Guide to Proposing an INQ 300 Intellectual Inquiry

**Overview**  
As the capstone of the Intellectual Inquiry program, INQ 300 should ask students to draw upon many of the skills developed in earlier INQ courses and also to incorporate knowledge and skills developed in their major programs. Students work in group to propose a solution or response to a specific problem. The course is focused first on the project process, not new content, per se. For most of the course, the instructor serves as a manager and guide to the students’ independent work.

**Topic Selection**  
Any discipline can work for INQ 300. The key is that students must be able to identify specific problems within the general topic for which they can propose a specific solution. Because the students lack specific content background, instructors should avoid topics that will require too much technical content knowledge. We have a couple of weeks at most to lay the content foundation. Students are drawing primarily on skills of research and analysis. Quantitative reasoning skills should be required in the large project. Note that QR skills include gathering or selecting data, representing it, interpreting it, using it in decision-making, and addressing uncertainty or significance.

**Requirement Highlights**

Each INQ 300 course will:

1. Require students to work in small groups to research and develop a proposal concerning a concept, approach, or solution to a problem that will be presented in a formal defense.
2. Pose a question or topic in such a way that students can draw on information and perspectives from all three divisions, encouraging research and creative application of facts to a contemporary problem so as to arrive at, propose, and defend a solution. Faculty should be deliberate in developing courses that allow students to draw from their previous work.
3. Include a number of intellectually rigorous readings, along with any other types of source materials relevant to the instructors’ disciplines.
4. Ask students to complete four kinds of tasks. The particular way these tasks are completed is up to the instructor:
   * Application of previous work to the course topic
   * Individual Writing
   * Group Assignment (may incorporate individual work)
   * Oral defense of group assignment.
5. Require Hacker’s *A Writer’s Reference*, or *Easy Writer* by Lunsford

**Learning Outcomes**  
All INQ 300 sections share these learning outcomes. You must put them in your syllabus. You may supplement these with additional LOs specific to your content or goals. You may rephrase the common LOs if you ensure that you do not lose their essence.

1. Students will apply their research findings to a formal project addressing the course topic question and will successfully present this proposal in an oral defense.
2. Students will write well-organized and clearly reasoned papers both individually and with a group. Papers will have clear theses, effective organization, and a minimum of sentence-level errors.
3. Students will contribute to meaningful, effective discussion and collaborative work that includes expressing, listening to, and debating ideas.
4. Students will be able to apply critical thinking and quantitative reasoning skills in a meaningful way.
5. Students will make explicit, meaningful connections between past course work (both in the core and in their majors) and contemporary issues.
6. Students will demonstrate understanding of a contemporary issue or problem, an awareness of the types of inquiry needed to understand it, and the resources required for addressing it.

For Global Perspective courses:

1. One or both of these outcomes
   1. Analyze selected issues or events by applying cultural frames of reference or perspectives.
   2. Analyze selected issues or events in terms of global interconnections and interdependencies

**Application of skills and knowledge from previous courses**  
Learning Outcomes 4 and 5 explicitly require that students use skills developed in previous coursework. Many instructors use an early assignment that requires students to inventory these skills (and sometimes content) in relation to INQ 300 and the course project. Such work can help build teams and member roles. Note that quantitative reasoning is specifically highlighted in the learning outcomes. Students should be pressed include quantitative data in their analysis and to support their solution.

Although students have received prior instruction in research, writing, and citations, they will need information on the sources, styles, and format appropriate to this project and its discipline. Many instructors partner with a librarian to work with the students on locating and evaluating source materials. Please provide instruction on the incorporation of source material and proper citations. Give feedback on this skill long before the final project paper.

Instructors are encouraged to refer students to the webpage on oral presentations: <https://www.roanoke.edu/oralpresentations>

**Project Process**  
Starting with the course topic, students work in groups to define a problem, conduct research, analyze, propose and defend a solution. Moving from a general topic to a specific problem and solution proposal is challenging for many students. Requiring them to choose a specific audience for that proposal often helps. Most of the instructor’s time in the second half of the course is spent managing the groups and ensuring progress. Instructors rarely spend time delivering content after midterm. Final projects will be rubric scored for Problem Definition, Knowledge & Research, Process & Execution, Analysis, and Conclusions. Groups will require guidance through the process as well as specific feedback. Many instructors use class time after midterm exclusively to meet with groups, receive interim reports, provide feedback on drafts, etc. Instructors provide structure and feedback for groups’ independent work. Instructors are urged to build in multiple intermediate deadlines and deliverables.

**Oral Defense**  
At the oral defense, student groups should detail their problem and solution, but also be expected to respond to substantive questions. Students should have opportunities to practice answering probing questions prior to the defense. Many instructors assign a group of students to read the presenters’ paper and serve as a knowledgeable audience to generate questions.

**Tests and quizzes**   
A final exam is NOT required for INQ 300. Many instructors use the exam period for some of the oral defenses.

**Assessment**  
All projects are collected electronically. The instructor scores them on the INQ 300 Project Rubric. In addition, each instructor assesses either oral presentation or writing skills. Rubrics can be found at <https://www.roanoke.edu/inside/a-z_index/intellectual_inquiry/inq_faculty_resources>

**Summary of items to include in your syllabus**

* Your section description
* The common learning outcomes for INQ 300 (earlier in this document)
* All of the stuff required in any syllabus, see <https://www.roanoke.edu/inside/a-z_index/academic_affairs/faculty_information/course_proposals_and_syllabi>
* A detailed daily schedule that includes
  + Readings with some indication of length
  + Due dates for assignments, drafts, etc.
  + Clear indication of timelines for the large project, intermediate deliverables, etc.
  + Clear indication of how the instructor will monitor process and provide feedback

**INQ 300 Course Proposal Form** rev September 2021

Please delete any Guidelines pages and save just the Proposal pages as a separate document. This proposal form and the course syllabus are then uploaded at <https://www.roanoke.edu/inside/a-z_index/academic_affairs/faculty_information/course_proposals_and_syllabi>

1. **Name of person completing this form**: Click here to enter text.
2. **Section Title:** Click here to enter text.
3. **Section description for the COL including a central question or questions to be addressed in the course. Students are the primary audience for this description. Do not include details so specific that they are likely to change from year to year.** **Maximum length = 150 words.**  
   Click here to enter text.
4. **Anticipated instructor(s):** Click here to enter text.

**Specific requirements of INQ 300**

1. **In INQ 300, students must propose solutions to contemporary problems. Give examples of a couple of specific problems related to your course topic for which students could propose solutions.**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Students should be asked to use skills developed in earlier INQ courses (quantitative reasoning and methodologies of multiple disciplines) to address aspects of contemporary issues. How will this happen in your course?**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Students work in groups on their large project. Describe how you will prepare students for this group work. What policies or plans do you have to address issues that arise related to group work? How will you manage or monitor the progress of groups as they work on their large projects?**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Consult project process information on the Guidelines document. Describe briefly how you will lead students through major phases of the project described there and addressed on the rubric.**

Click here to enter text.

1. **The large project requires an oral defense. Describe how you plan to run these defenses. How will you prepare students for an oral defense?**

Click here to enter text.

1. **INQ 300 can be structured in many ways to accomplish its main goals (explore a contemporary issue, prepare students for their large projects, and then mentor students through those projects). Describe the general structure of your course and how that structure will let you accomplish the major goals of INQ 300.**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Feel free to add any additional information or comments you would like to share with GEC.**

Click here to enter text.

**Global requirement—complete this section only if you are requesting Global Designation**

1. **Which Global Perspective learning outcome will this course address?**

Choose an item.

1. **Describe assignments and pedagogies that help students develop the analysis skills needed for the specific the learning outcome you chose. Be specific in your description and the placement of these assignments in the course schedule. BE SURE THAT THESE ASSIGNMENTS SHOW IN YOUR SYLLABUS.**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Describe the assignment that will be used in this course that will allow the faculty member to assess this learning outcome.**

Click here to enter text.