

IND 200 Interdisciplinary Scholarship:
Introduction to the Independent Scholars Major at JMU
Section 0001, 3 credit hours
Fall 2018, Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00-9:15 a.m., Cohen Center lounge

Professors

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Course description

IND 200 is a three-credit course designed to introduce students to the Independent Scholars major, and to the concept of interdisciplinary inquiry. Students will explore models of interdisciplinary thinking and research in a range of contemporary areas of study, and will gain familiarity with the possibilities for individualized study at JMU. Successful completion of the course involves the development of a proposal that defines and justifies an interdisciplinary area of inquiry, creates an individualized curriculum consisting of courses chosen carefully to address the theme of the student's area of inquiry, and outlines plans for independent research and experiential scholarship. Review of the completed proposal by the IS faculty review committee is required in order to declare the Independent Scholars major.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students will

1. Demonstrate a beginning comprehension of the academic disciplines and methods of inquiry relevant to each student's proposed area of study.
2. Apply perspective-taking techniques that require understanding, contrasting, and critically evaluating evidence and arguments from multiple scholarly perspectives.
3. Identify and frame questions, topics, and problems in ways that cross-cut and integrate lines of inquiry.
4. Integrate approaches and methods from relevant areas of study to construct
 - a guiding question that each student will pursue in the Independent Scholars major
 - a proposal outlining the importance of the guiding question
 - a working curriculum that includes course work and extracurricular plans
5. Demonstrate critical thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, project development/time management skills, intellectual independence, academic responsibility, and the ability to navigate complex organizations.

Requirements & student evaluation

Attendance and engagement – Engaged attendance is expected. Several times during the semester we will have guest speakers or workshops. Further, students are expected to demonstrate their intellectual curiosity, research skills, and academic independence by sharing

and developing their work with their classmates. Engaged contributions to the class will be assessed as “intellectual contributions to the course.”

Journal and portfolio – Students will respond to regularly assigned prompts via short journal contributions. Students will also create a portfolio to allow class members to view material students deem important to their independent scholars work. While journal and portfolio work constitute assignments, the level of effort put into them will also be assessed when determining “intellectual contributions to the course.”

Readings – Independent reading is vital to the creation of a coherent area of inquiry; to this end, students will develop and begin working on an individualized reading list, which will form the basis for some assignments. In addition, some readings may be added by instructors during the semester. It is the student's responsibility to come to class having read all assigned readings. Reading comprehension, as demonstrated in journal entries, portfolio work, and in-class discussions, will be assessed as “intellectual contributions to the course.”

Assignments and due dates – Assignments in addition to the journal responses and due dates will be established in class in response to the demands of the individualized projects. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with professors and keep up with assignments and due dates. The final exam date will be the last time to turn in all assignments for this course.

Grades – final grades will be assigned according to the following weighted criteria.

Attendance	10%
Intellectual contributions to the course	20%
Reading list	10%
Assignments	20%
Proposal	40%

Grades will be assigned as A=94-100; A-=90-93; B+=87-89; B=84-86; B-=80-83; C+=77-79; C=74-76; C-=70-73; D+=67-69; D=64-66; D-=60-63; F=0-59.

Committee review -- a faculty oversight committee consisting of the IND 200 instructors and others will evaluate the completed proposals at the end of the semester to determine whether the student should proceed in the Independent Scholars major. The committee will assess whether the proposal

- demonstrates that the student has researched, defined, justified, and revised a unique interdisciplinary domain of inquiry, framed around a guiding question that is intellectual in nature and is clearly situated in historical, cultural, and scholarly context.
- contains a plan for coursework, independent research, and experiential learning that will allow the student to pursue this inquiry in a thorough and feasible manner.
- is not better carried out within an existing department at JMU. In part, this will be demonstrated by how well the student situates their guiding questions in relation to existing disciplinary approaches, and also by a balanced distribution of relevant coursework from key disciplines.
- includes a curriculum that meets course requirements of the major and also is dynamic, i.e., moving from foundational courses to attain greater depth and complexity.

- justifies choice of courses according to the questions they address or the concepts, content, methods, skills, or other knowledge appropriate to the inquiry that they provide.
- demonstrates the interconnectedness of planned coursework, independent research, workshop courses, and experiential learning, which includes a discussion of the overarching intellectual goals of inquiry.

Academic Honesty/Honor Code

All work must comply with the JMU Honor Code (<http://www.jmu.edu/honor>). Violations will be reported to the Honor Council. Students may discuss class content with one another, but students who prepare answers to class assignments together are in violation of the honor code. Please be familiar with JMU's policy on plagiarism, defined as "copying, writing or presenting as one's own the information, ideas or phrasing of another person without proper acknowledgment of the true source." When making references to the ideas of others, it is essential to provide proper attribution and citation; failing to do so is considered academically dishonest, as is copying or paraphrasing someone else's work.

Add/Drop/Withdraw Deadlines

Students are responsible for registering for classes and verifying their class schedules on e-campus. The deadline for dropping and/or adding a fall semester class on e-campus is Tuesday, September 4. The deadline to withdraw with a "W" grade is Thursday, October 25.

Special Accommodations

Students in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with Disability Services in Student Success Center 1202. Students who are eligible for accommodations should provide a current Access Plan from Disability Services and review the plan with me. Accommodations such as exam administration are not provided retroactively, so early planning is necessary. See the Disability Services website, (<http://www.jmu.edu/ods/index.shtml>) and schedule an appointment with me.

Religious Accommodations

All faculty are required to give reasonable accommodations to students requesting them on grounds of religious observation. The faculty member determines what accommodations are appropriate for his/her course. Students should notify the faculty by no later than the end of the Drop-Add period the first week of the semester of potential scheduled absences and determine with the instructor if mutually acceptable alternative methods exist for completing the missed classroom time, lab or activity. Contact the [Office of Equal Opportunity](#) at (540) 568-6991 if you have additional questions.

Attendance Policy and Conduct

Regular attendance is required. If you must miss a class, notify me ahead of time and contact a classmate for notes and assignment information. I do not provide material for missed classes. Missing more than one class will affect your grade as detailed above.

Inclement Weather Policy:

James Madison University is primarily a self-contained campus with a large number of residential students requiring a variety of support services, regardless of inclement weather conditions or emergency situations. For the safety and well-being of its students and employees, the university may

close or limit its services based on inclement weather or other emergencies. Refer to the following sources for information on closings or delays:

- JMU Weather Line: (540) 433-5300
- JMU radio station 1610AM
- [JMU's home page](#)
- Area radio and television stations
- JMU Office of Public Safety, who in turn is responsible for announcements on Emergency Notification System

When the university is closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies, all classes are cancelled.

General outline of schedule

Weeks 1-5: Chamberlin. **Integrative thinking.** You will

- define an interdisciplinary area of inquiry.
- explore approaches to integrative thinking and interdisciplinary scholarship.
- explore options for courses within the JMU course catalog.
- generate a first draft of the proposal

Weeks 6-10: Linder. **Independence.** You will

- revise your proposal, incorporating feedback from instructors and peers.
- develop research, communication, and presentation skills
- explore questions of evidence within your area of inquiry.
- identify experiential learning/study abroad programs/internships related to your independent research

Weeks 11-16: Frana. **Professional communities:** You will

- explore how to be a professional, including identifying and connecting with organizations, professional communities, and peers.
- identify workshops needed to develop skills in research, communication
- initiate portfolio development
- produce a final draft of your proposal.

Weekly Schedule:

Week one Aug 31	Introduction to the major: Ideas and the Area of Inquiry.
Week two Sept 4-6	Integrative Thinking. Tuesday: Assignment 1: view TED Talk "Why bees are disappearing" Due: Journal Response 1. Discussion: the statement of purpose. Thursday: Due: Statement of Purpose. In-class exercise: Truth claims and evidence. Discussion: the reading list.
Week three Sept 11-13	Integrative Thinking Tuesday: Read: Articles from your reading list. Due: Journal Response 2. Tuesday and Thursday: In-class exercise: presentations.
Week four Sept 18-20	Integrative Thinking. Tuesday: Read: "Thinking Across Disciplines and Perspectives," by Matthew Miller and Veronica Boix-Mansilla, <i>GoodWork Project Report Series no. 27</i> . Due: Journal Response 3. Thursday: In-class exercise: Mind Mapping your area of inquiry (bubbl.us). Discussion: the proposal.
Week five Sept 25-27	Integrative Thinking. Tuesday: Read: https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/a-mutable-cloud-on-dark-ecology-and-confessions-of-a-recovering-environmentalist-and-other-essays/ . Due: Journal Response 4. Discussion: grappling with debate and conflict. Thursday: Read: Articles from your reading list. Due: Journal response 5. Discussion: planning a self-designed curriculum.
Week six Oct 2-4	Integrative Thinking. Tuesday: Due: course plan. In-class: work on proposal. Thursday: Due: Proposal draft 1.
Week seven Oct 9-11	Independence. Tuesday, in class, create concept maps to explore independence, and use these maps to create behavioral markers of independence. Thursday, demonstrate independence in some way relevant to your proposal. Meet with faculty to discuss feedback on first proposal draft.
Week eight Oct 16-18	Independence – Tuesday, in class, explore notions of evidence across disciplines. Thursday, in class, identify orthodox types of evidence found in your Area of Inquiry, and explore how unorthodox types of evidence might be incorporated into your Area of Inquiry.
Week nine Oct 23-25	Independence – Tuesday, Kurt Davies to discuss opportunities to develop independence through prestigious scholarship applications. Thursday, Write personal statement as discussed by K. Davies.

Week ten

Oct 30-Nov 1 Independence – **Due Tuesday**, Journal reflection about how to incorporate study abroad/experiential learning into your curriculum. **Tuesday**, in class, introduction to study abroad/experiential learning opportunities. **Thursday**, demonstrate independence by exploring study abroad/experiential learning opportunities. Discussion of curriculum choices as enrollment approaches. **Due Thursday**, Proposal draft 2.

Week eleven

Nov 6-8 Professional communities – **Tuesday**, in class, reports/presentations on individual progress. **Thursday**, reflecting on library and online research resources and relevant bibliographic tools. Journal reflection due.

Nov 13-15 Week twelve: Professional communities – **Tuesday** and **Thursday**, Building an online portfolio and presence. Visit by Digicomm Center Media Fellow. See award-winning examples of portfolios at <https://www.jmu.edu/digicomm/portfolio-gallery.shtml>. Journal reflection due.

Nov 20-22 Week thirteen: Thanksgiving Break (no class)

Nov 27-29 Week fourteen: Professional communities – Preparing for a professional academic conference. **Tuesday**, discuss various types of academic communities and conferences, including VCHC and SRHC. **Thursday**, conference abstracts due (post as journal reflection).

Dec 4-6 Week fifteen: Professional communities – **Tuesday**, in class, communicating evidence visually and ethically. Read ch. 15 of Booth's *Craft of Research*. First iteration of online portfolio must be launched and shared in our Canvas classroom by **Thursday** this week.

Dec 11-13 Week sixteen: no class meeting. **Final Proposal due.**