



e-Portfolio Assignment: Reflective e-Portfolio

Mellon Pathways Program

Fall 2020

Students in the fall semester of the Mellon Pathways Program will work on a reflective e-Portfolio. The focus of the fall e-Portfolio is personal and academic reflection, and is not intended to be public-facing.

What is an e-Portfolio? An e-Portfolio is a web-based collection of reflections and artifacts documenting academic, intellectual, and professional experiences. We use VCU's e-Portfolio platform, Taskstream.

How will my e-Portfolio be graded? Your e-Portfolio will not be graded. To be considered complete, your e-Portfolio should respond to four reflective prompts and adhere to the assignment, which is detailed below.

Who will see my e-Portfolio? Though students are welcome to share this e-Portfolio with anyone, the fall e-Portfolio is not intended to be public-facing. The e-Portfolio you work on this semester will be viewed by the Pathways Program staff. In addition, administrators from VCU, VCCS, and the Mellon Foundation may look at it to get a sense of the program and its participants. The information in the e-Portfolios, collectively, will also be used to help us evaluate and improve our Pathways Program. Beyond that, it is up to you to decide how widely to share your e-Portfolio.

If I'm a continuing Pathways Program student who has made an e-Portfolio before, should I start a new e-Portfolio or add this to my existing e-Portfolio? Continuing Pathways Program students can choose either to add a new button to their existing e-Portfolio called "Reflections Fall 2020" or to create an entirely new e-Portfolio. New students will create their first e-Portfolio.

Do I need a computer for the e-Portfolio? You will need a computer or tablet to work on your e-Portfolio. If you do not have access to a computer, please reach out to your transfer coach.

When will I work on the e-Portfolio? You will work on your e-Portfolio on your own time, and in the Folio Cafés, where there will be opportunities for you to discuss the content and ask technology questions. There are benefits—financial, academic, and social—to attending the Folio Cafés.

What are these financial, academic, and social benefits? The Folio Cafés and e-Portfolio prompts are designed to be an opportunity for you to get to know your Pathways cohort and staff, to learn about the arts and humanities, and to reflect on your courses, experiences, and goals. Students who complete their e-Portfolio and attend at least one event per week over the course of the semester are eligible for stipends and have priority for the Mellon Research Fellows program and other scholarship opportunities.

Why does the term “reflection” keep coming up? Reflection is looking at an experience or idea and identifying its significance and meaning for you as an individual. An important aspect of “folio thinking” is the ability to not only document but also reflect on your experiences. Reflection requires that you think deeply and critically, and consider how different experiences impact you, your plans, and your perspectives. Being able to reflect well benefits you in academic and professional settings, and helps you stand out in interactions and interviews.

How do I get a stipend? All students who complete the e-Portfolio assignment by the assignment deadlines and attend at least one Pathways Program event (Folio Café, discussion, panel, etc.) per week will receive a stipend. The stipend for Fall 2020 is \$500.

What happens after this first semester? In the second semester of the program, you will continue working on your e-Portfolio and transition into a *webfolio*, which is a professional e-Portfolio that you can share publicly to the extent that you wish. The Folio Cafés will continue as we guide you through this process, as well.

What is the e-Portfolio assignment? Your e-Portfolio assignment for Fall 2020 is as follows:

e-Portfolio Assignment for Fall 2020

By the end of the semester, your e-Portfolio will have four entries, and all of them will have been revised during the semester. Each entry will be a reflective response to one of the prompts we provide. There will be a new prompt provided every two weeks. All prompts will be in the weekly newsletter. You do not have to respond to every prompt, and you can go back to respond to earlier prompts if you wish. Your entries should be thoughtful and authentic.

We will have optional **office hours for tech or assignment assistance** Thursday, 9/10 (12-1), Friday, 9/11 (8:20-10), and Monday, 9/14 (2-3)

e-Portfolio Timeline

- By Friday, 9/18: **Create a new e-Portfolio or add “Reflections Fall 2020” button to your existing e-Portfolio**
- By Friday, 9/18: **Email your e-Portfolio address to mhutchison@vccs.edu**
- By Friday, 10/9: **Complete entries for at least 2 e-Portfolio prompts**
- Between Monday, 10/12 and Friday, 10/30: **Attend individual appointment with Prof. Sam Emswiler**
- By Sunday, 11/1: **Revise first 2 e-Portfolio entries**
- By Friday, 11/13: **Complete entries for 2 more e-Portfolio prompts**
- Week of 11/30: **Attend and share at informal e-Portfolio showcase**