1.3 Setting up Portfolios and Initial Research Philosophy Reflections

For Teachers

After the introduction to the course themes and style, students will create their portfolios. Teachers may justify the organization form, providing students an outline for its contents, and use the template throughout the course. This sample course uses a digital portfolio structure through shared Google Drive. However, assignment direction can be adapted for Dropbox or other storage clients or even for a printed, physical portfolio. (See assignment details in Module 1 for this assignment's implementation guide.)

Keeping recursive and reflective portfolios is a fundamental requirement of The College Board AP Capstone program. Students will house all process work, written reflections, paper drafts, and other related notes in an organized fashion; teachers can then check portfolios for completion at regular intervals. Ultimately, the portfolio process provides students with a way to physically see and monitor progress and an easy place to organize work and recall change over time—metacognitive activities that will be the basis of active reflections.

To have a stable backdrop, students complete an initial written reflection. This Research Philosophy Reflection asks students to provide an initial profile of their academic and career-based interests, topics of curiosity or talent, and the basis for lines of inquiry they may follow in the future. Teachers may choose to have students revise this reflection over the year and may also use it as a basis for discussion in the beginning classes of AP Research. This may be supplemented with broad introductions to lines of inquiry, epistemic worldviews, or other knowledge-based philosophies as they provide students with academic language for categorizing their curiosities. Doing so will lead students to methodological approaches and ethical research practices in the future. (See provided presentation and recorded lecture as potential resources for scaffolding this student reflection in Module 1).