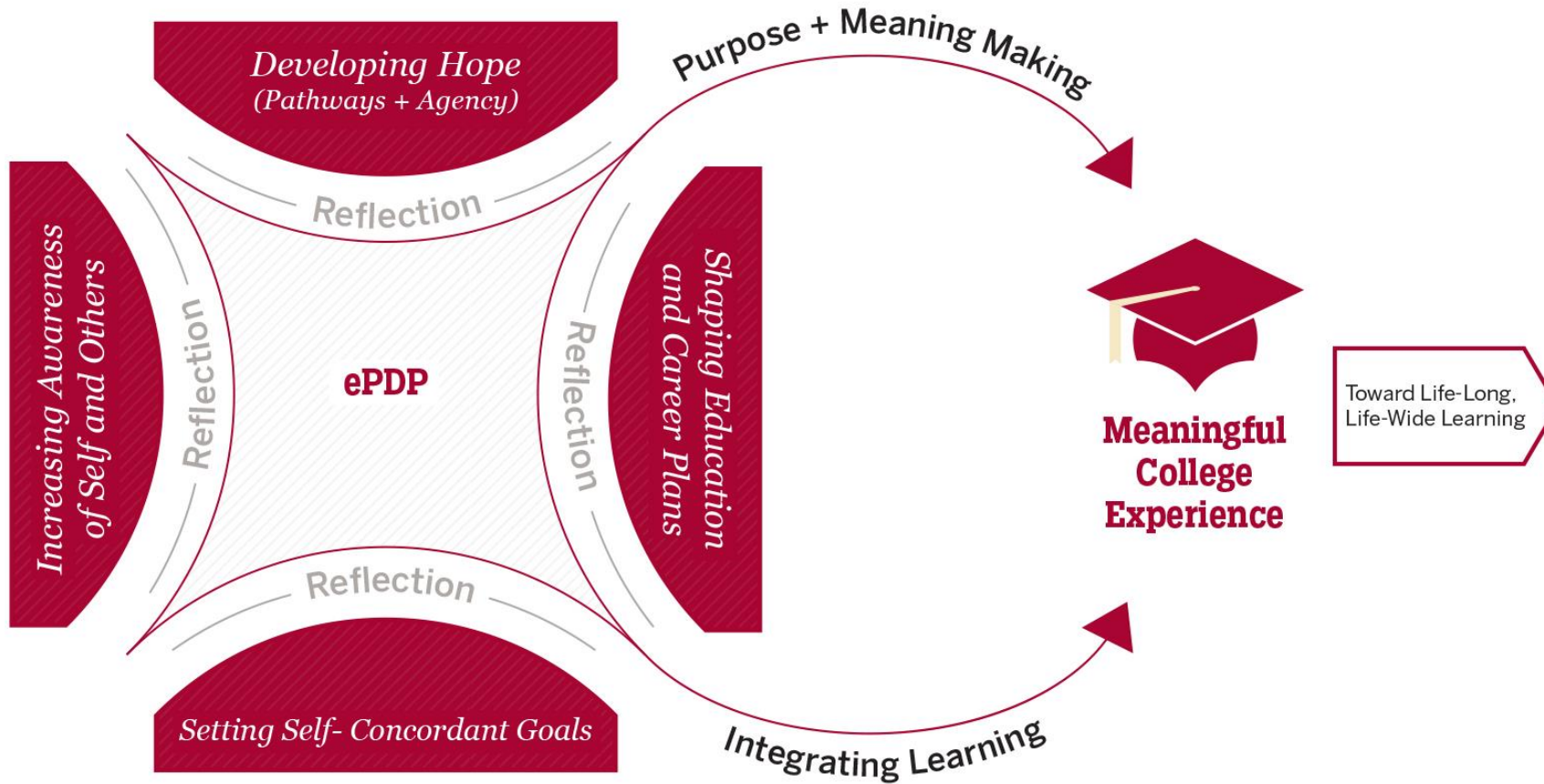
Why did we implement the ePDP?

The personal development plan is designed to foster:

- Goal commitment (student commitment to earning a degree)
- Academic achievement (through goal setting and planning)
- Curricular coherence and meaning in the first-year seminar

Conceptual Model for the IUPUI electronic Personal Development Plan (ePDP)

July 2013



This conceptual model is informed by best-practices in ePortfolio pedagogy including interactive and social pedagogies, reflection, authentic audience and feedback, as well as the framework provided by "The Learning Partnerships Model" (Baxter-Magolda & King, 2004).

Key Questions for Students

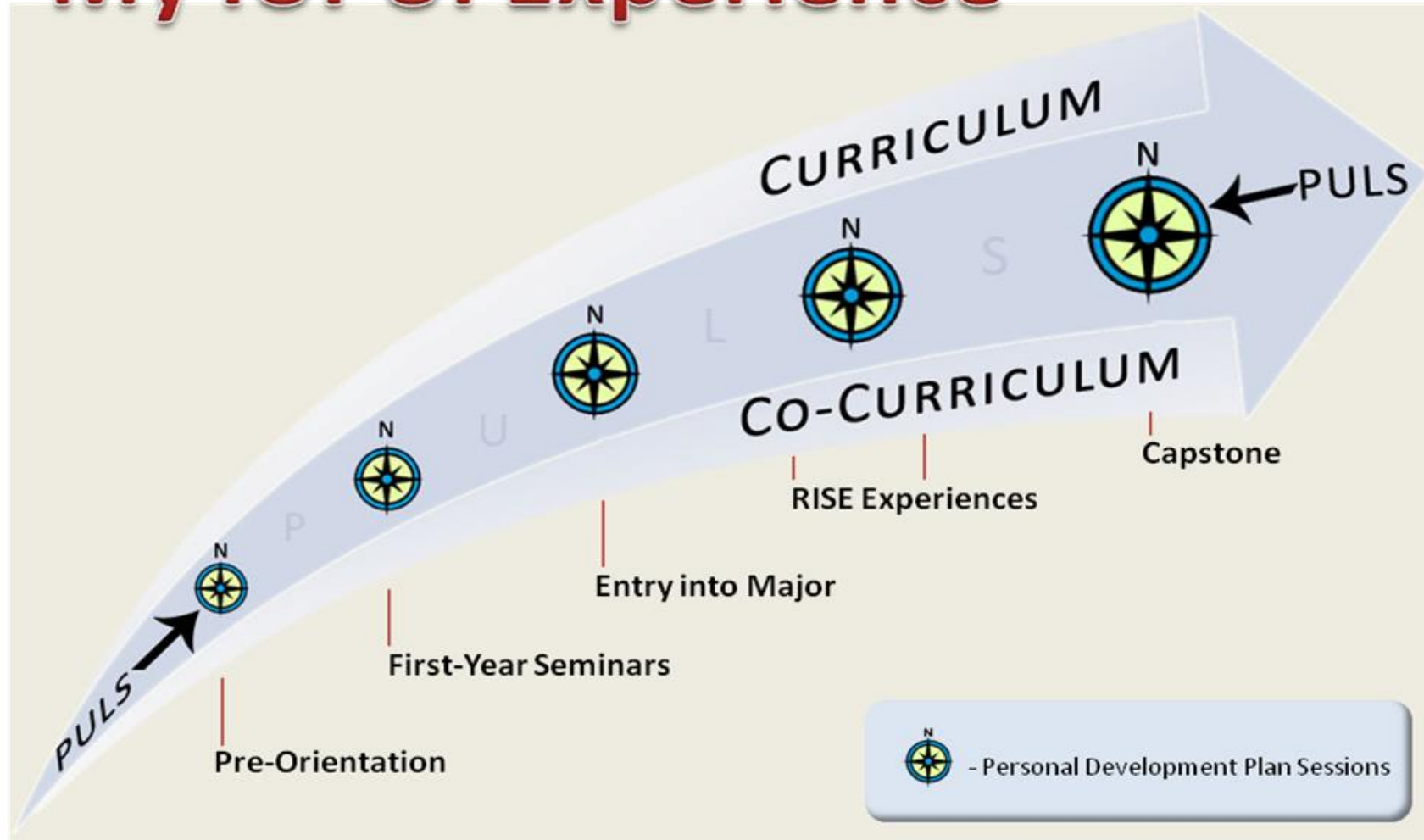
Who am I?

Where am I going?

How will I get there?

What am I learning along the way?

My IUPUI Experience



Structure of ePDP and FYS Curriculum

- ▶ The ePDP is a **presentation** of student learning that is the outcome of a semester's worth of work

more importantly...

- ▶ ePDP is **built on assignments and templates** that support successful completion of each section

Generating Learning

- **My Academics: Shaping Learning and Experiences**

Students will provide a description of their intended major, why this major is a good fit for them, double majors or minors, and an academic/course plan. Might also include:

- Presentation of key courses that will impact learning and success
- Skills, abilities, and knowledge that will be needed to succeed in this major
- Plans for participation in RISE and related high-impact practices
- Discussion of PULs and how they will/have been achieved
- Exploration of personal academic strategies such as time management and learning styles
- Academic showcase of best work
- Summary of key learning outcomes from across the curriculum

Reflection in the ePDP

- Students are provided with **very specific prompts** for each section of the ePDP
- **Utilizing a model for reflection can help**
 - Ash & Clayton DEAL Model - **Describe, Examine, Articulate Learning**
 - Janet Moon - **What, So What, Now What?**
- **Scaffolding is Key**
 - Need to teach and let students practice reflective thinking and writing
 - Should be integrated throughout the FYS; not only a final assignment
 - Use as both a repository of “evidence” as well as a place for meta reflection and critical thinking

Let's Take a Look

[First-Year Seminar ePDP: Candice](#)

[First-Year Seminar ePDP: Taylor](#)

<http://lhsi.iupui.edu/Interns/ePortfolio-Gallery>

One Year Retention ePDP versus no ePDP Fall 2010-2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Campus	73.4%	73.6%	72.9%	71.8%	74.8%
e-PDP	81.1%	73.9%	75.5%	72.8%	74.9%
Not e-PDP	72.1%	73.6%	71.4%	71.3%	74.1%
Difference	+ 9%	+ .3%	+ 4.1%	+ 1.5%	+ .8%

Fall 2013 ePDP Compared to Not ePDP First-Year Seminar Sections: GPA and Retention

EXPLORATORY STUDENTS

	N	Fall Semester GPA	First-Year Cumulative GPA	Fall-Spring Retention
e-PDP	152	2.93	2.69	93%
Not e-PDP	207	2.71	2.84	85%
Overall	349	2.80	2.75	88%

**Bolded items are significantly different based on independent samples t-test or chi squared test results (p .05).*

Fall 2013 Academic Success and Self-Reported Learning Outcomes

Completion of ePDP						
Item		N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Effect Size (r)	Sig (2-tailed)
Use reflective writing to understand my experiences	ePDP	196	3.81	0.99	.12	.015
	Not ePDP	385	3.58	1.12		
Identifying majors or future careers that match my strengths, skills, and interests	ePDP	195	4.17	.92	.19	.000
	Not ePDP	385	3.79	1.05		
Knowing strategies to overcome any obstacles I may face in pursuing my degree	ePDP	195	3.89	1.04	.11	.010
	Not ePDP	384	3.65	1.06		
Feeling a sense of purpose in pursuing my degree	ePDP	192	4.07	1.06	.12	.009
	Not ePDP	384	3.82	1.09		
Knowing what is required of me to attain academic excellence	ePDP	192	4.05	.92	.15	.001
	Not ePDP	382	3.76	1.02		
Knowing what is required of me to make a successful transition to an academic major	ePDP	192	4.08	.86	.16	.000
	Not ePDP	380	3.78	.97		
Building strategies for making a successful transition to the university	ePDP	192	3.98	.94	.16	.000
	Not ePDP	384	3.66	1.09		

¹ Means reported based on a 5-point Likert-Type response scale where 1=no gain, 2=little gain, 3=moderate gain, 4=good gain, 5=great gain

Note 1: Bolded items are significantly different based on independent samples t-test results ($p < .01$).

Note 2: 'Effect size' quantifies the size of the difference between two groups. Interpretation: r effects: small $\geq .10$, medium $\geq .30$, large $\geq .50$

Challenges We Face

▶ Consistent implementation across faculty

- Mandate versus optional
- Differing levels of understanding of the purpose of the ePDP
- Differing levels of understanding and ability to implement ePortfolio pedagogy
- Assignment versus true integration

▶ Student reflection

- First-year students
- Critical reflection versus reflection
- Audience

▶ Grading and evaluation of student narrative

- Providing meaningful feedback versus grading