

Announcer: Wake Forest LTC Update Pod.

Allen Brown: Welcome to our first ever Wake Forest LTC update pod. I'm Allen Brown. I'm an instructional designer here on campus and I know that this may or may not be true for many of you at other universities, but here at Wake there's several of us that really like engaging with the LTC community. And we have to decide each time who are the two people that are going to be able to join us or head to the conference. And one thing we're excited about here is we've gathered a few more of those folks. So, you'll get to hear from several of us about what's going on here at Wake in advance of the actual meeting where two more of us'll join you. So why don't we start off by finding who's with us today?

Hannah Inzko: Hello everybody. This is Hannah Inzko, director of academic technology, as part of IS.

Brenda Knox: Hi, this is Brenda Knox. I'm the director of online education at Wake Forest. Hello LTC. I miss you.

Paul Whitener: And I'm Paul Whitener and I am the assistant director of digital fabrication and maker education here at Wake Forest.

Allen Brown: Great. Welcome. I'm excited to have you all here. Thanks for the time. And I guess the first question I want to start off with is what are you talking about on campus, Brenda? What kind of things are you interested in right now?

Brenda Knox: Well, as most of the LTC people know, I can talk about a million things, but what I'm going to talk about today is e-portfolios at Wake. We've had a number of dabblings in e-portfolios around in different places, including in online education. So I've been interested in it for, you know, a lot of years. And we have something happening here right now that I think is particularly interesting where we seem to be gaining momentum, because we have a curriculum review committee that is looking at our undergraduate curriculum and some changes in that and some of the recommendations from them involve incorporating e-portfolio portfolio aspects into that.

We also have a first year experience committee, a separate group that's been working on undergraduate first years and they've also come out with a recommendation for incorporating e-portfolio. And then also at the same time I as a member of our committee on information technology, which is our academic information technology faculty committee, have instituted a community of interest underneath that committee around e-portfolios. So, we have a number of groups of people getting together and talking about the portfolios and the community of interest is meant hopefully to pull all of those groups together so everybody knows what everybody else is doing so that we can be more efficient. We can maybe find out if we can help each other.

Allen Brown: Yeah, and Brenda, when people talk about e-portfolio, sometimes there's different purposes, objectives that they're trying to serve. You just mentioned kind of a diverse population of people that are engaging here. Are you feeling any kind of specific goals that this group might have? Is there something you're thinking that, "Hey, e- portfolios are really probably going to be used in this way on campus," or is that something that's still materializing?

Brenda Knox: I think it's still materializing. One of the first things we did in the community of interest was make sure people understood that e-portfolio doesn't mean one thing. It can mean anything from a showcase external type e-portfolio for a student to something on the far extreme on the other end as something that's used to gather assessment data and outcomes data for accreditation purposes. So, those are wildly different.

And in the middle, in the huge area in the middle, there's a lot of teaching and learning e-portfolios that take many different aspects, either over a course or over an entire program or major or something else.

I see people in all of these groups aiming at all of those things, especially our graduate school and our online programs in our graduate school are more interested in that sort of accreditation and anything with licensing, like the teaching or education programs. Whereas the teaching and learning and showcase type e-portfolios are more of interest to the other parts of the university.

Allen Brown: Thanks. Thanks, Brenda. And Hannah, you actually shared a fun fact about e-portfolios a few minutes ago.

Hannah Inzko: Yes.

Allen Brown: What is it you discovered recently? Was it Educause, ELI? Where were you?

Hannah Inzko: I'm not even actually sure where the source was, probably from when I was at ELI. But yeah, Canvas recently purchased Portfolio, which is an e-portfolio platform. Interesting though, that I read it's only available to students within the United States, not international. So, that would affect online education though now that it's been purchased by a platform that is accessible to people all over the world, that probably will change.

Brenda Knox: The other thing I heard was that ... I heard this from Betsy, actually, Betsy Barry, our director of teaching and learning, that Chalk and Wire, which is one of the e-portfolios used by the counseling program on campus was bought by Campus Labs. So there's all kinds of interesting company consolidations happening.

[crosstalk]

Allen Brown: And we already use Campus Labs on campus?

Brenda Knox: We use Campus Labs for several other things on campus that are more administrative.

Allen Brown: Student life.

Brenda Knox: Yeah, student life and administrative.

Allen Brown: Great. Thanks, Brenda. Thanks, Hannah. Paul. What are you talking about on campus these days?

Paul Whitener: Oh, well, we're very excited. We finally got our Waker Space up and running and that would be our Wake Forest maker space. We're very excited to have it opened here. We have just under about 3000 square feet, Allen and it has just gone over phenomenally with the students, faculty and staff. We are open to the entire campus and we are completely student volunteer run right now, which is really exciting. They are doing all the workshops and they are creating workshops and they're setting up all kinds of great things for us.

Allen Brown: And we're inhabiting about 120 of those square feet [crosstalk].

Paul Whitener: In our podcast room. That's correct. It's a great room. It's actually one of our more popular rooms the Waker Space.

Students come in and do podcasts regularly now. And we have the sound tiles up and conversational mix and everything ready to go for them, so it's very well received.

Allen Brown: Yeah. Do you know those podcasts that they've been recording, are they often to meet a classroom objective? Is this just kind of something they're doing on their own? Is it a mix of all of the above?

Paul Whitener: That's a great question. It's actually a mix. We have several students that have come to us that do sports podcasting for money on the side and we have students who are doing political things and then we also have several classes that are having to come in and record a podcast for their classwork. So it's been a great mix.

Allen Brown: Yeah. I've been fascinated specifically about how you have been incorporating students in the decision making process and the teaching and learning process that they're not just kind of end users of this space, but really creators of this. Is there any like unique features in that regard that you're kind of excited about? Things you want to move with? One thing that students have come up with that we probably wouldn't have thought of ourselves?

Paul Whitener: That's a really good one. I think one of the best things students have come up with was actually here in the podcast room and we initially purchased one microphone thinking, okay, we're doing a podcast. It'll be one person. And

initially the students came in and said, "No, we need multiple microphones so that we can do interviews. We also need a way to do interviews over the phone." So, we're looking at ways to bring in folks that call in for their podcasts as well. So again, this room has been very popular. We think the laser cutter will take off here very soon, become our most popular piece of equipment.

Brenda Knox: I'm coming back for training.

Paul Whitener: I know, right? It's so much fun. The students are creating a lot of great things with the laser cutter, so it's going to become real popular real fast.

Allen Brown: Good, good. I'm excited to see it as it grows and develops into a really neat feature and have already found it a great space to inhabit on regular basis.

Brenda Knox: I think it's great that there's a lot of maker spaces is really focused on 3D printing and while we have 3D printing-

Paul Whitener: We do have 3D printing.

Brenda Knox: We have a lot of other stuff like laser cutters.

Paul Whitener: We do, Brenda.

Brenda Knox: Sewing machines.

Paul Whitener: And that's a great point. You know, our goal here at Wake Forest being a liberal arts school, we were very, very focused to intentionally make sure that we had a lot of liberal arts crossover in the space itself. We feel like we're going to do our best work when we can take all of those, as we call them on Wake Forest campus, our div five students, which would be your hard sciences, your biologies, your computer sciences, your chemistries and introduce those students and faculty to projects that say our history students are doing or our English majors. We feel like that intersection is going to really bring out our best work here in the space.

We're already seeing it with entrepreneurship. We have three various startup labs coming in here. They've developed their prototypes in here for their projects and they're getting ready to launch the actual products now. So the entrepreneurship has come in and done a great job. And of course that's a minor here at Wake Forest right now. So, they cross many different disciplines. We have entrepreneurship minors that come in from not only the sciences but all of the humanities, so that's been a great thing to see happening here, Brenda.

Allen Brown: Neat.

Hannah Inzko: The luggage tag that we made for my trip here on the laser printer stirred up quite a commotion at United Airlines when I was checking in. They pulled all of the personnel that was working over to come and look at it and they're all very amazed at it.

Paul Whitener: That's awesome. Yeah, that was created by one of our students on the laser. So yeah, it's been very popular so far.

Allen Brown: Yeah, that's neat. I'm excited to see and hear more about it. Hannah, what are you talking about these days on campus?

Hannah Inzko: Well, the last time that we met for LTC, I was sort of inundated with the learning management system evaluation. Not a whole lot has changed. Still pretty buried in LMS evaluation, but it seems to be rolling along swimmingly. I'm gonna knock on wood, so I don't jinx that.

One of the surprising successes out of this has been the website that I put together to sort of track the progress of this evaluation. A lot of people felt like that was a good place that they could go and see exactly where we were, how decisions were being made, what the next steps were, how they could participate in the evaluation. And so that has been really helpful for a lot of people who this might be their first evaluation or they may have not participated or been involved with previous evaluations.

So, it's moving along. We've narrowed it down. The committee is narrowed it down to two contenders who'll be coming in the week of March 25th. It will be Long Side, who's representing Sakai and Canvas. And so we're putting together an agenda for them right now. That's our current status.

A couple of other things. So, because there's been such an interest in this evaluation, Gordon McCray, who's the vice dean of the school of business, he teaches an undergraduate class, and he's brought me in to sort of partner with him and his students who are re-imagining what the next generation digital learning environment will be. So he has tasked them with thinking completely outside of the box, thinking about how this whatever environment that they would be required to go to for their courses or to submit homework or whatever they envision it, what it would look like, how it would interact with their current apps and applications that they're currently using.

So, it'll be interesting. I went in and sort of introduced what the evaluation was and what our current system looks like. And then their presentations will be on the 28th. So, myself and Myrrh and Betsy actually are going to be going and sort of judging their presentations.

And then also we've got a new grant. The whole grant structure has been sort of blown up here and the STEP grant, which is the Summer Technology Exploration. That is gonna continue to be very exploratory for any faculty who

just wants to get their hands on some technology and see what it can do. And also partnering with the Waker Maker Grant, which is a grant for faculty who are interested in actually incorporating this maker culture into their course and what some kind of project, if you want to talk a little more about that.

Paul Whitener: Yeah. Thank you so much for bringing that up. We're very excited about that. Faculty have the opportunity over the summer to come into the space and learn about all the equipment we have, the various various things they can do. And then we're going to work with faculty to try to help them incorporate this into one of their classes. We see the Waker Space as a tool, much like a laptop. And it's a lot of work to create a brand new class around, say the makerspace or something like that.

However, we can show them ways they can incorporate various pieces of equipment into their classes. For example, the chair of the math department, Dr. Sara Raynor, is a big knitter and she helps along with you, Hannah and Brenda, both of you help lead our Commit to Knit program, which is every Tuesday, which we have a great turnout for. But Dr. Raynor looking at how she can do the mathematics of knitting and roll that into a first year seminar or even a course. And she's even going to be coming in, in her summer session two, in a 300 level class and incorporating the space into that class. So, very exciting things. Hopefully, we'll get a lot of great things to come out of faculty of how they can incorporate the space into their work in the fall.

Hannah Inzko: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I think that grant programs like this are something that really help encourage faculty who might not be jumping to try new things because there is more of a load that you have to take on when you're learning a new technology or exposing your students to it and it's new, so where are they going to get support? How is it going to go? To sort of get them over that hump, these grants really help sort of push them.

Allen Brown: Yeah. One thing I've heard a couple of times here today is just the commitment to engaging students in the process, which can be difficult sometimes in staff. We get a little bit set apart. I know Hannah, you've been very intentional, but I thought that was kind of novel, your partnership with the business class about working with students to think about what the next generation digital learning environment might be. The Waker Space. I don't know, Brenda, if you've been thinking at all with e-portfolios, like where students might also come into that community of interest.

Brenda Knox: Yeah, I hope they do. I think we're a little nascent for that, but thank you all for reminding me that I need to make sure that all these groups, especially I'm sure that the first year experience group has been working heavily with students, so hopefully that they're bringing some of that feedback in, but at the moment they're actually, the group that's meeting about that has actually just recently reached out to more faculty. Because it was largely staff, so it's spreading out, too.

Allen Brown: It's a process.

Brenda Knox: I want to go back to Gordon's class and say that I'm really excited to hear what they might come up with just based on, we did some focus groups, if you remember, a long time ago with different populations around the learning management system and the students were the most inventive and outside the box, right? And it reminded me when we were talking to them that sometimes as staff or faculty, we can rely a little too heavily on what we know already. And they're more free thinkers, I think.

Hannah Inzko: Absolutely.

Brenda Knox: It was great, the stuff that came up with this. It was fantastic.

Allen Brown: Yeah, it makes a difference.

Hannah Inzko: Absolutely.

Allen Brown: So, thanks so much for sharing. One thing I am interested in and Hannah and Brenda, you're not going to be able to join the group at LTC. What's one thing you're going to miss?

Hannah Inzko: Oh, man. I think hearing from everybody else and just running ideas past people, I always get so inspired and so motivated and energized when I'm, you know, sort of overthinking something and I bring it to the group and they're like, "Oh, I've tried this before," and this is what worked or didn't work. And that really sort of sets me on the right track and gets me excited. So, I will definitely miss that. And I'm going out for dinner with everybody.

Brenda Knox: I was going to say what Hannah said. Also, just exactly what you said about being able to bounce ideas off of other people at similar schools and bring those ideas back and say, you know, it's not just us talking about this, but we know that we have colleagues at these other schools that are doing the same thing or have made the same discoveries and let's use that, right? And going out to dinner.

Allen Brown: Dinner, right.

Hannah Inzko: And I've heard that lot going on at Duke right now in the innovation space and with makerspace and and stuff. So I'm hoping that you guys take lots of pictures and bring them back.

Allen Brown: I'm sure we will. Pictures, notes.

Hannah Inzko: Because I'm really interested in what's going on. And maybe we'll take a side field trip-

Allen Brown: Following up. Durham's not too far.

Hannah Inzko: Yes, exactly.

Brenda Knox: Also, I just want to say that at last time I was out to dinner at Notre Dame, we met Mayor Pete, who you might have all heard about recently. He's running for president, maybe.

Paul Whitener: Oh, there you go.

Allen Brown: Intriguing. Fun fact that I'm going to have to delve more deeply into.

Paul, you're going to be joining LTC for the first time.

Paul Whitener: Absolutely.

Allen Brown: What's one thing we should know about you?

Paul Whitener: Wow, that's a good one. So, I'm looking forward to those dinners, apparently. I think that's one thing we should know. Also I want to engage with everybody that's been doing stuff in a makerspace. I sit on the group that is the North Carolina Makerspace Group and a lot of the schools in the state are involved in that. And some of them I've only seen in a web-ec, so I'd like to meet him personally, but I want to find out what works for various spaces and what doesn't and bring that back and help improve our space.

Allen Brown: Great. And I'm looking forward to meeting up with all of you and hearing about the pod and the demand for many more episodes to come, I imagine. Thanks so much.