

## WHAT IS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP?

When you come to college, you know that you will have harder classes, more freedom, and new friends, but the most important thing you will get is membership to a community of scholars. Every day, undergraduates join graduate students, faculty, and staff as they discover and create new knowledge. At Mason, scholarship is the process of **generating and sharing knowledge or creative works**. It includes **undergraduate research and creative activities**, with a wide range of possibilities from across the disciplines.

As a student at Mason, you have amazing opportunities to participate in scholarship. Students in all majors can, and are encouraged to, participate!

“Every day we get to come in and do something different and that we don't know the answer to. If we knew the answer to it, we wouldn't be doing it.”  
- Dan Cox (faculty)



## WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

[oscar.gmu.edu](http://oscar.gmu.edu)



“When you enter the realm of research, it becomes so dynamic, and you understand the field is constantly changing, it's constantly progressing.”  
- James Boddu (student)

247 Johnson Center  
4400 University Drive  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030  
© 2011, George Mason University



# STUDENT GUIDE: STUDENTS AS SCHOLARS

## Fostering a Culture of Student Scholarship



## WHAT IS *STUDENTS AS SCHOLARS*?

The purpose of the *Students as Scholars* initiative is to ensure that:

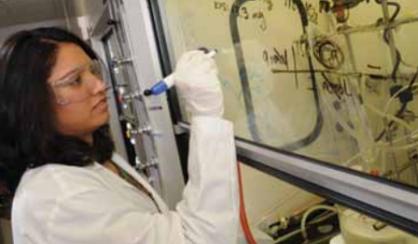
- Student scholarship is pervasive on campus.
- Undergraduate degree programs offer opportunities for student scholarly inquiry, creative activities, and research.
- Faculty support undergraduate students in scholarly inquiry, creative activities, and research.
- Students participate in scholarship, creative activities, and research.
- Students have opportunities to communicate the results of their research or creative activities.
- Students who have participated in scholarly activities are prepared for their career goals and advanced study.

## WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF *STUDENTS AS SCHOLARS*?

- 1) Enhance the awareness and visibility of scholarship at Mason
- 2) Increase opportunities for scholarly inquiry
- 3) Develop the infrastructure to support student scholarship



“The *Students as Scholars* initiative is going to change the trajectory of research experience for students. They will have scholarly experiences all along the way as opposed to just at the very end.”  
- Mills Kelly (faculty)



“ You don’t have to stay in the classroom, do your research, and then go outside the classroom and have two separate worlds. Scholarship breaks down those barriers. ”  
 – Mrinalini Ramanan (student)

“ Previous research is like rough fabric. You have to see how all the pieces blend together and provide that thread in between. ”  
 – Sabrina Speights (student)



“ I consider myself to be an artist and a scholar, and so looking at how creativity marries itself with issues of social justice and social change. ”  
 – Toby Jenkins (faculty)

“ When it comes to teaching and interacting with undergraduates, I tend to try and present information in the form of questions because that’s much more exciting. ”  
 – James Willis (faculty)



## WHAT WILL STUDENTS LEARN?

The *Students as Scholars* initiative is organized to build your skills in undergraduate research and creative activities. You will have increasing levels of engagement, beginning with **discovery**, moving through **inquiry**, and culminating with the **creation** of a scholarly or creative project.

### CREATION OF SCHOLARSHIP

At the pinnacle of the pyramid, students will:

- Create an original scholarly or creative project.
- Students will communicate knowledge from an original scholarly or creative project.

### SCHOLARLY INQUIRY

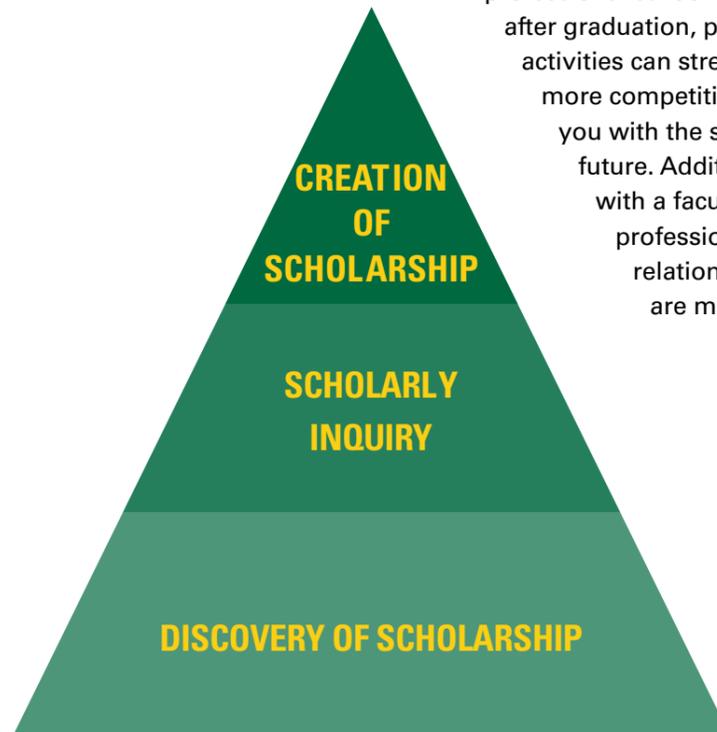
At the middle level of the pyramid, students will:

- Articulate a scholarly question, engage in key elements of the scholarly process, and situate the concepts, practices, or results of scholarship within a broader context.

### DISCOVERY OF SCHOLARSHIP

At the foundational level of the pyramid, students will:

- Understand how knowledge is generated and disseminated through scholarship.
- Discover how they can engage in the practice of scholarship.



## WHY SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?

Creating knowledge and educating students are what Mason does. This is your opportunity to tie what you are learning in classes to the larger picture of scholarship. Whether you are planning on applying to graduate or professional school or will be entering the job market after graduation, participation in scholarly and creative activities can strengthen your resume, make you more competitive among your peers, and provide you with the skills you need to succeed in the future. Additionally, experiences collaborating with a faculty mentor or meeting scholars at professional conferences can help you build relationships and networks with those who are more advanced in your field.

“ The most exciting part was that my project was applicable to the real world. ”  
 – Avis Foster (student)



## HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

There are a variety of ways for you to participate in student scholarship at Mason. Stop by OSCAR (the Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research) or visit [oscar.gmu.edu](http://oscar.gmu.edu) to learn about specific opportunities.

### If you are new to Mason:

- Attend the campus-wide Celebration of Student Scholarship to see the variety and quality of Mason student projects.
- Enroll in a University 100 class to learn more about *Students as Scholars*, as well as everything you need to know about being successful at Mason.
- Visit your professors during their office hours, and ask about their scholarly work. They’ll be excited to talk with you!
- Read Connect2Mason to find the Top 5 Academic Events of the week – and go!

### If you have chosen a major or know what you plan to do after graduation:

- Ask your advisor about which classes include opportunities for student scholarship – you should be able to explore this at every level.
- Search for *Students as Scholars* Projects on HireMason to find faculty who are looking for undergraduates to assist them with their scholarly and creative work.
- Register for a Research & Scholarship Intensive (RS) class to earn course credit for scholarly experiences in the classroom.
- Participate in your college’s undergraduate student symposium to see what other students are doing.

### If you already are working on a scholarly project:

- Apply for an Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (URSP) award to support your research and professional goals.
- Present your scholarship at the annual campus-wide Celebration of Student Scholarship.
- Submit your scholarship to the *George Mason Review*, a student-run multi-disciplinary journal. If your work is accepted, you’ll have a publication on your resume!
- Apply to the Undergraduate Student Travel Fund for support to present the results of your scholarship at a regional or national conference or event.
- Become an OSCAR Fellow and share your excitement about student scholarship with students, families, and the Mason community.

“ Scholarship means partaking in the creation of original work, and that can come in many different forms. ”  
 – Paula Salamoun (student)

