



CASE STUDY

East Carolina University

Situated in vibrant Greenville, North Carolina, East Carolina University (ECU) is the third-largest university in the state, supporting around 2,000 faculty and more than 26,000 students. Part of the UNC System, ECU is the only university in the state that offers a medical school, dental school, and a college of engineering and technology all at the same institution. Nursing is the university's highest-enrollment undergraduate program, with more than 2,000 of its students working toward this highly in-demand degree.

With thousands of faculty spread across varying disciplines, the institution was seeking a proactive solution for two major needs related to faculty processes: the need for a centralized place for reporting as well as a way to electronically route personnel actions. Faculty reporting and evaluation processes were mostly handled on paper, and ECU recognized the need to shift to digital in order to capture professional activities—regardless of discipline—and be able to maintain and utilize that data more efficiently. ECU selected Interfolio to help address both of these priorities, and the institution implemented Interfolio Faculty Activity Reporting (FAR) to support data collection for annual reporting needs at the institutional, departmental, and college level along with Interfolio Review, Promotion & Tenure (RPT) to streamline workflows for its personnel processes.

Themes discussed:

- Supporting All Stakeholders Through a Centralized Database
- Providing a One-Stop Shop for Faculty
- Fostering Success in Three Steps

Supporting All Stakeholders Through a Centralized Database

The team at ECU worked hard to ensure that this technology had faculty and staff buy-in across campus, promoting Interfolio with stakeholders as the starting point for faculty data across departments, colleges, and the institution as a whole. “Interfolio is the centralized source for faculty to document their productivity,” said Cara Gohn, ECU’s Interfolio Coordinator at the institution’s Office for Faculty Excellence. “Whenever there is a need to collect information on faculty productivity, Interfolio is often the place we start.” ECU continuously strives to find effective practices to ensure faculty are set up for success from day one. For example, Gohn presents to new faculty during orientation to help them understand all of the capabilities of the platform. “When our faculty are oriented, I share how they’re going to use Interfolio—in the first year and throughout their career. I show them how we import data on their behalf into FAR and how they can supplement and add any other activities or scholarly works they’re doing.” This data directly feeds into review processes at ECU, such as annual evaluations.

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Interfolio Coordinator, Office for Faculty Excellence
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In addition, administrative staff have been able to respond more quickly and effectively to requests for information with a centralized location for faculty and professional activities. “We’re able to more efficiently respond to requests for information in response to an institutional goal or UNC System request by using features like activity classifications and customized activity categories,” noted Gohn.

Gohn also stressed the importance of having buy-in from leadership, setting the tone across the institution to ensure success. “It starts with leadership—ECU realized the need for a centralized and efficient platform for faculty productivity reporting and reviews,” she said. “We understood the need for a support structure, both in the way the system is configured and through resources available to faculty as users of the system.”

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Providing a One-Stop Shop for Faculty

With thousands of faculty members to review on an annual basis—plus tenure and promotion considerations to keep track of—ECU utilizes Interfolio to address their needs across disciplines from humanities and business to engineering and nursing. The institution first piloted RPT at its College of Nursing and College of Allied Health Sciences to support annual evaluations. Since then, ECU’s use of the module has expanded, driving efficiency and insights that help both faculty and administrators. “With RPT, we were able to give administrators the ability to track the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process in a way they never had before,” shared Gohn. “Now, institutional administrators are able to more efficiently monitor the progress of various reviews.”

By combining the two Interfolio modules, the institution can easily leverage faculty information and materials curated in FAR to pre-populate review cases in RPT and reduce preparation time for faculty. And by pre-configuring templates within the RPT workflow, the institution is working to streamline the process for all stakeholders. “Everything is in the same place, and faculty are learning exactly what’s expected of them to upload or include or attach—and the same is true for reviewers,” said Gohn. “Committees can determine exactly what’s required of them because we build that into the process.”

ECU has found additional uses for RPT to build consistent practices for supporting faculty workflows. For example, each fall, colleges nominate faculty for awards for teaching and research, and faculty members submit a portfolio to a small committee for consideration. “It just made sense to utilize RPT for this process as well,” explained Gohn. “It’s becoming more of a one-stop shop for our faculty.”

Fostering Success in Three Steps

ECU's support structure includes three well-defined steps that the team focuses on each year to help ensure faculty succeed: a strategic training schedule, tailored newsletters, and an up-to-date resources website. The training sessions are offered throughout the year and recorded for those who can't attend live. These sessions, as well as carefully timed newsletters, are aligned with review schedules and deadlines. The [comprehensive resources website](#) houses training documents, session recordings, help guides, and more to support faculty efforts in Interfolio—including specific webpages for each of the review processes in RPT.

“We have an annual evaluation user guide page with step-by-step guidance for each reviewer,” noted Gohn. “For promotion and tenure, there’s a separate page where we also link to the Faculty Manual, which has the policies behind the operations. We work together to create a holistic website that faculty can visit to get the information they need.”

About Interfolio

Empowering scholars worldwide, Interfolio from Elsevier is an education technology company trusted by more than 500 colleges and universities across 20 countries since 1999. With innovative products designed to support major milestones in the faculty lifecycle, Interfolio's technology enables academic leaders to effectively advance institutions and their academic staff.

The most comprehensive platform of its kind, the Interfolio Faculty Information System streamlines processes for faculty hiring and recruitment, academic appointments and timelines, activity data reporting, and reviews and promotions. In addition, millions of scholars have used the Interfolio Dossier service to pursue academic programs and positions.

For more information about Interfolio, please contact team@interfolio.com or visit www.interfolio.com.