

USC Discovery Scholars
Davis School of Gerontology
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

Students will also have performed a significant piece of research presented in the form of a thesis to the Gerontology faculty.

Application: Application for the program should be made in the Spring of the Junior year. A faculty committee will review the applications, the plan for the research project, and clarify the mentoring responsibility of individual faculty members. Students will be required to have a clearly defined innovative research project and a plan for developing research skills before being accepted into the program.

Program: In addition to working with individual faculty mentors, students will be expected to participate in some research training either through courses or through attending a series of lectures on research design, data, analysis, and presentation of results. We will encourage students to take a course in methods and statistics (either GERO 593 or an undergraduate course). In addition we would expect students to complete the Gerontology Honors Seminar for 4 units (GERO 497ab).

During the fall semester, the research design and methods for the honors thesis are finalized and the research project undertaken.

Selection of Discovery Scholars: Gerontology will set up a three person panel to review the papers and select nominees for the University Discovery Scholar prize competition.

Panelists will evaluate theses as those worthy of Discovery Scholar designation and those not worthy. Only students presenting theses designated as demonstrating exceptional creativity and competence in research will be designated as Discovery Scholars. The faculty panel will select the scholars to be forwarded for consideration for the University prize.

School Contacts

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