

We propose to guide our students through a map of knowledge and inquiry that leads them from the Discovery of Scholarship through Scholarly Inquiry to a final research project that makes them Producers of Scholarship (See <http://oscar.gmu.edu/fac-staff/Mapping.cfm>). In this manner, we support and create an active dialog that promotes learning as an activity that is related to topics of interest and relevance, while at the same time demystifying academia as a bastion of privilege. In the following paragraphs we will describe the specific steps and activities that we will use:

Discovery of Scholarship

First, students will go out into the community and gather information about bilingualism. In the first activity, students will use place-based Apps such as SWARM to explore and document the local linguistic landscape via check-ins and photos, generating a map of bilingualism in Salem. The originality in using these Apps is to create assignments that will expand on them and engage our students in place-based learning with the local community. SWARM®, for example, would serve as a great venue to examine the local “linguistic landscape” of Salem. The study of linguistic landscapes is a field within sociolinguistics, which constitutes research. Second, students will engage in service learning at Latinx-serving organizations such as local schools.. Finally, students will conduct an oral history with a Spanish speaker in the community using the StoryCorps App to explore attitudes towards bilingualism. Through these activities, students will become aware that experiential learning constitutes scholarship.

Scholarly Inquiry

We will combine the previous fieldwork in the community with library research by discussing secondary readings¹ to help contextualize and explain students’ findings. Students will analyze their experiences to be able to distinguish between personal beliefs and evidence; explain the implications of their discovery as a form of new knowledge and what impact it has on them and society; and understand how these articles constitute knowledge and transmit it within a discipline. We will conduct “fishbowl” and “ji(sm)19.ck2(a)10.9(d)

and impel action through its social impact. (See <http://assessment.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Students-as-Scholars-Master-Rubric-Updated-July-2013.pdf>)

Data and statistics regarding retention support the importance and necessity for this curricular innovation. According to data provided by Michael Moon, Senior Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Institutional Research in the College of Liberal Arts, the population of Hispanic/Latinx students has almost doubled in the period from fall 2009 to fall 2014: from 7 percent to 12 or 13 percent, or from about 40 students per year to about 70. This increase is partly due to a tripling in numbers of students from California. We are retaining this population of Hispanic/Latinx students equal to that of White students over this period. The retention rate of Hispanic/Latinx students has persisted at a higher rate than have students in other traditionally underrepresented ethnic groups. In order to keep and increase these encouraging numbers we must actively mentor and model for students through our classes for retention and success. In the same