

To: All Arts and Sciences faculty

Fm: Susan Birren
Dean of Arts and Sciences

I invite you to submit proposals to designate your course as fulfilling a General Education requirement.

Background: Brandeis undergraduates must satisfactorily complete one non-Western and Comparative Studies course, one Quantitative Reasoning course, one Writing-Intensive course, and either a second Writing-Intensive course or an Oral Communication course, in addition to other writing, foreign language, and school distribution requirements.

Goals: By designating your course as fulfilling one of these requirements, you can facilitate and broaden students' choices regarding such requirements, gain more students seeking the specialized skills you teach; receive help from each of the oversight committees on specialized pedagogies; help clarify the skills taught across the undergraduate curriculum and better advertise to the Brandeis community your teaching methods and orientation.

Submission process: Following are brief descriptions of the four requirements and the approval process for each program. At <http://www.brandeis.edu/das/programs/ustudies> you will find more information regarding guidelines and forms.

Non-Western and Comparative Studies: This requirement is designed to encourage students to explore societies, cultures, and experiences beyond those of the Western tradition. NWC courses acquaint students with world views, indigenous intellectual traditions, historical narratives, and social institutions that have developed largely outside European society and its North American transplants. By examining some particular culture, society, or region of the non-Western world (such as those of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Oceania), or by systematically comparing a range of values and institutions across cultural boundaries, students broaden their understanding of human achievements and potentialities beyond the Western heritage. If you are offering a course that meets the program's criteria and objectives, please send the course syllabus via e-mail to Kristen Caporiccio (kcapor@brandeis.edu).

Oral Communication: This requirement aims to enhance students' abilities to communicate and listen effectively in a range of contexts, to critically evaluate orally presented information and arguments, and to consider specific techniques for using language as a communication tool. Oral communication courses include at least two opportunities per course to develop and practice oral communication skills through a wide range of possible assignments, and assessment of students' communication skills through feedback by instructor and classmates. The OC course proposal form is available at <http://www.brandeis.edu/das/programs/ustudies/OC.html>; send this form and your course syllabus to Irene Heier (iheier@brandeis.edu).

Quantitative Reasoning: This requirement develops students' abilities to collect, summarize, and analyze numerical data; to operationalize abstract concepts; and to critique the accuracy and soundness of conclusions based on data or on mathematical models. These courses vary widely in the skills that are emphasized, but usually include one or more of the following: a. learning to read, construct, interpret, and evaluate tables, graphs, and charts; b. developing quantitative measures of physical, behavioral, or social phenomena; c. using mathematical models to express causal relationships and to explore the implications of changed assumptions or proposed solutions to problems in the physical or social world; d. collecting and organizing numerical data from various sources; e. testing hypotheses using experimental

or statistical controls; or f. assessing the limitations of quantitative research. Please submit a syllabus and a brief statement describing how the course will teach quantitative reasoning skills to Kristen Caporiccio (kcapor@brandeis.edu) and attach a list of "quantitative reasoning assignments" that provide enough specifics to allow the Committee to understand what students will be asked to do.

Writing-Intensive (WI): Writing-intensive courses involve frequent writing assignments (i.e., 18-20 pages, or 4500-5000 words), opportunities for rewriting based on instructor feedback, and some writing instruction. The writing can be a mix of formal and informal, including drafts, journals, response papers, and thesis-driven papers; "revision" can include paper proposals, preliminary outlines, writing that count as drafts used in peer editing, or a paper's opening pages submitted for response. For more information and a link to the WI application form, please visit <http://www.brandeis.edu/writingprogram/instructorsfaculty/intensive/gettingwiapproved.html> or write Dawn Skorczewski at dawnskor@brandeis.edu.

For further information, please feel free to contact the chair or members of each of the oversight committees, available at www.brandeis.edu/das/programs/ustudies.