

LOWER DIVISION PORTFOLIOS

Instructions and Tables of Contents

Students in the lower division assemble each semester a *LIBS ___ Portfolio*. Beginning in LIBS 101 you will collect, in a three-ring binder titled *LIBS 101 Portfolio*, (A) the work you have done (your notes, response papers, essays, lab reports, art work, etc.) and (B) the reflection/assessment section (which is called the Intellectual Journey Section of your Portfolio). The Portfolios will be clearly numbered and titled with dividers according to the enclosed table of contents. There are specific contents for the *LIBS 101 Portfolio*. The packet will be available on the WEB.

At the end of LIBS 101 you will remove the ongoing Intellectual Journey section and put it in a *LIBS 102 Portfolio* where you collect your work and add to your previous reflection/assessment of your work.

At the end of LIBS 102 you will remove the ongoing Intellectual Journey section and put it into a *LIBS 201 Portfolio* where you collect your work and add to your previous reflection/assessment of your work.

At the end of LIBS 201 you will remove the ongoing Intellectual Journey section and put it into a *LIBS 202 Portfolio* where you collect your work and add to your previous reflection/assessment of your work.

At the end of LIBS 202 you will be asked to evaluate your entire, four-semester *Intellectual Journey Portfolio*. The development and final product of this Portfolio should provide you with a clear picture of your academic strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes and perhaps serve as a basis to decide on a major in upper division.

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR THE LIBS ___ PORTFOLIO (EACH SEMESTER)

1. SYLLABUS
2. NOTES
3. RESPONSE OR CONNECTION PAPERS
4. ESSAYS
5. REPORTS (LABS, WORKSHEETS, SCIENCE PROJECTS, ETC.)
6. ART WORK (SLIDES OR PICTURES, VIDEOS, ETC.)

This is the intellectual labor you have produced.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOR THE (ONGOING) *INTELLECTUAL JOURNEY SECTION* OF THE PORTFOLIO

- i. Table of Contents
- ii. Self Assessment Matrix
- iii. Assessment Criteria for Seminar Participants

At midterm and at the end of each course you are expected to reflect on and analyze your learning process by rereading your Notes, Response or Connection papers, Essays and Lab Reports, reviewing your art work according to the criteria (below) for the Intellectual Journey Section. Please briefly respond in writing to the following eleven criteria.

1. MIDTERM AND FINAL EVALUATION FORMS FOR EACH SEMESTER

2. QUESTIONS. Review the Questions you have raised in this semester's seminar and/or the readings and make a list of them.

3. FIELDS OF INQUIRY. What Patterns do you detect among your questions? Are they factual? Open-ended? (Essay type) General? Specific? Based on the text? Hypothetical? Based on loose association? Comparative? Deductive? Inductive? Other patterns?

4. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS. What seem to be the predominant academic, intellectual issues, themes and problems addressed by your questions? Do they point to a particular direction you would like to pursue (in terms of future readings, study, research or career interest)?

5. USING ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES. Hutchins is an interdisciplinary program. It considers the academic disciplines (literature, history, philosophy, social and "hard" sciences) as tools to help us answer our questions. a. How have the disciplines helped you to address these questions, issues and problems? b. What disciplines are your strong, most likeable ones? c. Which are the weaker least likeable ones? Why? Refer to the attached Self Assessment Matrix and Assessment Criteria for Seminar Participants.

6. BLIND SPOT. What areas, out of 2, 3, 4, and 5, appear to be left out or avoided?

7. SEMINAR SKILLS. After you review the materials given to you as guidelines for seminar: a. Describe how the material has been useful (or not). b. Assess your seminar skills, and c. Discuss what might be helpful to you to increase your skills. Refer to the attached Self Assessment Matrix and Assessment Criteria for Seminar Participants.

8. COLLABORATIVE LEARNING. In working in a group project, what are your reflections on the process of collaborative learning? What are the advantages and disadvantages of working with a group? What strategies did you learn that will help you in future collaborative learning?

9. WRITING ASSESSMENTS. Discuss your writing strengths and weaknesses according to the criteria developed in class and the comments from writing tutorials. (When appropriate, you may refer to the Writing section of previous Midterm and Final Evaluations.)

10. CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE. What seems to be your biggest challenge in the course and how do you seem to respond to it? Refer to the attached Self Assessment Matrix and Assessment Criteria for Seminar Participants.

11. INTELLECTUAL JOURNEY ESSAY. Now that you have reflected on your intellectual labor, what image comes to your mind? In a three-page essay discuss your work in Hutchins thus far: how has it contributed to your intellectual journey? Refer to the attached Self Assessment Matrix and Assessment Criteria for Seminar Participants.

SELF ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Your portfolio demonstrates that in your written and other work in Hutchins you have attained the following levels of competency in the areas listed below:

Assessment Areas	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
1. Interdisciplinary	usually views issues through a single discipline	sometimes uses more than one discipline to work on an issue	often combines disciplines; thinks beyond disciplinary boundaries
2. Depth of understanding & use of materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • level & diversity of sources • interpretation of sources 	level too simple; too few inadequate and/or inaccurate	level adequate; number sufficient adequate and/or accurate	level sophisticated; number substantial insightful and/or precise
3. Multiple perspectives in overall Portfolio work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pluralism, multi-culturalism, etc. 	consistently employs mono-cultural or ethnocentric perspective	occasionally sees from "other" point of view	consistently aware of other perspectives
4. Creativity & Higher-level synthesis	"plays it safe"; depends on authorities; keeps ideas separate from one another; wants answers	sometimes tries "new" approaches; somewhat independent in ideas; tolerates ambiguity	finds imaginative ways; takes risks; pulls ideas together; sees relationships; enjoys ambiguity
5. Communication ability (written & oral) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity of expression • cogency • diversity of media 	confusing needs work one type of presentation	straightforward satisfactory more than one type of presentation	elegant good several types of presentation (3 or more)
6. Seminar skills	incoherent or else fails to participate	adequate	"barn builder"; sophisticated insight into material and creative application of ideas

(On this page paste or scan “Assessment Criteria for seminar participants”)

THE PORTFOLIO

INTRODUCTION TO THE HUTCHINS SCHOOL

The Hutchins School of Liberal Studies is a broad-based interdisciplinary program which ranges widely across the many areas of inquiry that make up the Liberal Studies. More than just a collection of courses, the Hutchins program tries to provide the kind of educational experiences that will help students become confident of their ability to participate effectively in society. In this age of too-easy answers, well-educated citizens need to be able to think independently, but the skill is rare. For that reason, the program holds the fostering of intellectual development as one of its highest aims. To think independently, one needs to be able to ask the kinds of questions that are meaningful for the individual and effective in getting to the heart of an issue. One needs, too, to be able to make coherent sense of a wide and often confusing array of ideas and opinions. Finally, one needs to be able to bring a sense of values to bear in interpreting what is "out there." So that they may develop that independence of mind, students here are given a good deal of latitude in determining the directions their education will take. Discovering how to use that latitude to shape a meaningful education is part of the challenge of Hutchins.

The Portfolio allows the student to record and evaluate the range of educational experiences and ideas that constitute that individual's particular pathway through the Liberal Studies. At the same time, the Portfolio is a means of assessment appropriate to the aims of the Hutchins program. Unlike tests, which are the usual means of evaluating a student, the completed Portfolio furnishes a portrait of the independent learner and captures a sense of the shaping process through which he or she developed intellectually.

HUTCHINS APPROACHES TO LEARNING

The Hutchins School of Liberal Studies provides many kinds of learning experiences through which you can earn the 48 units needed for the Lower Division. (Note that the Hutchins School does not meet the GE requirement in mathematics. Please refer to "Hutchins School of Liberal Studies: Lower Division General Education Program" for further information.)

PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio begins in Hutchins' gateway course, LIBS 101 The Human Enigma and it evolves each term as you complete your coursework; it culminates in your final semester in LIBS 202 Challenge and Response in the Modern World. Each Portfolio is different. Yours will reflect the pathway you followed in your interdisciplinary study. We expect you to include in it examples of your achievements in each of the areas.

All essays returned to you from your work accepted for the major are to be included in the Portfolio. Brief connection or reaction papers should be included. Other possible and equally valid kinds of items might be slides or pictures of art work you produce, tapes of performances you give, ethnographies, records of oral interviews and case studies. Reports on learning that you do outside the regular classroom, at museums, concerts, field trips, cultural ceremonies, for example, can be included. Activities or experiences which are difficult to document in writing need to be discussed with your advisor or instructor. Generally, whatever attests to your growing understanding can be suitable.

The Portfolio is not something to "get done" as soon as you start your work in Hutchins; it should "grow," as you do, semester by semester. Because you will become surer of yourself as you go through your intellectual journey, the earlier work you include in the Portfolio may (but will not necessarily) strike you as less representative as time goes on. It is nevertheless to be valued as significant of who you were at a given point. In other words, don't be discouraged if you find you have included items you have in a sense outgrown. They are certainly acceptable, even important, in a book like this. They do not have to be updated or revised; if they met the requirements of your instructors, they belong in the Portfolio in the condition in which you submitted them to the instructor. Part of your work in LIBS 202 will be based on the content of your Portfolio. You will write an intellectual autobiography tracing the development of your thinking in the Lower Division, therefore, it is essential that you save all your work.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN DESIGN

We believe that you should shape your education to meet your needs, hopes, and aspirations. While we will require certain kinds of work of you, you have the chance to determine a great deal about the shape and content of your lower-division work. To formulate some of your ideas, please read through the following questions, then write briefly on each of them. You can, of course, change your mind whenever you want.

INTRODUCING YOURSELF

1. Why are you in college?

- 2a. What do you hope to be doing five years from now?

- 2b. What do you hope to be doing ten years from now?

- 2c. What do you hope to be doing twenty years from now?

3. Why are you in the Hutchins program instead of some other place?

4. Where were you before you came to Hutchins?

5. What are you most eager to learn about? Why?

6. What are you least interested in studying? Why?

7. What do you think are your greatest, intellectual, artistic, creative and social skills?

8. What skills do you still need to develop?

DEVELOPING SKILLS

The Hutchins program intends to build upon students' previous education and experience in some specific ways. Meeting academic requirements does not necessarily insure that you will acquire the skills we think you should have by the time you graduate from Sonoma State University. With this in mind, read through the following descriptions of goals for our students. When you meet with your advisors during your progression through the program you will assess yourself. Then as you plan your studies you can take into account the areas in which your skills need strengthening.

Our primary concern in the Hutchins program is for students to remain/ become lifelong learners. In order to do this well, we think that students need to be able to **enter into discussion effectively, analyze written material, think critically, write clearly, and make formal presentations**. We also hope that students will be able to go beyond the purely discursive and **communicate about and through the arts**.

The seminar is one good place to practice and develop effective discussion skills (written/oral language). Your *willingness to discuss and even to debate issues* is a key factor here. But it is also important to *show respect for other points of view, to listen carefully, to keep comments relevant to the subject at hand, and to have a sense of the quantity of your contributions* relative to those of your partners in discussion. Combining these skills with the ability to express yourself clearly will give you a valuable asset for any future.

A strong point of the Hutchins program is our focus on analyzing written material critically as well as personally. We ask you to respond to a large amount of writing during your studies here. It is crucial that you develop your ability *to recognize important points* in the readings. You need to be able to *examine arguments carefully* (both explicit and implicit). It is important to *know how to raise questions* about arguments and things in the material which interest or puzzle you.

Knowing how to look at the writing of others can also help you with your own writing. It is our goal that every graduate of the Hutchins program be able to communicate effectively through writing. While the main focus here is on *formal papers*, *creative writing* is important as well. We expect you to become skillful enough with the *basic components of writing* (organization, grammar, spelling, and so forth) to get your point across clearly whether you are writing a petition, a letter to a friend, a novel, or a technical report.

Words may be the most abundant form of communication these days, but they aren't the only form. Although the next goal is sometimes difficult to achieve, and is not commonly an integral part of American liberal education, we want our students to be able to communicate through the arts. At a minimum, we want you to *recognize some of the forms employed in the arts* and be able to discourse about them. Ideally, we want you to *be able to express yourself through the arts* themselves.

Review the skills described above and rate yourself on the following page. Are you sure or unsure that you have adequately developed each skill? At the end of each lower division course, your instructor will also offer evaluative remarks. We expect you to develop the areas you are unsure about now, at the beginning of your studies. Part of your evaluations are based on your proficiency in these skills each semester. But it is our hope that you will take these skills away with you. They are not intended simply as part of a rating system but are helpful in participating in the world after graduation.

EVALUATING YOUR SKILLS

Score yourself according to Levels 1-5 with 1 being the lowest Ability

Ability to enter discussion effectively:

- respect for other points of view
- willingness to discuss / debate issues
- relevance of comments
- appropriate quantity of talk

Ability to analyze written material:

- ability to recognize important points
- examine arguments carefully
- ability to raise questions

Ability to communicate through writing:

- formal papers
- creative writing
- component skills (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.)

Ability to communicate through the arts:

- recognition of art forms
- ability to express through the arts

INTELLECTUAL INTENTIONS AND PERSONAL MUSINGS

The preceding pages have asked you to review the reasons that brought you to Hutchins and your concerns as you begin the lower-division program. You have looked at ideas about your own learning style, have reviewed already completed courses, and have thought about the skills you will need as a lifelong learner. You are probably aware of a whole host of things you hope to learn and do in the coming terms, ranging from intellectual areas of interest to abilities you hope to develop and master. Given that present awareness, write a brief synopsis on this sheet of your own most important learning goals and the ideas about learning you take with you as you go. What do you want things to be like here, and why? (This synopsis – call it your philosophy of education if you like – should not talk about the specific required courses but about the self-development you think should occur to enable you to graduate from Hutchins as an assured, autonomous learner.) (Add additional pages if you wish.)

SYNOPSIS OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS