# HIPs in action: A Comparative Analysis of Collaborative Tools in a Business Course

**Yangil Park**
**Georgia Southwestern State University**
**Americus, GA 31709 U.S.A.**

## ABSTRACT

Online learning tools provide better opportunities for adult and distance learners, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, online learning also has some limitations that need to be overcome. Many higher education institutions have used a variety of new online tools to enhance the online learning experience. And with many adult learners now accessing books online too, making these classes engaging and interactive has never been more crucial. Adopting High Impact Practices (HIPs) into online courses has become one of the solutions as institutions adjust to this new paradigm to ensure quality education and student success.

One of these tools was wikis, which are good for collaboration and developing higher-level thinking skills. The second tool used in the course was ePortfolio, which was named as the eleventh high-impact practice by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) after recognizing its effectiveness. The third one used was a service-learning project, which was promoted for small local businesses. This study explored the effects of using such HIP tools in an Information Systems course on student learning. The findings are summarized and compared among these three.

**Keywords**: High Impact Practice (HIP), Wiki, ePortfolio, Service learning, Online learning, Collaborative learning

## INTRODUCTION

Since the pandemic hit, higher education is all trying to work out the next steps. It's obvious that COVID-19 upended our learning. It's also brought some new challenges to college and issues that we've never had to deal with before (Ramaswamy, 2022).

Even before the pandemic, colleges were adopting more online classes. As this trend keeps up, teachers are going all out to ensure students aren't just passing through but are genuinely learning and growing. And with many adult learners now accessing books online too, making these classes engaging and interactive has never been more crucial. (Sharp & Whaley, 2018). Adopting High Impact Practices (HIPs) into online courses has become one of the solutions as institutions adjust to this new paradigm to ensure quality education and student success.

High Impact Practices are teaching tactics widely recognized for working well with diverse students. Activities include freshman seminars, group projects, undergraduate research, cultural activities, community service, internships, and capstone projects. They're important for getting students involved, boosting what they learn, and sharpening critical skills (AAC&U).

We investigate the use and application of wiki, ePortfolio, and service-learning projects in an online learning environment. So, we used an Information Systems course to investigate the student learning outcomes using each of these three for a course project over a 5-year span. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate and compare the use of HIPs, which would provide more collaboration and interaction.

Students sometimes find it tough to keep up with the fast-changing tech world (Sula et al., 2021) Imitating Wikipedia can be a solution, given its massive pool of contributors. We can get students to write and tweak Wiki articles as part of their coursework. Using wikis in teaching opens up more chances to enhance understanding and turn students into more engaged community members. (Sharp & Whaley, 2018).

According to AAC&U, think of ePortfolios not just as a stack of papers a student turns in. They're about both a final product and the steps it took to get there. As students pull their work into these ePortfolios, they're basically linking the academic life. It's like creating a personal archive that also helps them see the bigger picture of their learning journey.

Service-learning (SL) is another type of HIPSs in which students learn by applying their knowledge to real-world initiatives. It's characterized by education, action, interaction, and reflection. SL can enhance academic engagement and comprehension of social issues (AAC&U).

HIPs boost how much students learn and succeed by mixing into teaching and learning all the focused and connected ways people pick up new stuff (Lee, et al., 2021). It's not just about learning things right then; it's about keeping that knowledge fresh and being able to use it repeatedly (Watson, et.al, 2016). Recently, AAC&U named ePortfolios as the

eleventh high-impact practice after recognizing its effectiveness. It turns out that students engaged in structured ePortfolio activities often display the positive benefits typically associated with other high-impact practices (Watson, et.al, 2016).

**REFERENCES**:

Lee, Laura., Wilkum, Kristi., Immel, Kathy., & Fischer, Abbey. (2021). A Taxonomy for Designing and Evaluating High-Impact Practice Experiences. *College Teaching*, 69(4). 191-201.

Ramaswamy, Sonny (2022)**.** V4I4: Student Success: Higher Education's Raison Detre, https://nwccu.org/v4i4-student-success-higher-educations-raison-detre/

Sharp, L., & Whaley, B. (2018). Wikis as Online Collaborative Learning Experiences: "A Different Kind of Brainstorming." *Adult Learning*, 29(3), 83–93.

Sula, G., Haxhihyseni, S., & Noti, K. (2021). Wikis as a Tool for Co-constructed Learning in Higher Education – An Exploratory Study in an Albanian Higher Education. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 16(24).

The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), https://www.aacu.org/trending-topics/eportfolios

Watson, C. E., Kuh, G. D., Rhodes, T. et al. (2016). Editorial: EPortfolios: The eleventh high-impact practice. International Journal of ePortfolio, 6(2), 65–69.