Integrated Information Literacy Assessment Using ePortfolios
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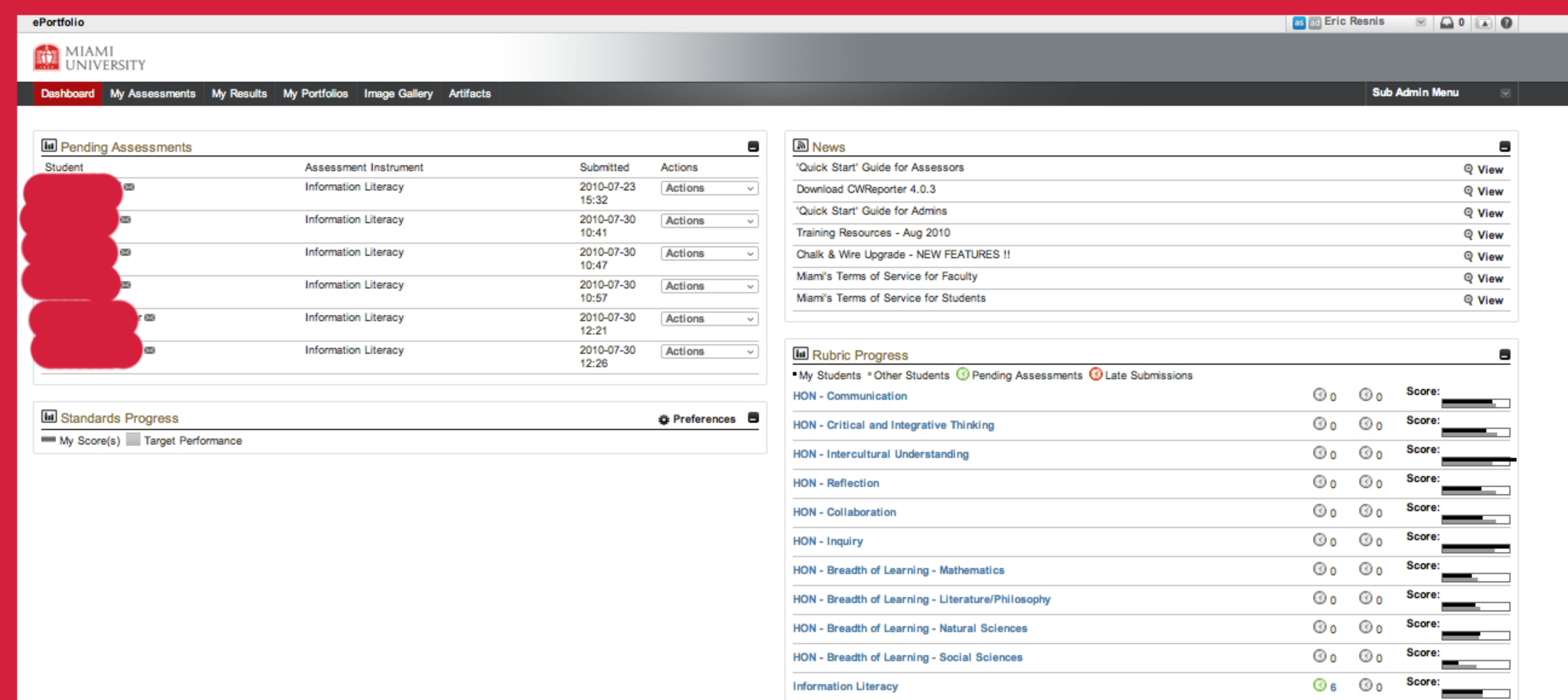
MIAMI UNIVERSITY
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The Premise

Miami University began using Chalk and Wire ePortfolio (Ottawa, ON) system for educational assessment in Fall, 2009. One of the early adopters of the system was the Honors Program, which had recently revamped its curriculum to focus on ten learning objectives, including Critical/Integrative Thinking, Inquiry, and Communication. I assisted with piloting the initial round of ePortfolio submissions and evaluations, and arranged to evaluate the submissions for Information Literacy.
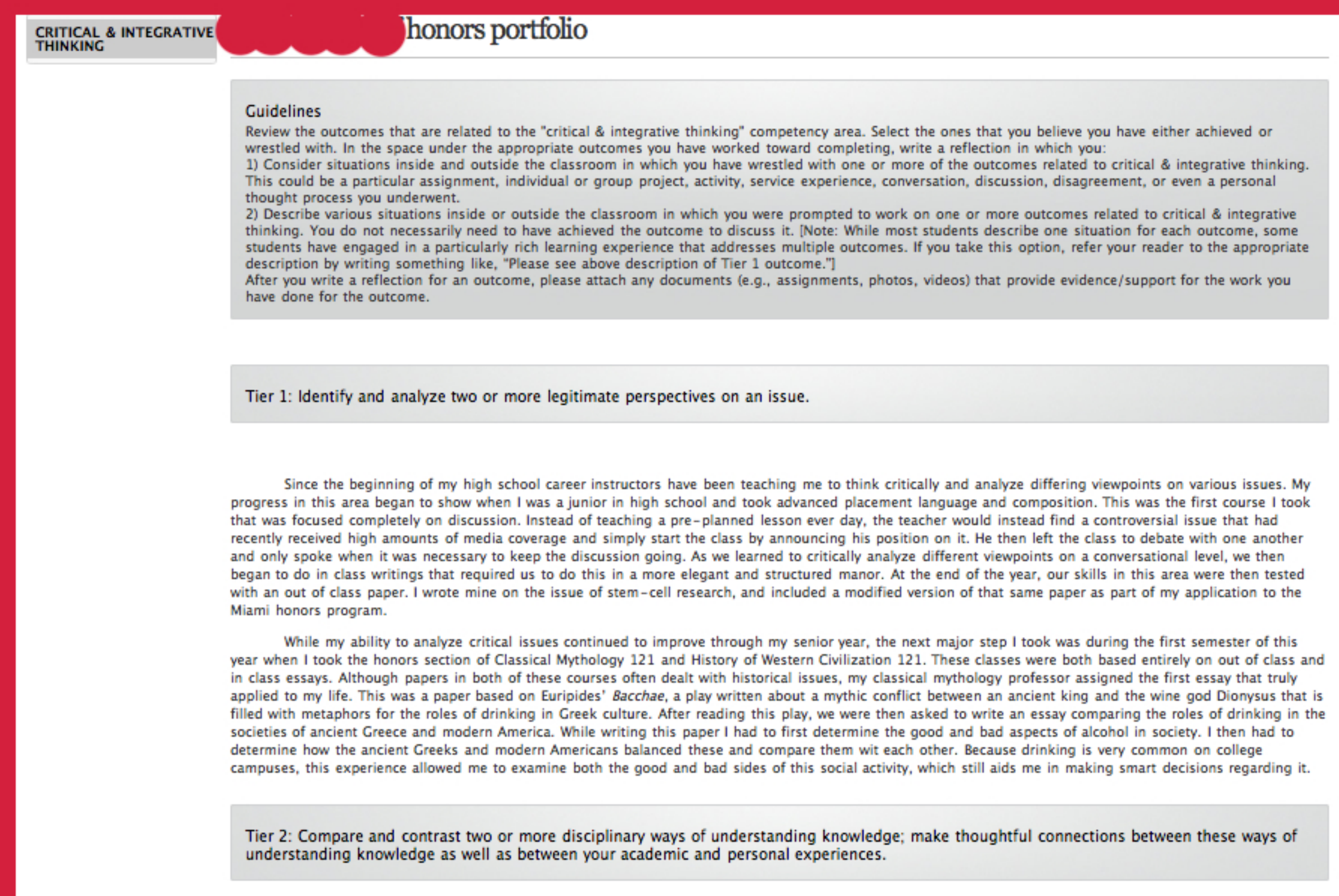
The Project

ePortfolio submissions submitted in the areas of Critical/Integrative Thinking, Inquiry, and Communication were automatically 'escalated' for assessment of Information Literacy using the VALUE rubric from the American Association of Colleges (AAC&U). Honors students chose the artifacts for their portfolios, and none of the assignments were designed specifically to address information literacy. A working of group of four librarians assigned scores for each submission (a total of 330). After that, scores were compiled and analyzed.

Results

Good Things

1. LOTS of good data (fairly easily!)
2. Good assignments fostering information literacy
3. While many artifacts were nonscorable (~35%), the data overall was quite satisfactory.
4. First-year Honors students are adept at finding information (but..)
5. Synthesis was not that satisfactory (but not surprising for any first year).

Mishaps and Challenges

1. The VALUE Rubric was too general
2. Assigning 0 for a non-scorable artifact = bad idea
3. Chalk and Wire early summer upgrade = lost data
4. Student entries not providing enough information
4. Time (75 artifacts per person @ 5 min per artifact)

The Future

Honors will be using ePortfolios for all first year and second year students in the 10/11 academic year, and we will be evaluating their submissions for information literacy. We are currently retooling the VALUE rubric based on our experience and hope to have a team of 8-10 librarians evaluate the submissions when they are submitted. From that point we will determine if we should evaluate all or selected submissions, and if we can offer the assessment to other departments on campus

Additionally, we are currently working on ways to further enhance Tier II and Tier III (Honors upper-level courses) to foster information literacy skills at those levels. This process will continue as we see progression in student ePortfolio submissions.