To: Faculty

From: Jennifer Cleary, Chair, Oral Communication Curricular Oversight Committee

Date: 2014-2015

The Oral Communication Committee invites faculty to propose courses for inclusion in the program for the 2014-2015 academic year. Please submit your syllabus and use the attached syllabus cover sheet to help the Committee assess whether the assignments and instruction contained in your course fulfill OC requirements.

The Oral Communication requirement aims at enhancing students' ability and comfort in communicating and listening effectively in a range of contexts, to critically evaluate orally presented information and arguments, and to gain skills in specific techniques for using language as a communication tool.

The OC requirement: In addition to the UWS requirement, all students are required to complete one additional Writing-Intensive (WI) course, and one other course from either the WI or OC components. OC courses may be offered in any discipline; courses numbered 90-99 are excluded. A course may be certified as both writing intensive and as an oral communication course, although students may use it to fulfill only one of the requirements.

Requirements - More specifically, OC courses must:

1. Require students to make two distinct oral presentations of at least 5 minutes each, prepared in advance in the student's own words, and dealing with content related to the course material and goals. Examples of assignments include an individual oral presentation, managing a classroom discussion, or participating in a debate or classroom panel. Appropriate content might include: describing one’s own research and the data sought and found; discussing or presenting one’s own artistic creation; presenting an original analysis of an artistic work; teaching a section from a lesson plan; presenting a paper or poster presentation of research/ideas; framing different perspectives or approaches found in the relevant scholarly literature; summarizing a scientist's research and analyzing its standing in the field; or discussing the achievements of an artist or scholar. Examples of faculty approaches to instruction and assessment can be found on our website: [http://www.brandeis.edu/das/programs/ustudies/OC.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/das/programs/ustudies/OC.html)

2. Require faculty to offer specific instruction in OC skills (before the presentation), and to provide feedback (after the presentation), with clear standards of assessment. Grading oral communication skills is optional. The instruction might take the form of ten minutes of lecture on techniques of effective presentation, and/or on methods and standards of providing peer feedback. The focus of instruction and feedback MUST be on aural as well as oral skills, and may address topics such as appropriate style and effective delivery; small group interaction; issues of nervousness; appropriate use of visual aids; and the organization and presentation of complex arguments.

OC committee members: Jennifer Cleary (Theater) Chair, Dan Kryder (Politics), Sophia Malamud (Computer Science), and Jim Morris (Biology).
Oral Communication Course Proposal

Return to Jennifer Cleary at jacleary@brandeis.edu.

Name: ___________________________ Dept: ___________________________

Phone: __________ Email: ______________________ Mail stop: ____________

Please provide summary information and a syllabus for each course you are proposing.

Course ID: __________ Title: __________________________________________

Please provide the following in your proposal:

1. Please describe how oral communication skills factor into your learning goals for the course. (In addition, this information should also be included in the course syllabus.)

2. Please describe specifically how you will teach oral communication skills in your course. Attach any handouts you may use. ***Please note: we are looking for how presentation skills (i.e., intonation, gestures, facial expression, audience connection, eye contact, physical comfort, use of visual aids, and approaches to nervousness) are taught, not just about the content required in a presentation assignment. These skills should be at the center of the instruction.

3. Please describe two oral communication assignments listed in your syllabus and their length and nature.

4. Please describe specifically the structured feedback you will provide to your students. This includes peer feedback forms as well. If you use a rubric, please attach it here. Please note that presentation skills should not just be one line item on your rubrics. You may refer to the Evaluation Forms on the Oral Communication website for examples:
http://www.brandeis.edu/das/programs/ustudies/Oral%20Communications%20Resources.html.