

# **Mellon Research Fellows**

2023-2024  
Student Orientation





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## Orientation Schedule

**Monday, August 14**

<b>9:00 – 9:15</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and introductions</li> </ul>
<b>9:15 – 10:15</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program goals</li> <li>• Undergraduate research</li> <li>• Research topics</li> <li>• Research timeline</li> <li>• Project ideas</li> </ul>
<b>10:15 – 10:30</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions &amp; break</li> </ul>
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program requirements</li> <li>• Contracts</li> </ul>
<b>11:00 – 11:50</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encountering challenges</li> <li>• Q &amp; A with former MRF's</li> <li>• MRF Promotional Video</li> <li>• Questions</li> <li>• Next steps</li> </ul>



## Letter from the Director

August 14, 2023

Dear Mellon Research Fellow,

Welcome to the Mellon Research Fellows 2023-2024 Orientation! We are delighted to welcome our fourth cohort of Mellon Research Fellows and their mentors to our program.

The Mellon Foundation, Mellon Research Fellows committee, and staff have identified you as someone with the potential to contribute to society—in academic research, community involvement, or some other way. The goal of the Mellon Research Fellows program is to give you a funded opportunity to learn deeply about a topic connected with arts or humanities, develop skills in research, and produce a final project that expresses or illustrates your learning.

All Mellon Research Fellows information, links, and updates can be found in the weekly Pathways Program newsletter, in the [MRF Mentee Updates](#) and in [Canvas](#). If you have questions, please contact the Pathways Program Director, Janelle Marshall at [jmarshall@vccs.edu](mailto:jmarshall@vccs.edu), or Transfer Coach, La'Tifha White at [lwhite@reynolds.edu](mailto:lwhite@reynolds.edu).

The Mellon Research Fellows program is intended to inspire and challenge, and give you an opportunity to explore a topic of interest to you and to create something new. We hope that this experience will deepen your connection to the arts or humanities, and will provide you with skills for future academic, personal, and professional endeavors. And, not irrelevantly, we hope that this will be a fun, exciting, and satisfying year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janelle Marshall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Janelle" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Marshall".

Janelle Marshall  
Director of Pathways to the Arts & Humanities  
Virginia Community College System

## Program Requirements

Mellon Research Fellows should expect to spend an average of 5-10 hours per week on all aspects of the program. This includes the following program requirements.

- ◇ **Orientation**, August 14, 2023, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
- ◇ **Weekly meetings** with mentor
  - Can be by Zoom, phone, or in-person, schedule to be determined by mentor and fellow
- ◇ **Research journal** (Google form, due weekly, should be completed between Thursday and Sunday)
  - Questions change weekly, sometimes include required attachment
  - Approximately 10 minutes to complete
- ◇ **Symposia: 90 minutes**
  - Monthly (exception: there will be two in October) and currently all scheduled to be virtual ([here](#)).
  - Topics relevant to research and Mellon Research Fellows journey, followed by informal discussion
  - **Required to attend each symposium.** If you cannot attend, please let us know *in advance* if an accommodation needs to be made for attendance at a symposium.
- ◇ **Annotated bibliography** (Attached to research journal four times in fall and winter)
  - Kept throughout research journey and shared and discussed regularly with mentor
  - Specific format of annotated bibliography will be determined with your mentor, based on your topic, kinds of sources, type of research, your style and theirs. Will generally include:
    - One entry for each source (article, book or book chapter, video, podcast, etc.)
    - 2-6 entries per month (depending on type of source, type of research, point in project)
    - Brief (1-2 sentence) summary of source
    - Useful quotes
    - Reflection on how the source helped answer your research question or develop your project
  - For an example, click [here](#)
- ◇ **Prospectus** (Due with research journal Dec 3)
  - One-page summary of your topic, the format of your final project. (*i.e.* an academic paper, documentary, podcast series, etc.), your spring timeline, and guidelines generated by the student and faculty mentor to assess the final project
  - Approved by faculty mentor (prior to submission) and director (after submission)
  - For an example, click [here](#)
- ◇ **VCU faculty connection** (assigned and introduced in spring semester)
  - Advisory/consulting opportunity
  - Meet twice in spring
- ◇ **Informal Get-Togethers (optional):** are an opportunity for fellows to talk about their experience and share concerns and advice. They will all take place virtually [here](#). Dates for fall and spring are in the [MRF Mentee Updates](#).
- ◇ **End-of-Year Poster Session and Celebration:** May 9, 2024

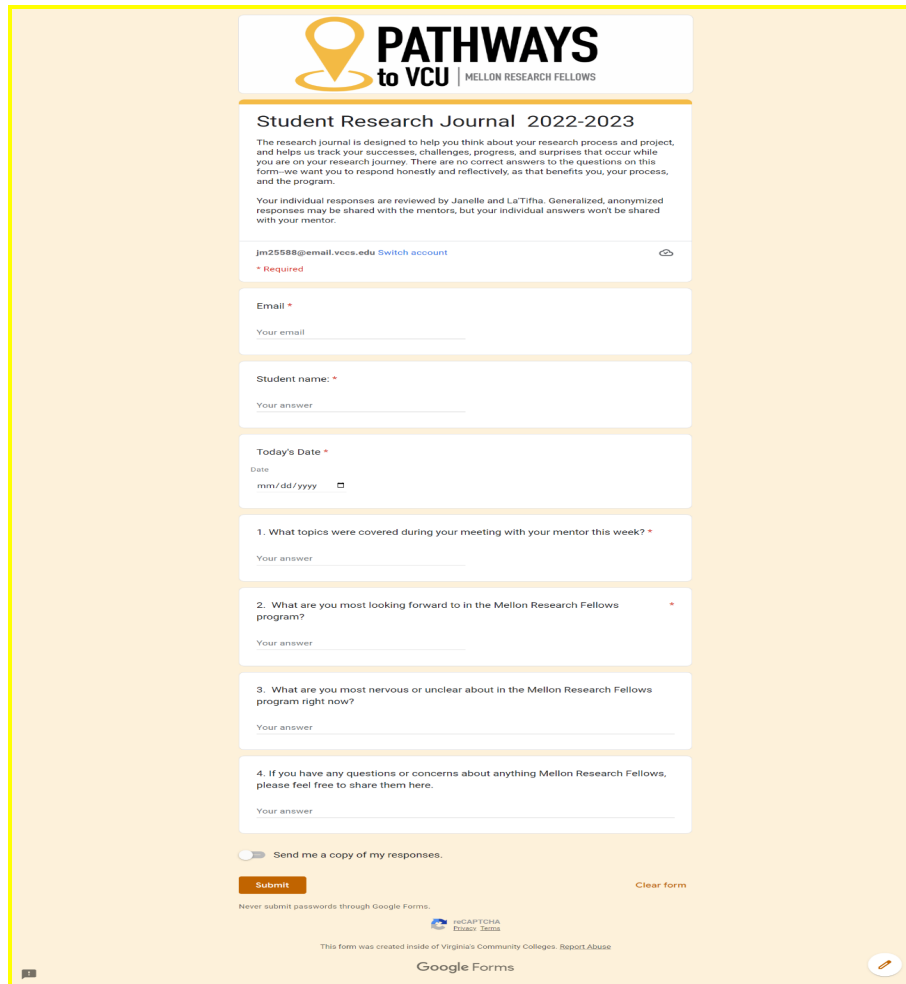
## Research Journal

The research journal is due weekly on Sundays. It is intended to be a check-in on your progress and experience, and will be reviewed weekly by Janelle and La'Tifha. Some of the information may be generalized, anonymized, and shared with mentors or program evaluators, but the individual responses aren't shared. You will be emailed a link to the journal or may find them in the [MRF Mentee Updates](#) and the questions will change each week. We expect the form to take approximately 10 minutes for you to complete. An example is below.

### Research Journal Schedule

**Fall (15 Journals):** August 27, Sept 3, Sept 10, Sept 17, Sept 24, Oct 1, Oct 8, Oct 15, Oct 22, Oct 29, Nov 5, Nov 12, Nov 19, Dec 3, Dec 10

**Spring (11 Journals):** Jan 21, Jan 28, Feb 4, Feb 11, Feb 18, Feb 25, March 3, March 10, March 24, April 14, April 21



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### Student Research Journal 2022-2023

The research journal is designed to help you think about your research process and project, and helps us track your successes, challenges, progress, and surprises that occur while you are on your research journey. There are no correct answers to the questions on this form—we want you to respond honestly and reflectively, as that benefits you, your process, and the program.

Your individual responses are reviewed by Janelle and La'Tifha. Generalized, anonymized responses may be shared with the mentors, but your individual answers won't be shared with your mentor.

jm25588@email.vccs.edu [Switch account](#)

\* Required

**Email \***

Your email

**Student name: \***

Your answer

**Today's Date \***

Date

mm/dd/yyyy

**1. What topics were covered during your meeting with your mentor this week? \***

Your answer

**2. What are you most looking forward to in the Mellon Research Fellows program? \***

Your answer

**3. What are you most nervous or unclear about in the Mellon Research Fellows program right now?**

Your answer


**4. If you have any questions or concerns about anything Mellon Research Fellows, please feel free to share them here.**

Your answer

☐ Send me a copy of my responses.

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## Mellon Research Fellows Student Schedule

The Mellon Research Fellows research journey can seem enormous and daunting at times, and we want to provide a structure that allows you to focus on the process rather than the end result. The deadlines and elements below will help you with the “project management” of the Mellon Research Fellows experience.

### Academic Year Overview

**August** and **September** are about exploring your topic(s), going down rabbit holes, taking notes on what you read/see/watch/listen to/think about, thinking about what interests you, and developing a research question.

In **October**, you'll hone your research question, continue your exploration, and start to answer your research question.

In **November** and **December**, you'll continue exploring your topic and answering your research question, decide on your final project format, and turn in your prospectus.

**January** and **February** are about reading, watching, and listening, but less of it. You'll be organizing your information and your thoughts and taking the first steps of working on your final project.

In **March** and **April**, you'll turn in the first draft of your project and work towards and complete the final draft.

By **May**, your final draft will be done and your focus will turn to creating a poster, sharing and celebrating.

### Important Dates to remember

October 8	Students turn in their current annotated bibliography. Stipend pay period 1 for students.
October 22	Mentor and Mentee decide if IRB is needed
November 19	Students turn in their current annotated bibliography through their research journal.
Dec 3	Students turn in their prospectus. Stipend pay period 2 for students.
January 21	Students turn in their current annotated bibliography through their research journal.
February 18	Students turn in their current annotated bibliography through their research journal.
March 10	Students turn in the draft of their final project. Stipend pay period 3 for students.
April 21	Students submit their final projects electronically
May 9	Poster presentation and celebration. Stipend pay period 4 for students.

## Symposia

Mellon Research Fellows are required to attend nine symposia on topics related to research and the research experience. All symposia are scheduled to be virtual, held [here](#). These symposia take the form of panels and are intended to be accessible and informative. **You are required to attend each symposium.** If you cannot attend, please let us know *in advance* if an accommodation needs to be made for attendance at a symposium.

Monday, Sept 18, 3:00– 4:30 pm
Monday, Oct 9, 5:00– 6:30 pm
Monday, Oct 23, 3:00 – 4:30 pm
Monday, Nov 13, 5:00 – 6:30 pm
Monday, Dec 4, 3:00– 4:30 pm
Monday, Jan 22, 5:00 – 6:30 pm
Monday, Feb 19, 3:00 – 4:30 pm
Monday, Mar 11, 5:00 – 6:30 pm
Monday, Apr 1, 3:00 – 4:30 pm



## Contract

Please click [here](#) to access the contract and email back to Janelle at [jmarshall@vccs.edu](mailto:jmarshall@vccs.edu).

### THE VIRGINIA FOUNDATION

for COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION

#### Stipend/Contracted Services Agreement Form

#### Mellon Research Fellows Program

- This is a contract for the services of (name): \_\_\_\_\_  
(Furthermore referred to as the payee), who agrees to render his/her/their services as a Mellon Research Fellow. As a Mellon Research Fellow, the payee agrees to the following, with services rendered on or before date in parentheses):
  - Attend orientation (8/14/23)
  - Attend weekly meetings with mentor (fall & spring semesters)
  - Complete weekly research journal Google form (fall & spring semesters)
  - Attend symposia (fall & spring semesters)
  - Submit prospectus (12/3/23)
  - Undertake research in selected area and document research through annotated bibliography (Due dates: October 8, November 19, January 21, February 18)
  - Submit draft of final project (3/10/24)
  - Create and present a final project at end-of-year celebration (5/9/24)
- The VFCE agrees to pay by check, as full compensation for these services, the sum of \$5,000 in four equal installments of \$1,250, paid in Oct. 2024, Dec. 2023, March 2024 & May 2024.
- No payment shall be made prior to services to be rendered.
- This is not a contract for employment; payee is not entitled to worker's compensation and unemployment benefits.
- Payee is responsible for his/her own tax liability. A 1099-Miscellaneous Tax Form will be mailed to payee at the end of January of the following year if annual earnings exceeded \$600. Please notify [jfrederick@vccs.edu](mailto:jfrederick@vccs.edu) if the address is changed.
- Other terms and conditions are as follows (If none, write none): Complete schedule of events and deadline will be posted online. Mellon Research Fellows are expected to spend 5-10 hours per week on research and related work.

#### INDIVIDUALS RENDERING SERVICE

#### VFCCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City    State    Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judy Frederick, Director of Operations

## Next Steps

- ☐ Look over orientation packet, let us know if you have any questions
- ☐ Add MRF schedule dates to your calendars (We'll see you at the first symposium on Sept 18!)
- ☐ Send completed [contract](#) and [W-9](#) to Janelle Marshall (jmarshall@vccs.edu) by Fri, Aug 25
- ☐ Connect with and schedule first weekly meeting with mentor by Monday, Aug 28
- ☐ First [Student Journal](#) by Sun, Aug 27
- ☐ Read weekly Pathways Program newsletter on Fridays
- ☐ Participate in Fall Pathways Program, beginning week of Sept 11