USC Discovery Scholars
School of Cinematic Arts
Submission Criteria

Eligibility

Discovery Scholars will:

- Have a minimum 3.5 overall GPA upon graduation
- Complete an undergraduate degree within five years
- Complete and submit an online application, letter of recommendation, and senior project as explained below by the annual deadline.

Online Application

Submit an online application via the Discovery Scholars website:
http://ahf.usc.edu/scholars/discovery/apply/

Letter of Recommendation

All Discovery Scholar submissions must include a letter of recommendation from a USC faculty member. Whenever possible, the letter should come from the faculty member who has supervised or mentored the student on the project being presented for consideration. The letter of recommendation should provide context for the student's work relative to: the student's overall achievement and performance in the program; the scope and quality of the student's contribution to the submitted project; the merit of the project relative to both the quality of work typically presented at the undergraduate level and the highest standards of the discipline; and the value and implications of the project in the field of study and beyond.

Project Criteria

The following are the criteria for the five undergraduate majors within the School of Cinematic Arts:

Division of Cinema and Media Studies

Discovery Scholar candidates in Cinema and Media Studies may demonstrate excellence in research by submitting a substantive piece of original scholarly work in standard research paper format or in the form of a work that also includes multi-media components. Submissions will be evaluated on a number of criteria, including the quality of research, historiographical contribution, theoretical analysis, or new forms of multi-media knowledge production.

Division of Film and Television Production

Discovery Scholar candidates in Film and Television Production may demonstrate excellence in filmmaking by submitting a short film or television production made in one of the advanced undergraduate production classes: CTPR 480, CTPR 484, or CTPR 486 or any combination of courses resulting in a crew-based project that is approved by the division to substitute for one of these courses. **Submissions will be made by groups of students working in collaboration**, and will be evaluated on the following criteria: the content and writing; the expertise exhibited in producing, directing, cinematography, editing and sound; and the collaborative skills exhibited in making the film or video.

Division of Writing for Screen and Television

To apply for Discovery Scholar status, undergraduate writing students must be in their senior year, must be enrolled in CTWR 418a or CTWR 419a or CTWR 420a in the fall semester and CTWR 418b, CTWR 419b, or CTWR 420b in the spring semester.

In the fall semester students must declare their interest for consideration as a Discovery Scholar. In addition to working on their advanced writing project in class, students must secure an additional faculty mentor who will offer further guidance and support. During the spring semester, while students are in CTWR 418b, CTWR 419b, or CTWR 420b, **both the classroom instructor and the mentor will need to recommend the student in a letter for consideration of Discovery Scholar status**.

The finished written work must be either a feature-length screenplay not less than one hundred pages in length, a pilot script and bible for an original one-hour dramatic television series or a pilot script for a half-hour comedic television series. The subject matter of the student's project should represent humanitarian values and reveal insights into the human condition and/or advance the values of understanding and tolerance.

The criteria for judging student's work will be based on:
- Originality of concept and design
- Quality of writing
- Creation and development of insightful characters
- Mastery of theme and subject matter
- Understanding and effective use of dramaturgy

Division of Animation and Digital Arts

To apply for Discovery Scholar status, undergraduate animation and digital arts students must be in their senior year, must be enrolled in CTAN 401a in the fall semester and CTAN 401b in the spring semester.

In the fall semester students must declare their interest for consideration as a Discovery Scholar. In addition to working on their advanced animation and digital arts senior project in class, students must secure an additional faculty mentor who will offer further guidance and support. During the spring semester, while students are enrolled in CTAN 401b, **both the classroom instructor and the mentor will need to recommend the student in a letter for consideration of Discovery Scholar status**.

The finished work must be a fully rendered, animated piece with a completed sound track. In the case of installation work, the piece must be mounted in a suitable space with all sound and animated components completed and functional.

In the case of an interactive work, the piece must be fully functional with completed animation, sound and interactivity.

Students' projects should articulate the requirements and relationships between theory and practice regarding the complexity of an animated film in idea and execution while also

representing humanitarian values and insights into the human condition and/or advance the values of understanding and tolerance.

The criteria for judging student's work will be based on:
- Originality of concept and design
- Quality of execution and mastery of the art form
- Quality of research and written documentation

Division of Interactive Media and Games
To apply for Discovery Scholar status, undergraduate interactive entertainment students must be in their senior years, and enrolled in one of the following courses: CTIN 459, CTIN 486, CTIN 491, CTIN 492, or CTIN 493.

In the fall semester students must declare their interest for consideration as a Discovery Scholar. In addition to working on their advanced game project in class, students must secure an additional faculty mentor who will offer further guidance and support. During the senior year, while students are enrolled in one of the courses listed above, **both the classroom instructor and the mentor will need to recommend students in a letter for consideration of Discovery Scholar status**.

The finished work must be a complete, polished advanced game project that is innovative in both its aesthetic and technical aspects. The project must exhibit new and different design ideas that clearly show innovation beyond the examples of existing game genres.

Students' project should articulate the requirements and relationships between theory and practice regarding the complexity of an advanced game project in idea and execution while also representing humanitarian values and insights into the human condition and/or advance the values of understanding and tolerance.

The criteria for judging student's work will be based on:
- Originality of concept and design innovation
- Quality of execution and mastery of the art form
- Quality of research and written documentation

Division of Media Arts + Practice
To apply for Discovery Scholar status, undergraduate Media Arts + Practice students must be in their senior year and they must be enrolled in IML 440, 441, 444 or 490.

In the fall semester students must declare their interest for consideration as a Discovery Scholar. In addition to working on their media arts thesis project in class, students must secure an additional faculty mentor who will offer further guidance and support. This faculty mentor will need to recommend students in a letter for consideration of Discovery Scholar status.

The finished work must be a polished media project that is both aesthetically and technically innovative, exemplifying digital scholarship and practice-based research. The project must have a compelling conceptual core that effectively engages with the issues raised in the project's

research; a strong research foundation utilizing multiple kinds of sources; and an effective relationship between form and content demonstrating controlled and deliberate design decisions. The project should also be creative and imaginative in its approach, exploring new forms of scholarship, communication, storytelling and/or user experience.

The criteria for judging student's work will be based on:
- Conceptual core
- Quality of research
- Relationship between form and content
- Creative realization

School of Cinematic Arts Minors
Minors in Cinematic Arts, Animation and Digital Arts, Comedy, Digital Studies, Entertainment Industry, Game Animation, Game Audio, Game Design, Game Entrepreneurship, Game Studies, Game User Research, Media and Social Change, Science Visualization, and Screenwriting will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

School Contact
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