

Discovery Scholars in Gerontology

Discovery Scholars in the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology will be undergraduates who have compiled a distinguished overall academic record and have demonstrated exceptional creativity in original research.

Eligibility: Students who have an overall USC GPA of at least 3.5 and a GPA in Gerontology of at least 3.75 will be eligible to earn the designation of Discovery Scholar at the time of graduation. 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.

Students will present the final thesis to the Gerontology faculty committee on March 25th.

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.

For more information regarding the Discovery Scholars Criteria for Gerontology students, please contact Assistant Dean Maria Henke at mhenke@usc.edu.