

Academic Programs and Requirements for Degrees

The Aquinas Scholars Program

Overview

Each year of Aquinas Scholars Program consists of two parts. Part I broadly focuses on identifying and refining a project topic that will be the focus of the first semester and during Part 2 the following semester. Projects should focus on topics that will not only enrich the student's own comprehension of the subject matter but will allow the student to impart knowledge to peers, the Albertus learning community, and/or society at large. This may include topics that enable the student to contribute to the community's learning by raising awareness or offering a new perspective on important issues or topics, advocating for particular policies or programs, providing education/sharing knowledge on a particular topic or area of interest, and/or offering potential new ideas to addressing existing issues. Students will develop an interdisciplinary topic and will identify a faculty member within each discipline to serve as their subject advisor. The course instructor and subject advisor will work together to support the student in refining the topics, locating and deconstructing articles, and crafting final projects each semester.

In addition to each student's focus on their project, this program enhances each student's engagement in the Liberal Arts and advances their understanding of how the Liberal Arts influence our society. This additional aim is accomplished through independent and group trips to a variety of cultural, literary, and historical events and locations in New Haven and surrounding communities. These events also help strengthen the learning community. All students will provide support and guidance to one another throughout the program.

Part 1

In Part 1 students will identify a topic and conduct a literature search to gain a deep understanding of the subject matter and its relevance to today's society. During Part 1, students will learn how to: 1) identify a compelling topic, 2) articulate the importance of their chosen topic, 3) conduct a literature search, 4) read, summarize, and critique peer-reviewed journal articles, and 5) write a project significance paper to justify the project's merits.

Part 2

In Part 2, students will use their findings from the annotated bibliography to organize and develop a comprehensive paper on their topic that raises awareness on an issue, advocates for a particular policy, intervention, or program, and/or proposes a novel idea or program to address the issue. During Part 2 students will learn how to : 1) formulate a strong and objective argument, 2) write a formal research paper that adheres to MLA/ APA, 3) create and organize a formal presentation of their work, 4) organize and promote a small research symposium and/or present at Experiential Learning Day to showcase

their learning community's work, and 5) articulate the skills that they gained from the program and its relevance to their future careers.

Program Participation Criteria

To enter the program, students must:

- Be nominated by a faculty member (students who wish to participate are encouraged to seek nomination);
- Submit a brief letter (1-2 pages) addressed to the Aquinas Scholars Program Director outlining reasons for wanting to participate in the program, academic goals, and discussion of why the candidate believes that he or she is suited for the program.
- Interview with the Aquinas Scholars Program Director

To continue in the program, students must:

- Successfully complete the requirements outlined each semester
- Maintain a 3.2 G.P.A.

To complete the program successfully, students must:

- Successfully earn the 8 course credits (two semesters)