

Course Level Descriptions

Discovery of Scholarship courses: These courses will be designed to introduce students to scholarship. The Discovery-level material will be covered in introductory courses in a major, general education courses, basic Introductory Composition (ENGL100/101), and First-Year Seminar (UNIV100/300) courses. These courses should include some active or inquiry-based learning techniques.

Student Learning Outcomes:

All Discovery of Scholarship courses must address the student learning outcome, *“Students will understand how knowledge is generated and disseminated through scholarship, and the importance of scholarship to society,”* by addressing three of the following elements:

1. Distinguish between personal beliefs and evidence.
2. Articulate how scholarship influences society.
3. Understand epistemological or historical perspectives of a specific body of knowledge.
4. Evaluate credibility of source information.
5. Understand research methods used in a discipline.
6. Understand how knowledge is transmitted within a discipline, across disciplines, and to the public.

In addition, Discovery of Scholarship courses are required to address how students can engage in the practice of scholarship, by introducing students to:

1. How Mason faculty are engaged in scholarly work.
2. Undergraduate scholarly work at Mason
3. Opportunities offered by the *Students as Scholars* initiative.

Scholarly Inquiry courses: In these courses, students learn about the recursive process of scholarly inquiry either through studying previous scholarship or as preparation for participating in an original project. A scholarly inquiry class may be a research methods course in a discipline or a course that uses inquiry-guided learning to explore a topic.

Student Learning Outcome:

Scholarly Inquiry courses must meet the student learning outcome, *“Students will articulate a scholarly question; engage in the key elements of the scholarly process; and situate the concepts, practices, or results of scholarship within a broader context.”*

Scholarly Inquiry courses must address both of the following elements:

1. Articulate and refine a scholarly question.
2. Follow ethical principles.

And, address at least one of the following elements:

- 3a. Choose an appropriate discovery process for scholarly inquiry.
- 3b. Gather evidence appropriate to the question.
- 3c. Apply appropriate scholarly conventions during scholarly inquiry.
- 3d. Apply appropriate scholarly conventions when reporting or performing.

And, address at least one of the following elements:

- 4a. Assess the validity of key assumptions and evidence.



4b. Situate the scholarly inquiry within a broader context.

Research and Scholarship intensive (RS) courses: Courses in which students actively participate in the process of scholarship and make a significant contribution to the creation of a disciplinary-appropriate product for evaluation will be awarded an RS designation that will appear on the student's transcript. RS courses will be upper division.

Student Learning Outcomes:

RS courses must meet the student learning outcome, "*Students will create an original scholarly or creative project,*" by addressing both of the following elements:

1. Justify that the project intends to be engaging and novel to a particular audience.
2. Take responsibility for executing the project.

RS courses must also meet the student learning outcome, "*Students will communicate knowledge from an original scholarly or creative project,*" by addressing both of the following elements:

3. Present their understandings from a scholarly perspective for a specified audience.
4. Demonstrate awareness of broader implications.

NOTE: Projects undertaken by students in RS courses should meet the Scholarly Inquiry student learning outcomes by addressing at least three of that level's elements, to be determined by the faculty member.