



Unlocking your graduation success:
Mastering portfolios, deadlines, and
submission strategies



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Learn about the essential components of your portfolio and the significance of early submission to prevent course duplication. Discover guidelines for assembling and submitting your portfolio for evaluation.

Part 1 - What Is the Portfolio? How Long Does It Take?

Part 2 - Putting the Portfolio Together – Bits and Pieces

Part 3 - Timelines and Deadlines

Part 4 - Helpful Resources

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What is the Prior Learning Portfolio?

The **Portfolio** contains a collection of **YOUR documents and written assessments (work, training and life experiences)** put together which will be submitted to the Assessment Team for evaluation and awarding of credits.

Guidelines, Samples and Fillable Forms on the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) website will walk you through the process of preparing the portfolio. There are **many resources available** to assist you in preparing your portfolio.



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What are we looking for in the Portfolio?

The Assessment Team is looking for depth and quality.

Developing the portfolio will be easier for you if you:

- Collect relevant documents
- Determine competencies tied to your experiences (work, life or trainings)
- Utilize the worksheets and resources provided to you

Your final submitted portfolio **must** demonstrate college level work for the awarding of academic credits.



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How long does it take to prepare a prior learning portfolio?

YOUR portfolio is prepared by YOU on YOUR schedule. How long it takes to prepare the portfolio is up to you. We have had students that have completed a portfolio in as little as a few weeks while others may take a few months. As mentioned, pre-planning is the key. It may take some time to obtain necessary employment verifications, training syllabi/course descriptions, letters from human resources or any other documents needed to back-up the competencies you will be writing about.



The portfolio is your key to saving time and money!



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Putting the Portfolio Together – The Bits and Pieces



A portfolio contains the following components:

- **Cover Letter** (optional)
- **General Information** (Tabs I –Personal Information and II – Educational Information)
- Academic History, Transcripts and Transfer Credit Evaluations (most of these available in your student portal)
- **Table of Contents (Tab III)** (individual table of contents for work, training and life experiences)
- **Work Experience Section** (Tab IV)
- **Training Experience Section** (Tab V)
- **Life Experience Section** (Tab VI)
- **Portfolio Checklist** (optional -this helps to ensure all necessary forms and documents have been included) (Tab VIII)
- **Signature Page** (Tab VII)

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Timelines and Deadlines



Are there Timelines and Deadlines to Submit Portfolios?

- **Submit as early as possible in your degree program.** This enables you to efficiently plan your degree program and the courses you need to take.
- **Ideally, portfolios should be submitted within four months of your admission.** This will allow your advisor to place your credits within your program plan within the various concentration areas/or electives, which will reduce the number of courses you may need to take and put you on the 'Fast Track' to complete your degree.
- **Portfolios *can* be submitted at anytime,** but should you need credits in time for graduation, please consider the following timelines.
 - **August Graduation** – portfolios should be received by **May 1st**.
 - **December Graduation** – portfolios should be received by **September 1st**.
 - **May Graduation** – portfolios should be received by **February 1st**.

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Evaluation Timelines

Once we receive your portfolio, the evaluation and assessment period takes approximately 6-8 weeks.

Portfolio is sent to two evaluators that review the portfolio independently. This process takes minimum of 2 weeks.

Following review by the evaluators, the portfolio is then sent to the Prior Learning Team coordinator to assign the awards. This process takes minimum of 2 weeks.



Don't Procrastinate and Wait Until the Last Minute!!

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We Are Here to Help

YOUR success is OUR success!



In Person – if you are in the Mt. Pleasant, Michigan area, you can schedule an appointment with our Prior Learning staff located in the CMU's North Campus, Innovation and Online, 802 Industrial Drive, Mount Pleasant, MI 48858. Call (989) 774-7126



Phone – call our Prior Learning staff members who can assist you over the phone. Call (989) 774-7126



Email – send your questions to us via email priorlearning@cmich.edu



Webinars and In-Person Sessions - check our Prior Learning webinar page for upcoming live webinars in in person live sessions that focus on specific topics helpful to you as you begin the Prior Learning Portfolio process <https://www.cmich.edu/academics/innovation-online/resources/credit-for-prior-learning/prior-learning-webinars>



Webpage – our webpage has a wealth of information to assist you in planning, preparing and submitting a portfolio. The web page has links to worksheets/templates, a comprehensive Student Handbook, FAQs, links to archived webinars, video briefings and much more <https://www.cmich.edu/academics/innovation-online/resources/credit-for-prior-learning>

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