

GST Advanced Interdisciplinary Seminars: Summer/Winter Courses

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.

Advanced Subject Matter	<p>How does your course help students investigate advanced subject matter in-depth? We suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of information more than volume/breadth of material. • Homework assignments that expand topics covered during class time.
Interdisciplinary Approach	<p>How does your course introduce and support both interdisciplinary material and interdisciplinary approaches to inquiry? We suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment guidelines that foreground interdisciplinary expectations for research and writing. • Discussions that help students understand interdisciplinary fields' values.
Effective Teaching	<p>How does your course integrate a variety of pedagogical approaches? We suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars that present a variety of classroom activities and instruction methods. • Group work that engages students in the learning process. For instance, each group member could specialize in a specific area within a broad theme and then teach other group members about their particular area through small presentations or collaboration during or outside of class. • Opportunities to provide input and participation during lectures (including those which use PowerPoint). • Question and answer sessions in which students respond to classmates' questions.
Writing Intensive Methodology	<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"> • 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, even during an intensive short-term course. Faculty can reinforce the importance of these writing stages by assigning a small portion of the project grade to process activities (i.e., credit or no credit for completing process steps). • Explicit expectations for writing conventions in the interdisciplinary area of study.

Advanced Critical Thinking	How does your course support advanced critical thinking? We suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time to plan and revise projects before final due date. Typically, one or two large projects—with integrated writing process activities like research logs, draft due dates, and peer response—would be adequate for short term courses.• Excerpts of movies that facilitate analysis and discussion. Students prefer viewing full-length movies outside of class for homework.
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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.