

GST Advanced Interdisciplinary Seminars: General Application Tips

Tips for Proposing and Developing Your Course

The following tips were developed in response to General Studies Council's reviews of previous applications and student feedback.

General Comment: The committee is expecting a fully-developed proposal with a complete syllabus and hopefully plenty of examples of reading and writing tasks and creative pedagogies. The more you can outline, the more we'll be able to understand exactly what you plan for the class and the more we will be able to help you revise and strengthen your course if it is approved.

Advanced Subject Matter	How does your course help students investigate advanced subject matter in-depth? We suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A fully developed proposal, including the required readings for the semester, as well as outlines of writing assignments. These details will allow us to better understand your approach to advanced subject matter.• Depth of information more than volume/breadth of material.
Interdisciplinary Approach	How does your course introduce and support both interdisciplinary material and interdisciplinary approaches to inquiry? We suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strong case for how your approach draws from many disciplines and integrates knowledge outside your primary academic department.• Assignment guidelines that foreground interdisciplinary expectations for research and writing.• Discussions that help students understand interdisciplinary fields' values.
Effective Teaching	How does your course integrate a variety of pedagogical approaches? We suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Precise descriptions about the variety and scope of pedagogies you will use in the class. GST Council members represent a wide range of academic departments and can suggest approaches that may blend well with your own, if we can determine how you will be sparking students' interests in the course.• Seminars that present a variety of classroom activities and instruction methods.• Group work that engages students in the learning process.• Opportunities for students to provide input and participation during lectures (including those which use PowerPoint).• Question and answer sessions in which students respond to classmates' questions.

<p>Writing Intensive Methodology</p>	<p>How does your course incorporate writing-intensive instruction and support students in their development of advanced writing capabilities? We suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific instances of writing assignments that speak both to the depth and breadth of writing encouraged in your classroom. We have sent proposals back only to find that the faculty member was well equipped with both writing-to-learn and learning-to-write activities. These opportunities were just not communicated to the council well enough for us to accept the proposal in its initial form. • In-class writing process activities: brainstorming questions, practicing inquiry strategies, drafting sections of larger projects, obtaining feedback from peers, revising for content and structure, and editing for sentence style. • Built-in due dates for topic ideas, research logs, and drafts to support students continued development of a sophisticated writing process. • Explicit expectations for writing conventions in the interdisciplinary area of study.
<p>Advanced Critical Thinking</p>	<p>How does your course support advanced critical thinking? We suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear statements of your objectives and goals for the course. We should be able to understand the thinking that will go on during the semester through your objectives and goals for the course. • Specific and clear assignments that measure attainment of your course goals and objectives. • Sufficient time to develop projects. Allow time to plan and revise projects before the final due date.

To suggest additions to these tip sheets, please send your comments to the Director of General Studies who will share them with General Studies Council for further consideration.