

# **Ph.D. Higher Education Administration Portfolio Guidelines**

**Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership & Policy**

**School of Education and Urban Studies**

# Portfolio Guidelines

## Purpose

A central purpose of the Portfolio in the Higher Education Administration PhD is to document the student's academic growth and professional development in the field of Higher Education. A comprehensive account of a doctoral student's experiences and ongoing progress toward one's academic and professional goals, the portfolio should be a well-organized, coherent, and selective, facilitating evaluation by the student's Faculty. The portfolio should represent the scope and depth of a student's professional goals, and academic accomplishments in coursework, independent study, research experiences, internships, and other advanced learning activities. It also provides a vehicle for self-reflection and personal growth. The evaluation process includes two (2) presentations by the student to their faculty over the course of their program.

The essays in your Portfolio require you to integrate research, theory, philosophy, current issues, and best practice into your responses. Your portfolio provides an opportunity for you to document your overall mastery of the field, knowledge base, and skill sets across the curriculum. The Portfolio is designed to evaluate your ability to synthesize, integrate, and apply knowledge and material across the curriculum. The Portfolio requirements are aligned with the core foundational knowledge and competency areas for students graduating from doctoral programs in higher education including: <sup>1</sup>

- An understanding of the socio-cultural-historical nature of higher education in the United States;
- Issues of equity, access, diversity, and inclusion within educational sectors, and the role of social justice oriented education, leadership, and research in serving diverse stakeholders;
- Governance and organizational structures of colleges and universities;
- Policy, Politics, Ethics, and Legal Issues within Higher Education
- Issues Confronting Various Stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators
- Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Methodologies and Practices

## Student Objectives

In the Portfolio process, each student will:

1. Define their academic and professional goals;
2. Formulate specific plans to achieve those goals through coursework, research experiences, and field-based activities;
3. Demonstrate growth in understanding individual specializations and how knowledge in

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Freeman, S., Hagedorn, L.S., Goodchild, L. F., & Wright, D. A. (Eds.) (2014). *Advancing higher education as a field of study*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

- them is advanced through inquiry;
4. Synthesize and reflect upon the process and results of particular learning activities;
  5. Demonstrate mastery of the knowledge base within the field of Higher Education Administration;
  6. Modify goals and plans as needed based on academic and self-evaluation as well as feedback from the student's Faculty;
  7. Demonstrate readiness to proceed to the dissertation phase of the doctoral program at the appropriate point in the program.

As students progress through the program, they will be required to meet periodically with their Faculty Advisor to review and assess their goals, plans, understandings, and accomplishments, and to discuss possible modifications and additional work needed to facilitate continued progress in the doctoral program.

### **Submissions and Evaluation**

Students are required to make two (2) separate formal presentations of their Portfolios to their Faculty or Faculty Advisor during the program.

- **First Submission (Portfolio I):** approximately halfway through the PhD program.
- **Second Submission (Portfolio II):** when students are in their final semester of coursework. The second submission will be called the **Comprehensive Portfolio Assessment**, and will include a formal evaluation of a student's overall readiness to proceed to the dissertation phase of their PhD.

The student's Portfolio will be presented to the primary Faculty Advisor, who will then pass the Portfolio on to a second Program Faculty member. Both Faculty will evaluate the student's portfolio to determine the student's readiness to advance to candidacy.

### **Portfolios**

In the Higher education Administration PhD program, a Portfolio is a selective and organized electronic record of your documented accomplishments and learning as a student. It provides your Faculty with information to assess your growth and development, and to suggest changes that more closely tie your goals to your program.

**Preparation:** Prior to the formal submissions of your portfolio, you should meet with your Faculty Advisor to ensure you are addressing the expectations for each portfolio submission. Once you are comfortable with the contents of your portfolio, you will then formally submit it to your Faculty Advisor. The first submission will be evaluated solely by your Faculty Advisor; your second/final submission will be evaluated by your Advisor and one additional Faculty member from within the program. Once your Faculty Advisor has read your portfolio, they will contact you to set up a meeting to review your Portfolio and provide you with their evaluation.

**Portfolio Submissions:** Prior to presenting your portfolio each time, you should meet with your Faculty Advisor to ensure you are addressing the expectations for each portfolio submission. Once you are comfortable with the contents of your portfolio, you will then formally submit it to

your Faculty Advisor. The first submission will be evaluated solely by your Faculty Advisor; your second/final submission will be evaluated by your Advisor and one additional Faculty member from within the program. Once your Faculty Advisor has read your portfolio, they will contact you to set up a meeting to review your Portfolio and provide you with their evaluation. All Portfolios are expected to conform to APA style and formatting.

**Format:** Students are required to develop and submit their Portfolios via electronic format. There are multiple possible platforms for your Portfolio to be housed on, such as Pathbright.com and Portfoliogen.com.

**Portfolio I (21-30 credits):** Students must submit their first Portfolio when they have successfully completed at least 21 credits, but no more than 30 credits of coursework.

At this meeting, your Advisor will sign the **Portfolio Assessment and Feedback I form** (PAF I), and submit it to the Higher Education Administrative Office. Insert your copy of the PAFI in your portfolio. Use the feedback you receive from your Advisor from Portfolio Review #1 in preparing for Portfolio Review II.

At this first portfolio meeting you are expected to include the following items:

### ***Section 1: Program of Study***

Please complete the Program of Study (POS) document. You may get this from either your Advisor or the Higher Education Administrative Office. How does your POS help you accomplish your goals? If you are seeking to use credits previously earned elsewhere or at Morgan State University, please provide a rationale. Information on seeking transfer or waiver of credits can be found in the Program Handbook or through the Higher Education Administrative Office.

**Note:** You do not need to specify on the POS those electives you intend to take unless you know them. Many students elect to take a number of the Special Topics Seminars offered by faculty, and these vary by semester/academic year. You can address that in the second portfolio assessments as your plans become clearer and as courses become available. From this point forward, you should also file your Program of Study form with the Higher Education Administrative Office at the start of every term.

### ***Section 2: Your Current Vita/Resume***

### ***Section 3: An Analytic and Personal Essay***

In this section, you will address how you view your role and place in your PhD coursework and your profession; discuss the way that you see yourself growing and changing due to your experiences thus far. Provide a written description (no more than 10 pages) detailing your academic goals (specialization and supporting areas of study), research goals (problems, topics, theories, concepts, approaches, interests), and professional goals. As part of this essay, discuss how you see yourself developing as a scholar-practitioner, including how social justice, diversity, and inclusion shows up in your professional work, or what you might want to learn more about and develop as a social justice educator and leader. As you consider your professional goals and development, discuss your professional associations/affiliations (e.g.,

ACPA, NASPA, ASHE, AERA, NACADA, ACA, etc.) and how they do/can support your continued development. You may offer an optional video, graphical, or pictorial representations of how your interests, experiences, and plans fit together to showcase your professional development activities. Such creative aspects should portray the intellectual substance of your developing identity as a scholar-practitioner. Finally, please discuss what you see as your own personal strengths and opportunities for improvement as a scholar-practitioner, and what you are learning about yourself through your role as a doctoral student.

#### ***Section 4: Knowledge Discussion Essay***

The purpose of this Section is for you to make connections among coursework taken in the core foundation classes, the research methods classes taken, and any specialization/concentration course take thus far.

In an 8-10 page essay, you are to analyze and synthesize what you have learned about the field of higher education administration so far and to situate this knowledge within your own professional experiences. You will want to address the major connections and themes you are seeing across your courses.

#### ***Section 5: Transcripts***

In each portfolio, please include copies of your unofficial Morgan State transcripts. For any grade of either a C or lower, or an Incomplete, please submit a statement explaining why you received such grades and your intention to address gaps in your learning relevant to the course topic.

**Note:** Should you not pass this portfolio assessment, you can conduct this review once more. Students who are unable to provide acceptable evidence of readiness to continue in the program at that second presentation will not be permitted to continue in the doctoral program.

**Portfolio II (48-60 credits):** Students must complete this Comprehensive Portfolio review before the end of their coursework (typically in the last 2 semesters of coursework). After this review, submit the signed PAF II to the Administrative Office for your files. Include your copy of the PAF I in your portfolio.

#### ***Section 1: Program of Study Update***

Please conduct a review of your program plan and timeline and make changes as appropriate. At this point, you should make note of any electives/specialization courses you have taken or intend to take. Include your updated POS with your portfolio and submit an updated copy of your Program of Study to the Higher Education Program Administrative Office. At this time, your program of study and your academic transcript should be identical. It is incumbent upon you to be sure you have satisfied all University and program requirements in order to proceed to the dissertation phase of the program. Should you have failed to take a required course, have not successfully passed all research courses with a B or better, or still have an Incomplete(s) for a grade, you will not be allowed to proceed to RDHE 998: Dissertation Seminar. All grades of Incomplete must also be removed before the Dissertation can be started.

## ***Section 2: Updated Resume/Vita***

### ***Section 3: Analytical Personal and Professional Update:***

In this section, please address the following questions in a coherent, synthesized essay.

- Since starting your PhD program, in what ways have you been engaged in your professional community and what professional development activities have you participated in (e.g., publications; speaking engagements; presentations or workshops you have delivered, etc.)?
- How have you addressed the gaps discussed in Portfolio Evaluation I?
- How have your courses and your professional activities influenced your thinking and your work as a scholar-practitioner?
- What are your intellectual goals and research interests? How have they shifted?
- What are your professional goals? How have they changed, if at all?
- In what ways have you continued to learn and develop as a social justice oriented educator and leader?

### ***Section 4: Knowledge Acquisition/Synthesis Essay***

In this essay you are expected to demonstrate your understanding of your field at this point in the program. Similar to what you wrote in your first Portfolio, the purpose of this section is for you to articulate the connections you see among courses taken thus far. This is the point at which you should be taking a larger, more global view of the issues facing higher education institutions.

In a 15-20 page essay, you are to explore and discuss what you see as 3-4 of the major connections and themes you are seeing across your courses thus far. How do various courses and ideas relate to one another? Various questions and ideas one could consider/address include: How do legal issues and politics play out in policy development? How does finance and budgeting connect with issues of governance and policy? How do various organizational theories impact governance issues? Where and how do the needs of various stakeholders (students, staff, faculty, community, parents, etc) come to bear on decision-making within universities? How have the goals of higher education changed over the past 20 years? 50 years? 100 years? Since Harvard was founded? What role does student affairs play in student learning, and how does university structure, governance, policy, politics, and faculty impact that? These questions are merely examples and are not meant for you to explicitly answer.

### ***Section 5: Knowledge Application Essay***

In a 15-20 page essay, (excluding references) you are to identify a singular key issue or problem in the field that interests you. Provide a synthesis and literature review of some of the seminal and contemporary literature related to this issue in the field and discuss the various theories and methods used for studying it. Given the issue identified, the theories in use, and the methodologies used to address particular research questions, what do you see as some of the research gaps that still exist, and how might one go about exploring those questions? (You might see this as the beginning of your dissertation literature review and as a way to begin to conceptualize your dissertation research).

(I would suggest including a critique of the program and how the program can be improved;

courses that can be offered; how the program can remain current and lead the higher education academic)

### ***Section 6: Transcripts***

In each portfolio, please include copies of your unofficial Morgan State transcripts. For any grade of either a C or lower, or an Incomplete, please submit a statement explaining why you received such grades.

### **Evaluation of Comprehensive Portfolio**

Your Comprehensive Portfolio must be submitted to your Faculty Advisor and a second Faculty member no later than the first four weeks of your final semester of coursework. Once your Portfolio has been reviewed by both Faculty, you will be contacted to set up a review meeting. If any weaknesses or gaps in evidence of readiness for dissertation work are noted in the Comprehensive Portfolio Assessment, you will be provided feedback from your Faculty to address each area of concern. The Portfolio Assessment and Feedback (PAF) form will specify any and all actions that you are required to complete before you are judged to have fully passed the Comprehensive Portfolio Assessment.

You will be given no more than one academic semester following the end of the term in which you submit your final Portfolio to complete any remedial work requirements, at which time your Faculty will review your Portfolio a second time. Students who are unable to provide acceptable evidence of readiness to advance to candidacy at that second presentation will not be permitted to continue in the doctoral program.

### **Focus of Portfolio Review and Comprehensive Portfolio Assessment Meetings**

Standards and scoring rubrics for each portfolio review are included below.

*Scoring Rubrics and Portfolio Evaluation  
Forms for Portfolio Reviews*

## ***Portfolio Assessment and Feedback I***

### **Scoring Rubric for Assessment I**

<b>Portfolio I Sections</b>	<b>Unacceptable (1)</b>	<b>Marginal (2)</b>	<b>Competent (3)</b>	<b>Mastery (4)</b>
<b>Section 1: Program Plan</b>	POS and student's goals are not aligned		POS fits with student's goals	
<b>Section 2: Resume/Vita</b>		Does not correspond to accepted features of the typical vita.	Corresponds to accepted features of the typical vita. Entries in APA	
<b>Section 3: Analytic Personal and Professional essay</b>	Student role and place in PhD program is missing or unclear. Essay does not provide clear examples of growth and development and is missing examples of connections between courses and professional life. Discussion of academic, research, and professional goals is missing. Relevant work is missing in the essay.	Student role and place in PhD program is not clearly articulated. Essay provides minimal examples of growth and development; limited examples of connections between courses and professional life. Discussion of academic, research, and professional goals is shallow or minimal. Relevant work is minimally discussed.	Student role and place in PhD program clearly stated. Essay provides clear examples of growth and development including connections between courses and professional life. Relevant work is woven throughout the essay. Clear discussion of professional goals and research interests.	Student role and place in PhD program clearly stated. Essay provides clear examples of growth including connections between courses and professional life. Relevant work is woven throughout the essay. Essay provides evidence of deep analytical thinking about current doctoral work and professional life. Ability to articulate roles as both a scholar and a practitioner is present.
<b>Section 4: Knowledge Discussion essay</b>	Connections among coursework taken in the foundations class, areas of research, and the student's specialization and emphasis area or concentration are missing or disjointed. Analysis of the field is missing or only makes minor connections.	Essay makes some connections among various aspects of program, but they are superficial. Analysis of the field is superficial or presents tangential elements or discussions.	Essay includes clear connections among coursework taken in the foundations class, the research methods classes taken, and the student's specialization and emphasis area or concentration. Analysis of the field includes broad connections.	Essay includes clear connections among coursework taken in the foundations class, areas of research interest, and the student's specialization and emphasis area or concentration. Analysis of the field includes broad connections. Student has made more connections than usual at this point in one's doctoral career.

<p><b>Portfolio Language and Writing</b></p>	<p>Numerous errors or error patterns in grammar, mechanics or spelling are present and distract the reader from the content. Language use is not what is expected for doctoral level work, and may not be fluent or engaging. Writing is significantly below that of graduate level quality and needs additional development.</p> <p>Current APA format is not applied accurately.</p>	<p>Some errors in grammar, mechanics or spelling are present and sometimes distract the reader from the content. Language use approaches what is expected for doctoral level work, but may not be engaging. Writing is approaches that of graduate level quality and needs additional development.</p> <p>Current APA format is not applied consistently.</p>	<p>Minimal errors in grammar, mechanics or spelling. Uses language elaborately to express ideas. Writing is at the graduate level, but may benefit from more careful editing.</p> <p>Current APA format is applied accurately</p>	<p>Student makes no or very few errors in grammar, spelling or mechanics. Uses language masterfully to express ideas. Writing is engaging, and clearly at or above the graduate level and shows careful editing.</p> <p>Current APA format is applied accurately</p>
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## Portfolio Assessment and Feedback I

In Portfolio I, the focus is on ensuring that a strong foundation of coursework, research preparation, and professional self-reflection are being built, and that activities and plans in the doctoral program are well-aligned with the student's academic and professional goals.

**Note to faculty:** Please use the scoring rubric to guide your evaluation of the student's portfolio, and then score and use the comment boxes for feedback.

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **ID#** \_\_\_\_\_

**First semester in the program** \_\_\_\_\_ **Current Semester** \_\_\_\_\_

Number of credits student has taken to date (including this semester) \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1: Program Plan

1	3
POS and goals are not aligned	POS and goals are aligned

Comments:

### Section 2: Resume/Vita

2	3
Marginal	Competent

Comments:

### Section 3: Analytic Personal and Professional Essay

1	2	3	4
Unacceptable	Marginal	Competent	Mastery

Comments:

**Section 4: Knowledge Discussion Essay**

1	2	3	4
Unacceptable	Marginal	Competent	Mastery
Comments:			

**Language and Writing**

1	2	3	4
Unacceptable	Marginal	Competent	Mastery
Comments:			

\_\_\_\_\_ **The student has met or exceeded expectations of the Portfolio and is hereby allowed to proceed in the program.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **The student has not met the Faculty/Committee’s expectations and should resubmit their Portfolio by three months from today.**

Additional comments, recommendations, and required actions:

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Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Faculty Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Program Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Effective: 9/2018

## ***Portfolio Assessment and Feedback II***

### **Scoring Rubric for Assessment II**

<b>Portfolio II Sections</b>	<b>Unacceptable (1)</b>	<b>Marginal (2)</b>	<b>Competent (3)</b>	<b>Mastery (4)</b>
<b>Section 1: Program Plan</b>	POS and student's goals are not aligned		POS fits with student's goals	
<b>Section 2: Resume/Vita</b>		Does not correspond to accepted features of the typical vita.	Corresponds to accepted features of the typical vita. Entries in APA	
<b>Section 3: Analytic Personal and Professional Update</b>	Intellectual and professional goals are not clearly stated. Gaps from Portfolio 1 not addressed. Influence of coursework on student thinking is not stated. Engagement in professional community missing.	Student role and place in PhD program is not clearly articulated. Essay provides minimal examples of growth and development; limited examples of connections between courses and professional life. Discussion of academic, research, and professional goals is shallow or minimal. Relevant work is minimally discussed.	Intellectual and professional goals are updated and clearly stated. Gaps from Portfolio 1 addressed. Influence of coursework on student thinking is clearly stated. Engagement in professional community presented and described.	Demonstrates a sophisticated and holistic understanding of the integration and synergy of intellectual, professional goals, research experiences and coursework. Student makes a conceptual link between her/his academic work and engagement in the professional community. Professional and research experiences evident beyond the scope of coursework requirements.
<b>Section 4: Knowledge Acquisition/Synthesis Essay</b>	Understanding of the specialization(s) and research in the field is lacking at this point in the program and is not clearly expressed.	Understanding of the specialization(s) and research in the field is underdeveloped at this point in the program and is not clearly expressed.	Understanding of the specialization(s) and research in the field is appropriate at this point in the program and is clearly expressed.	Understanding of the specialization(s) and research in the field is advanced at this point in the program and is clearly expressed.
<b>Section 5: Knowledge Application</b>	A key issue in the field is not identified. Historically influential and contemporary sources are not cited or not interpreted appropriately.	An issue is identified, although it may not be a major or important one. Limited use of historical or contemporary sources used to frame or support issue	A key issue is clearly expressed and both historically influential and contemporary sources are cited and interpreted appropriately.	In addition to all expectations for a competent essay, this paper is written at a potentially publishable level.

<p><b>Portfolio Language and Writing</b></p>	<p>Numerous errors or error patterns in grammar, mechanics or spelling distract the reader from the content. Language is appropriate but may not be fluent or engaging. Writing approaches that of graduate level quality, but may need additional development.</p> <p>Current APA format is not applied accurately.</p>	<p>Some errors in grammar, mechanics or spelling are present and sometimes distract the reader from the content. Language use approaches what is expected for doctoral level work, but may not be engaging. Writing is approaches that of graduate level quality and needs additional development.</p> <p>Current APA format is not applied consistently.</p>	<p>Minimal to few errors in grammar, mechanics or spelling. Uses elaboration to express ideas. Writing is at the graduate level, but may benefit from more careful editing.</p> <p>Current APA format is applied accurately</p>	<p>Student makes no or very few errors in grammar, spelling or mechanics. Uses language masterfully to express ideas. Writing is clearly at the graduate level and shows careful editing.</p> <p>Current APA format is applied accurately</p>
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## ***Portfolio Assessment and Feedback II***

In the second and final Comprehensive Portfolio Assessment the meeting the focus shifts from academic and professional development to formal evaluation of the student's readiness to proceed to the dissertation phase of the PhD, once remaining courses have been successfully completed, thereby gaining ***doctoral candidacy*** status.

Note to faculty: Please use the scoring rubric to guide your evaluation of the student's portfolio, and then score and use the comment boxes for feedback.

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **ID#** \_\_\_\_\_

**First semester in the program** \_\_\_\_\_ **Current Semester** \_\_\_\_\_

Number of credits student has taken to date (including this semester) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section 1: Program Plan**

1	3
Goals and POS are not aligned	Goals and POS are aligned

Comments:

### **Section 2: Resume/Vita**

2	3
Marginal	Competent

Comments:

### **Section 3: Analytic Personal and Professional Update**

1	2	3	4
Unacceptable	Marginal	Competent	Mastery

Comments:

**Section 4: Knowledge Acquisition/ Synthesis Essay**

1	2	3	4
Unacceptable	Marginal	Competent	Mastery
Comments:			

**Section 5: Knowledge Application**

1	2	3	4
Unacceptable	Marginal	Competent	Mastery
Comments:			

**Language and Writing**

1	2	3	4
Unacceptable	Marginal	Competent	Mastery
Comments:			

Additional comments, recommendations, and required actions:

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Student Date

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Faculty Advisor Date

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Program Coordinator Date