Task Force on General Education

Proposal for a New General Education Curriculum

September 5, 2017
Amended by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee-October 6, 2017

Executive Summary
The Task Force on General Education has worked since May 2016 to define a new General Education curriculum for Brandeis students. Synthesizing ideas, information and feedback from Brandeis students, faculty, staff and alumni, as well as approaches taken by other universities, the Task Force has defined a set of knowledge and skills that will prepare our students to navigate and succeed in a rapidly changing world.

The Task Force believes that upon graduating, a Brandeis student should:

- Understand the nature of evidence, be able to assess its validity and impact, make sound evidence-based arguments and apply them to an assessment of contemporary problems and to the creation of new knowledge
- Think critically, communicate effectively, assess and manipulate quantitative information, understand historical context, and operate effectively within a digital world
- Acquire the broad knowledge, skills, experiences, flexibility and resilience required to navigate and succeed in chosen careers, engage in civil discourse, and contribute to community, national and global relationships
- Understand the meaning and importance of social justice and inclusion in its many forms, including issues of gender, race, ethnicity, the environment and climate justice, and recognize the nature and roots of inequity in the United States and the world

Working from these core goals, the Task Force formulated five themes that frame a set of requirements to allow students to achieve benchmarks for gaining the interdisciplinary perspectives and specific kinds of understanding that are the hallmarks of a liberal arts education. Special attention has been paid to integrating requirements within and across the themes and across the four-year program to encourage students to build field-specific skills and competencies while gaining a broad understanding of fields outside of their area of specialization.

Brandeis First Year Experience: The Brandeis First Year Experience (FYE) aims to build
cohort identity, introduce new students to different disciplinary perspectives, model civil discourse and critical analysis, demonstrate the advantages of participating in the rich intellectual co-curricular life of the university, and emphasize and elevate the importance of core writing skills as a method of communication. Using the University Writing Seminar (UWS) as a framework and cornerstone to teach transferrable writing skills and engage students in “Critical Conversations”, Brandeis professors will model techniques for making arguments, analyzing effective evidence and thoughtfully considering counter-positions. UWS writing assignments will connect to the Critical Conversations component of the FYE, as well as link to experiential opportunities, preferably on campus, to promote meaningful engagement with faculty, students and the Brandeis co-curricular community during the first year.

**Foundational Literacies:** Requirements in Foundational Literacies will allow students to define themselves as writers, communicators, researchers, artists and critical thinkers across the entire liberal arts landscape. Students will gain quantitative reasoning skills in a course designed to enhance analytical skills, including those of statistical analysis. As they progress and specialize in their academic careers, they will expand their core skills in writing, oral communication and a newly defined digital literacy component in their major areas of study. The movement of these requirements into majors and areas of specialization will allow students to gain skills in contexts that will prepare them for success beyond the university.

**Schools of Thought:** Requirements in this theme will allow students to acquire a broad array of interests and an appreciation of different approaches even as they gain the specialized skills and knowledge of their major. The Schools of Thought requirements reflect the university’s affirmation that all liberal arts graduates should become broadly acquainted with the perspectives, insights, and methodologies of a variety of disciplines. Students will complete at least one designated course in each of Brandeis’s four Schools of Arts and Sciences: Creative Arts, Humanities, Science, and Social Science. Courses counting for the Schools of Thought requirement will be curated by the appropriate school councils to ensure the inclusion of core methodologies and disciplinary approaches.

**Health, Wellness, and Life Skills:** The Health, Wellness and Life Skills requirements will provide students with the tools to successfully balance and succeed in social, professional, community, and global commitments. Students will complete this new *non-credit* requirement (replacing the previous Physical Education requirement) by completing three modules or course equivalents, including one in *Navigating Health and Safety* (which includes required instruction in alcohol and drug education and sexual assault prevention, with other module options in self-defense, CPR, First Aid, etc.), one in *Mind and Body Balance* (with instruction in areas such as physical fitness, nutrition, stress management, faith and spirituality), and a third in either of those two areas or in *Life Skills* (with modules on such topics as financial literacy, career development, team building, negotiation skills, crisis management, reducing your carbon footprint, and/or other skills needed by students beyond the academy). Students who complete these requirements will gain confidence and resiliency by learning how to navigate difficult and potentially dangerous situations, gaining a solid foundation in the skills of everyday life, and establishing productive habits.
Global Engagement: In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, Brandeis students are encouraged to actively explore and analyze social, political, cultural, and linguistic diversity and difference in the United States and in the world, as well as learn about issues of climate change, environmental justice and sustainability. Students will take courses in three areas. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Studies in the US (DEIS-US) courses will prepare students to engage with dynamics, developments, divisions and inequalities within US society, and to explore the historical and contemporary experiences, interests, and perspectives of groups and institutions that have shaped life in the United States. In the Difference and Justice in the World (DJW) requirement, students will focus on the diversity of the human experience from global or transnational perspectives by engaging in the study of the histories, arts, cultures, politics, economies, environments and/or religions of peoples outside the US. Extending our students’ ability to engage globally, the World Languages and Cultures (WLC) requirement will provide an “intermediate” proficiency (the equivalent level of a third semester of language instruction achieved through placement, exemption, or courses) in speaking, writing and reading and comprehension in a language other than English. This requirement will enhance an understanding of the challenges of cross-cultural communication, grant access to diverse bodies of knowledge through courses in languages other than English, and provide skills needed to communicate with friends, colleagues, and strangers in work, travel, and community settings.

These requirements define a new General Education curriculum at Brandeis to be implemented starting in the 2019-2020 academic year. In completing these requirements students will take a maximum of 10-13 courses (depending on the number of language courses needed), although a number of courses will count for more than one general education or major requirement and the number of courses taken by most students will be significantly lower than the maximum. Specific goals for each requirement and specific content needed to achieve those goals will be articulated and refined by designated faculty committees, which will also work with departments to define field-specific approaches to some requirements. The success of each requirement will be assessed on an ongoing basis and modifications to the requirements will be considered by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Completion of these requirements will provide the general knowledge and critical skills needed for long-term success as our students graduate and navigate the complexities of the modern world.

Introduction
The fundamental premise of liberal arts education in the United States is that the pursuit of expertise in one area is enriched by broader knowledge of a range of subjects. Additionally, the ability to think critically and communicate effectively enhances one’s ability to succeed in the world. Within this model, a successful education binds together practical and theoretical knowledge, including knowledge that improves practice in the economic or commercial world and knowledge pursued as an end in itself. Brandeis, along with our peer institutions, seeks to prepare citizens for roles in a democratic society which respects
and relies upon expertise, and in which citizens are also expected to judge issues intelligently for themselves rather than ceding the entire management of their lives to experts. In achieving these goals a Brandeis education should recognize the importance of curiosity as well as professional credentials, and intellectual freedom as well as technical mastery. In valuing judgment as much as valuing skill, a liberal arts education should allow students to make interdisciplinary connections and provide fertile ground for the kind of creative leap that happens when ideas from two widely separated fields of study fortuitously converge. One of the aims of this integrated approach to the liberal arts education is to provide students with the intellectual flexibility and resilience to succeed in an ever-changing career landscape. But this integrated approach aims also to provide students with the ability to discover and shape those experiences of meaning, value, and wonder that are essential parts of a full life.

In designing a new plan for general education at Brandeis, the Task Force on General Education* has considered the importance of disciplinary knowledge, new approaches to the integration of different disciplines, the need for new areas of expertise in a digital and technology-rich world, and cultivation of civic, cultural and environmental awareness and engagement both in the context of the United States and the wider world. We sought to establish a balance between concern with the present and concern with the past, between theory and practice, between foundational literacies and advanced research, between what is explicitly taught and what co-curricular activities nourish. We sought to rethink traditional themes in a way that reflects recent changes in our world, recognizing the need for quantitative and digital competence and skill in different modes of communication. We have broadened some of the curricular concepts we inherited, placing physical education, for instance, in the more general context of health and wellness and other “life skills”. We have sought to encourage a respect for differences of point of view and for civil discourse by designing a series of “Critical Conversations” for first-year students on issues of public concern. In keeping with Brandeis’ longstanding commitment to social justice, we have modified our requirements to engage social justice at the world scale, to address issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity in the United States, and to recognize that environmental literacy provides an important new avenue for considering social justice at the national and transnational level. We have also re-envisioned the language requirement to place it in the context of a broader global engagement. In addressing these issues, we affirm Brandeis’ traditional commitment to face-to-face instruction and to involving our students in research and the production of knowledge and honoring the interplay of research and teaching that was in our founders’ minds when they first envisioned Brandeis as a small research University.

Process
The Task Force on General Education was appointed in the spring of 2016 and has been working since then to devise a set of recommendations for a new General Education curriculum at Brandeis. It has now been over 23 years since Brandeis has fully revised its General Education curriculum. Our decision to review these requirements recognizes that changes in society, culture and the environment (i.e. emerging science and technology,
social and political upheavals at home and across the globe, the challenges of climate change, and dramatic shifts in wealth and opportunity) affect the knowledge and skills needed by our students for a successful career and a successful life. Our starting point for meeting these challenges is our understanding of Brandeis as a mid-sized research university with a focus on liberal arts undergraduate education and with a commitment to social justice, inclusion and the use of our knowledge to repair the world. Consequently, we framed this proposal for a new General Education curriculum to prepare our future students for the world that they will live in.

Our process has included gathering information about a variety of approaches to General Education, examining requirements and changes at other institutions, and surveying (see Table) our own students, faculty, staff and alumni about our current requirements and their recommendations for the future. Over 1400 undergraduates responded to our survey, generating more than 360 pages of comments on the future of general education at Brandeis; in addition, we received responses from over 1000 of almost 5000 alumni, randomly selected from the classes of 2001-2015. We also gathered data about our students and their paths once they leave the university.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Surveyed</th>
<th>Number Surveyed</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Students</td>
<td>3,818</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>726</td>
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<td>Alumni</td>
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<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Students</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many different viewpoints emerged from our surveys. Overall, the value of having a broad range of requirements was supported. Early conversations of the Task Force focused on issues raised in the surveys, including requests for new requirements (i.e. social justice, environmental literacy, skills and practical applications), requests for changes in our current practices (i.e. increase the relevance of writing and quantitative requirements; increase/decrease/abolish the language requirement), and suggestions that some current requirements be dropped (i.e. Non-Western and Comparative, Physical Education, writing requirements). There were also suggestions that we increase the flexibility of our curriculum overall.

We used the information from the surveys, as well as our assessment of published information and approaches taken at other institutions to, as stated in the charge of the Task Force (see Appendix I), define a new General Education curriculum based on the knowledge, understandings and skills that our students need to be successful and achieve professional and personal satisfaction in their lives beyond Brandeis. We then worked to shape a new curriculum that would provide our students with the tools needed to develop
the intellectual skills and moral resilience to adapt to changing life and world circumstances, and to gain the breadth of perspectives that can best be acquired through a liberal arts education. By the end of the summer of 2016 we articulated five core themes that we refined throughout the 2016-2017 academic year.

The Task Force worked in small subgroups to develop recommendations, and these subgroups reached out to many individuals across campus to seek advice in framing both the overall themes and curricular details. As the overall themes developed we took them to stakeholder groups on campus--Department Chairs, Interdepartmental Program Chairs, Chairs overseeing our current Writing, Quantitative Reasoning, Oral Communication, Foreign Language and Nonwestern and Comparative Studies requirements, the Committee for the Support of Teaching, Creative Arts, Science, Social Science and Humanities Division meetings, members of the Board of Trustees, Undergraduate Departmental Representatives, Library/Student and Enrollment/Academic Services staff, the University Advisory Committee and Integrated Budget and Planning Committee -- to solicit feedback and refine our vision. Four open forums with faculty, staff and students, one with Library staff, and two additional open forums targeted specifically to students provided opportunities for feedback from the broader community. Because of concerns voiced by faculty and students about the complicated logistics and large class sizes of a proposed 21st Century Challenges theme, the Task Force, after lengthy deliberations, revised its proposal to include a new Brandeis First Year Experience, which seeks to engage students in the consideration of evidence and argument in the context of our first year University Writing Seminar.

The Task Force is grateful for the many ideas and thoughtful conversations with faculty, students, staff, alumni and Board members that have emerged over the past year. These interactions have led us to define five themes to structure the General Education requirements for the next generation of Brandeis students. These themes are: The Brandeis First Year Experience; Foundational Literacies; Schools of Thought; Global Engagement; and Health, Wellness and Life Skills. Within these broad themes we address a range of knowledge and skills, and define the specific requirements that will allow our students to think critically, communicate effectively, analyze quantitatively, think historically, and move confidently through a digital world. These skills and understandings will be integrated across the themes, and over the four years of a student’s Brandeis education, in ways that allow students to build competencies and field-specific skills while gaining a broad understanding of the artistic process, scientific and technological advances that have altered the digital landscape, social and cultural differences, and the challenges that we face, now and in the future.

This proposal has been presented to and approved by the AY2016-2017 and the AY2017-2018 Undergraduate Curriculum Committees and, over the fall semester presented to the University Advisory Committee, the Faculty Senate, and the Institutional Planning and Budget Committee. The proposal and related legislation will be presented to the Brandeis faculty, discussed at open forums and voted on at Faculty meetings starting in October 2017. Following faculty approval, the proposal will be presented to and voted on by the Board of Trustees. Approval will be followed by an implementation process of at least a
year with the new requirements being effective for the entering class of AY2019-2020.

Curricular Goals and Themes
The success of Brandeis alumni is measured not only by an initial job or experience following graduation, but by life-long engagement in fulfilling careers, contributions to family and community growth, and understanding and engagement in the rich political, cultural, artistic, and scientific life of the world that we share. This level of engagement requires that our students:

- Understand the nature of evidence, be able to assess its validity and impact, make sound evidence-based arguments and apply them to an assessment of contemporary problems and to the creation of new knowledge
- Think critically, communicate effectively, assess and manipulate quantitative information, understand historical context, and operate effectively within a digital world
- Acquire the broad knowledge, skills, experience, flexibility and resilience required to navigate and succeed in chosen careers, engage in civil discourse, and contribute to community, national and global relationships
- Understand the meaning and importance of social justice and inclusion in its many forms, including issues of gender, race, ethnicity, the environment and climate justice, and recognize the nature and roots of inequity in the United States and the world

The new Brandeis General Education curriculum will provide core knowledge and skills through a set of curricular themes that build through first year experiences and major specializations, while embodying the nature and value of liberal arts education. The features of the new curriculum are outlined below:

The Brandeis First Year Experience
The Brandeis First Year Experience will enhance the current University Writing Seminar (UWS), a requirement already shared by all first year students, with new integrated curricular and co-curricular elements that will introduce them to our outstanding faculty and their disciplinary perspectives and methodologies. Here, as elsewhere in the proposal, we have aimed to enhance the connections among and between various parts of the curriculum. The Brandeis First Year Experience will encourage first year students to participate in the rich co-curricular life of the university, and contribute to building cohort identity.

The UWS will form the core of the new requirement and place the acquisition of essential writing skills in a central context as students see Brandeis faculty engaging in “Critical Conversations” and are introduced to co-curricular opportunities at Brandeis. UWS
teaches transferrable writing skills (defining a thesis, assessing and analyzing evidence, introducing and developing an argument) that students will employ and continue to develop throughout their academic and professional lives. Each current UWS assignment includes pre-writing, peer review, and revision. These assignments include a “close reading” in which the student brings out non-obvious nuances of a prose passage, a “lens essay” in which one particular text and another at a higher level of abstraction (for example, a text which lays out a governing theory, an overarching theme, a larger structure of which the first text presents a part) reflect upon each other and each deepen one’s sense of the meaning of the other, and a research paper in which the student must engage the ongoing scholarly conversation about a text, problem, or theme examined in the course.

One of the UWS assignments will now be linked to required attendance at one of two “Critical Conversations” offered each semester. These Conversations will feature two professors from different divisions, who will discuss contrasting approaches to broad topics such as Climate Change and Environmental Justice, The Meaning of Truth, Health Policy in America, Immigration and the Politics of Race and Racism, The Concept of Time, Life in the Universe or Issues of Authority. Critical Conversation faculty will model how information is analyzed and used to construct arguments as well as how to consider counter arguments. Faculty will also engage with the First Year Experience beyond the evening event by coordinating with UWS faculty and providing opportunities for informal interactions with first year students. The Conversations will connect back to a UWS writing assignment in which students will continue to learn how to assess the quality of an argument and its counter-arguments, model civil discourse and critical analysis, and help students understand the UWS’s relevance. Critical Conversations will be proposed by faculty interested in creating an engaging and meaningful experience with students that extends beyond the initial conversation. Faculty groups and topics will be selected by an oversight committee a year in advance of the offerings.

A Brandeis education should include engagement in the rich array of learning opportunities outside the classroom, and the First Year Experience provides a mechanism for initial participation in the campus community. UWS instructors will link a small writing assignment to a three to five hour out-of-class experiential assignment (for example, attendance of a Brandeis public lecture or science colloquium or creative arts performance or a visit to the Rose Art Museum or other local science/art/history museum; to name only a few), selected to complement their course design. Through these different UWS components students will interact with faculty and with each other and will gain an appreciation of the importance of co-curricular activities in a Brandeis education.

Interactions among first year students and between students and faculty will be developed through smaller optional group meetings with Critical Conversations faculty who will meet over breakfast, lunch or dessert with UWS students. These interactions will provide an opportunity for students to learn how to make connections with and interact informally with faculty. Peer advisors may also be assigned to UWS sections as another element of cohort building.

UWS courses are generally taught by graduate students, with full time and part-time
lecturers teaching 25 to 30% of the total number of sections. While graduate students will continue to be given first preference for teaching, the Task Force proposes inviting core Brandeis faculty to teach UWS courses as overloads, banked courses, or with support for needed course replacements. This will expand the range of teaching and learning experiences available for both faculty and students while maintaining important teaching experiences for graduate students. The First Year Experience oversight committee will include representatives from the four divisions and Office of Experiential Learning, as well as the Director of First Year Writing and another representative of the writing program. Additional details of this program can be found in Appendix I.

**Foundational Literacies**
Requirements in Foundational Literacies will help students achieve essential learning goals that define undergraduates as writers, public speakers, researchers, artists and critical thinkers across the entire liberal arts landscape. All students will take a course to develop their quantitative reasoning skills from among many courses offered across the Brandeis curriculum. As students progress in their academic careers, they will expand their core skills in writing, oral communication and a newly defined digital literacy component within their major areas of study. The movement of these requirements into majors and areas of specialization will allow students to gain skills in specific contexts that will prepare them for success beyond the university.

**Quantitative Reasoning** - the ability to understand numerical data and analysis in its myriad forms – is a vital skill in the 21st century, and the current QR requirement will be updated to reflect quantitative skills needed in today’s world. QR courses from different disciplines share a commitment to enabling students to collect, understand, summarize, interpret, analyze and evaluate data; apply statistical analyses; and think critically about the accuracy and soundness of conclusions based on data or on statistical models. We propose that the QR committee both review and further refine the current course list and that faculty be encouraged to think about how existing and newly developed courses can be structured to emphasize these essential skills. The QR committee will work with departments to increase the number of QR courses, and offer new courses appropriate for their majors.

The three other components of the Foundational Literacies requirements are Writing Intensive (WI), Oral Communication (OC), and new Digital Literacy (DL) courses/course equivalents, which frequently will be linked to, defined and located in requirements for majors.

The advantages of moving WI, OC and DL into the majors include providing opportunities for students to learn how core skills are used in field-specific contexts and allowing students to fulfill General Education requirements while often fulfilling major requirements. Faculty will engage in clarifying and stating learning goals in literacies appropriate to the major, and work with standing committees to determine pathways for students to meet these learning goals. As students complete their majors they will gain specific skills for writing and oral presentations in their chosen fields and will become conversant with the digital context of their major specialization.
• Through frequent writing assignments, opportunities for revision, focused writing instruction, and review of exemplary writing in the discipline, Writing Intensive courses further develop writing skills necessary for successful written communication in specific fields of specialization. Students will learn to evaluate and employ disciplinary writing conventions, styles, and formats, and how to convey arguments and use evidence and rhetorical strategies for appropriate audiences.

• Oral Communication courses enhance students’ ability to communicate and listen effectively in a range of contexts, critically evaluate orally presented information and arguments and consider specific techniques for using language as a communication tool.

• Learning outcomes for Digital Literacy include acquiring one or more of the following abilities: to evaluate the validity of digital sources; create and use digital media; analyze, present and reason about large sets of data; generate or utilize appropriate software in the discipline; and become adept at utilizing data bases, as defined by the major.

Each department or interdisciplinary program’s Writing Intensive plan will either be approved by the Director of University Writing, or by a Writing Intensive Committee chaired by the Director of University Writing. Each department or program’s Oral Communication and Digital Literacy plan will be reviewed by the OC or DL oversight committee.

Oversight committees will work with departments to design curricular approaches to meeting the new WI, OC, and DL requirements, which might be satisfied through completion of such options as: a four-credit course; a series of courses in the major; an e-portfolio demonstrating key aspects of skills relevant to the learning goals established in the major; on-line modules, coupled with on-line exams demonstrating competencies; a practicum offered in coordination with a course or courses in the major; a designated course from a different department. Students who are double majoring will not be required to fulfill these requirements in each major, though they are likely do so when pedagogical elements are embedded in core courses.

Additional details of the Foundational Literacies requirements can be found in Appendix II.

Schools of Thought
The Schools of Thought requirement reflects the university’s conviction that all liberal arts graduates should become broadly acquainted with the approaches, perspectives, insights, and methodologies of a variety of disciplines, even as they gain specialized skills and knowledge in their majors. Although the changes to the requirement in this area are modest, we have tried to shift emphasis away from the mechanical notion of ‘distribution’ toward a conception of plural disciplinary proficiencies as a core intellectual value of the liberal arts education. All students will complete at least one course in each of Brandeis’s
four Schools of Arts and Sciences: Creative Arts, Humanities, Science and Social Science.

This requirement is similar to the current School Distribution requirement, with the exception that Advanced Placement equivalents will no longer be used to satisfy the requirement. Divisions/School Councils will be encouraged to evaluate courses to ensure that the core methodologies and approaches of the school are demonstrated and understood.

An overview of the Schools of Thought requirements can be found in Appendix IV.

**Health, Wellness, and Life Skills**
The goal of the Health, Wellness and Life Skills (HWLS) requirement is to provide students with the tools to successfully balance personal well-being with social, professional, community, and global commitments. Health, Wellness and Life Skills is a new non-credit structure in which students will complete modules or course equivalents in three areas: Navigating Health and Safety; Mind and Body Balance; and Life Skills

Some topics and experiences within these areas include:

**Navigating Health and Safety**
- Alcohol and drug education
- Sexual assault prevention
- Self-defense
- CPR
- First Aid

**Mind and Body Balance**
- Physical fitness
- Nutrition
- Stress management
- Faith and spirituality

**Life Skills**
- Financial literacy
- Career development
- Team building
- Negotiation skills
- Crisis management
- Reducing your carbon footprint

Students who complete these requirements will gain confidence and resilience by learning how to navigate difficult and potentially dangerous situations, gaining a solid foundation in the skills of everyday life, and establishing productive habits of mind and body.

Core learning goals include, but are not limited to: acquiring skills and understandings that will set healthy life-long attitudes towards physical and mental wellness, gaining
interpersonal competency skills, and developing career skills needed to navigate changes in life circumstances.

Modules would be required in both Navigating Health and Safety, and Mind and Body Balance with a third module from any of the three areas. The requirement would be coordinated by a committee drawing its membership from faculty, representatives of the Department of Athletics, the Brandeis Counseling Center, Hiatt Career Center, and staff from Students and Enrollment, the Dean of Arts & Sciences and the Registrar; this committee would approve new course offerings, design the final tracking methodologies, and propose budgets and resources required for the new requirements.

For additional details on the Health, Wellness and Life Skills theme, see Appendix V.

Global Engagement
In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, Brandeis students are encouraged to actively explore and analyze diversity and difference— including the impact of social, political, cultural, environmental and linguistic structures in the US and in the world through courses offered in any school in the areas of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Studies in the US (DEIS-US); Difference and Justice in the World (DJW); and World Languages and Cultures (WLC). Taken as a whole, this set of requirements emphasizes the profound connections between local and global forms of understanding and social justice, including environmental issues. Students who take the opportunity to study abroad will be encouraged to integrate their experiences into their course of study, including in courses that will count toward the Global Engagement components.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Studies in the US courses will prepare students to engage with dynamics, developments, divisions, and inequalities within U.S. society, and to explore the historical and contemporary experiences, interests, and perspectives of a wide range of groups and institutions that have shaped life in the United States. The content must focus on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion, with at least 50% of the material addressing US national and/or regional issues. Historical and comparative perspectives are encouraged, as is the study of theoretical frameworks.

As part of the Difference and Justice in the World requirement, students will examine the social, cultural, political, and/or economic diversity of the human experience within global/transnational contexts, and engage in the study of peoples in countries outside the U.S., their histories, arts, cultures, politics, economies, environments, and religions. At least 50% of the content must focus on issues and areas outside the United States. Historical, comparative and scientific perspectives are strongly encouraged, as is the study of theoretical frameworks.

Extending our students’ ability to engage globally, the World Languages and Cultures requirement will facilitate an “intermediate” proficiency (the equivalent of a third course in a language sequence) in speaking, writing and reading and understanding in a language other than English. This requirement will increase an appreciation of the challenges of cross-cultural communication and grant access to diverse bodies of knowledge through
sources in languages other than English. As part of a liberal arts education, learning to communicate in another language challenges unexamined habits of mind, enhances understanding of the challenges of cross-cultural communication, and enriches the imagination. Studying another language enhances cultural literacy and communication skills useful in professional and social contexts, increases tolerance for divergent points of view, and promotes empathy, social responsibility, and awareness of the value of human diversity beyond one’s immediate community. The cognitive benefits of learning another language include the strengthening of analytical skills, pattern recognition, attention span, and problem-solving skills. By demonstrating a qualifying level of proficiency, students may receive partial or full exemptions, which can reduce the WLC component to zero, one or two courses.

These proposed requirements build upon the strengths of earlier configurations of Non-Western and Comparative Studies (currently a one course requirement) and Foreign Language requirements (currently up to three courses or proficiency equivalent to a level 30 language course) to recognize evolving discourses on difference, an increasingly diverse nation and a growing international student body at Brandeis.

Global Engagement is framed as a two to five course requirement, in which each student must complete one DEIS-US and one DJW course. Students with previous experience in foreign language study may be exempted from all or part of the World Languages and Cultures component, which would enable them to reduce the requirement to as few as two courses (one DEIS-US course and one DJW course).

The DEIS-US and DJW components will be administered by a faculty oversight committee appointed by the Dean of Arts and Sciences and an additional faculty committee will oversee the WLC component. Additional information on the Global Engagement requirement can be found in Appendix VI.

**Number of Requirements and Double Counting**

The new General Education requirements together make up a set of 12-14 credit-bearing courses and three additional non-credit modules that will provide students with an education that is distinguished by a broad understanding of the history, sciences, arts, and culture of the United States and the world and with specific knowledge and skills that, together, will prepare students for success beyond Brandeis. The number of courses and credit requirements are described here, with comparisons to previous requirements below.

The **First Year Experience** requires the completion of [1] four-credit course that does not double-count toward any other requirement.

**Foundational Literacies** requires the completion of [4] four-credit courses; writing, oral communication and digital literacy courses may double count toward major, Schools of Thought, or Global Engagement requirements; the quantitative reasoning course may count toward a Social Science, Humanities, or Creative Arts Schools of Thought requirement or a
Global Engagement requirement. Note that in some majors writing, oral communication and/or digital literacy requirements may be satisfied through completion of two-credit practica that link critical skill acquisition to other courses required for the major. Additional approaches for demonstrating competencies will be considered by the oversight committee.

**Schools of Thought** requires the completion of [4] four-credit courses, any of which, with the exception of introductory language courses, may double count toward major, Foundational Literacies, or Global Engagement requirements.

**Health, Wellness, and Life Skills** requires the completion of [3] non-credit modules that do not double-count toward any other requirement. Note: Some four-credit courses may count towards this requirement; if taken, these may double count toward major, Foundational Literacies, Schools of Thought or Global Engagement requirements.

**Global Engagement** requires the completion of [1] four-credit course in DEIS-US, [1] four-credit course in D|W, up to [3] four-credit courses in WLC. All courses, with the exception of introductory language courses may double count toward major, Foundational Literacies, or Schools of Thought requirements.
### Comparison of New and Old General Education Requirements

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Old Requirement</th>
<th>New Requirement</th>
<th>Number (old/new)</th>
<th>Thematic group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Writing Seminar (UWS)</td>
<td>First Year Experience (including UWS)</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>First Year Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Foundational Literacies</td>
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<td>Writing Intensive</td>
<td>Writing Intensive</td>
<td>(1-2)/1</td>
<td>Foundational Literacies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>(0-1)/1</td>
<td>Foundational Literacies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Digital Literacy</td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>Foundational Literacies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Distribution</td>
<td>Schools of Thought</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>Schools of Thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Health, Wellness, and Life Skills</td>
<td>2 sem/3 modules (1.5 semesters)</td>
<td>HWLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the US (DEIS-US)</td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>Global Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Western and Comparative</td>
<td>Difference and Justice in the World (DJW)</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Global Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>World Languages and Cultures (WLC)</td>
<td>≤3/≤3</td>
<td>Global Engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maximum number (credit-bearing)*: Old Requirements/New Requirements: 11/13

*This assumes one Schools of Thought course double counts towards the major, with no other double counting. The actual number of courses taken will be lower as students double count in different combinations and because the new Writing Intensive, Oral Communications, and Digital Literacy requirements will, in general, double as courses required for the completion of the major.

The maximum number of 13 courses required for students starting in an introductory language sequence in the new General Education curriculum is consistent with the number of requirements at 12 of our peer institutions¹, which have, on average, the same maximum

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¹ Boston College, Boston University, Emory University, Harvard University, New York University, Tufts University, University of Chicago, Vanderbilt University, Washington University (St. Louis), Wellesley College,
number of requirements. Historically, Brandeis’ requirements have been higher than the current number of 11 courses; the three course “Cluster” requirement was eliminated in the late 1990’s and the first year University Seminar (USEM) requirement was terminated in 2009.

Double and Triple Majors
Brandeis students have embraced the opportunity to double or even triple major, and/or to complete one, two or three minors. Over 50% of students graduate with a double or triple major and over 80% of students graduate with a major and at least one minor. The Task Force considered the question of double and triple majors and explored the possibility that limits should be placed on the ability of students to complete multiple majors. Conversations with the Office of Academic Services and some faculty have raised concerns that students are collecting credentials instead of carefully curating their education. Other faculty are supportive of double majors, seeing an opportunity for students to gain experience in multiple disciplines that can support enrollments in the Humanities and the Creative Arts and encourage interdisciplinary thinking. Triple majors represent a very small proportion of the graduating class (4%) and were seen by at least one department as providing an opportunity for very motivated students in technical fields. Based on these conversations, the Task Force chose not to impose limitations on the number of majors, but encourages the university to review the curricular implications of allowing students to continue to triple major.

Comments on Co-Curricular Experiences
The Task Force recognizes that co-curricular and experiential learning opportunities are a key part of a Brandeis education. These experiences play an important role in preparing our students for jobs, careers, and a lifelong involvement with arts, culture, and civic engagement. The new General Education curriculum emphasizes the importance of co-curricular and experiential opportunities by including a co-curricular component in the First Year Experience and by including co-curricular experiences as part of the requirements in the Health, Wellness and Life Skills theme. While these experiences now form a part of the General Education requirements, co-curricular and experiential learning is pervasive throughout a student’s Brandeis career and there is an expectation that students will continue to take advantage of opportunities to work with faculty on research and artistic projects, engage in community service, and carry out a variety of internships. Enhanced interactions with the Hiatt Career Center and other units contributing to the Health, Wellness, and Life Skills requirements may provide new opportunities for students to engage in activities outside the classroom.

Implementation and Assessment
Implementation of the new General Education requirements will take place over the Spring 2018 semester and the 2018-2019 academic year. Thus, the first class to complete the new requirements will be the entering class of Fall 2019. During the implementation period

Wesleyan University, Williams College
special attention should be given to the roll out of the new Foundational Literacies requirements, including assessment of our current Quantitative Reasoning courses and a call for new QR courses. Implementation will also require departmental and program consideration of Writing Intensive, Oral Communication, and Digital Literacy in the majors, as well as planning for all aspects of the new First Year Experience. The Task Force is pleased and grateful that the Brandeis Library, Hiatt Career Center, Office of Experiential Learning, Brandeis Counseling Center, Office of Prevention Services, Athletics and Physical Education, and the Office of Academic Services have all expressed enthusiasm and eagerness to support the proposed curriculum and to contribute to modules within the Health, Wellness and Life Skills theme. Opportunities will also exist to engage the expertise of the Office of Study Abroad in developing courses and practica for the Global Engagement theme.

Vigorous oversight committees will be appointed and/or reconstructed during the implementation period for the Brandeis First Year Experience; Writing Intensive; Quantitative Reasoning; Oral Communication; Digital Literacy; and World Languages and Cultures programs. A single committee will oversee Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Studies in the United States and Difference and Justice in the World. Each oversight committee is charged with outreach and course approval and will work with departments and programs to implement curricula to achieve Foundational Literacies within the majors and other goals and learning outcomes of the new General Education plan. The committees will work with the Provost’s office and the Center for Teaching and Learning to define and implement ongoing measures of student achievement on identified learning goals. We expect that these measurements will include such tools as rubrics to evaluate portfolios, capstone projects, course assignments, papers and exams and/or focus groups, surveys, or standardized tests. The current pass/fail grading policies will continue to be utilized. A student may select the pass/fail grading option to complete one element of General Education requirements, except for the University Writing Seminar, Quantitative Reasoning, Oral Communication, Digital Literacy, and Writing Intensive requirements and level 30 courses in the World Languages and Cultures component. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is charged with assessing and reviewing all aspects of the new curriculum every five years, with the first review to be conducted in the 2023-2024 academic year.

Additional resources needed to support the curriculum will include funds for faculty professional development, assessment, co-curricular activities and programming in the University Writing Seminar; new positions for practicum instructors; compensation for faculty participants in the Critical Conversations; and staffing for new Health, Wellness, and Life Skills modules. While it will be possible to implement the new requirements without the addition of new full-time faculty, we encourage the university to consider how the addition of full-time contract and tenure-line faculty could enhance opportunities for experiential and interdisciplinary learning and relieve pressure on departments and interdisciplinary programs with high enrollment majors. Contributions to the General Education curriculum could be achieved through opportunities for departments to request hires in areas such as Climate Justice and Sustainability, New Media and Digital Design or Quantitative Reasoning or by targeting hires to departments such as Economics, Math, or
Computer Science that may otherwise struggle to provide Foundational Literacies courses to their students.

*Members of the Task Force on General Education:*

Susan Birren, Dean of Arts and Sciences and Task Force Chair
Chinyere Brown, Student, Class of 2017
John Burt, Professor of English and Head, Division of Humanities
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Emily Conrad, Student, Class of 2017
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Mark Hewitt, University Registrar
Melissa Kosinski-Collins, Associate Professor of Biology
David Powelstock, Associate Professor and Chair, German, Russian, Asian Languages and Literature
Sara Shostak, Associate Professor of Sociology, Chair, Health, Science, Society and Policy
Derron Wallace, Assistant Professor of Education and Sociology
Elaine Wong, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education
APPENDICES
Appendix I

Charge to the Task Force on General Education Requirements
May 2016

The charge to the Task Force will be to consider all aspects of university requirements within the context of how we think of ourselves as a university and to think about what knowledge, skills, and understandings we believe that our students should have by the time they graduate. We will not address specific requirements for majors and minors, but will rather focus on expectations that apply to all undergraduate students across the university. In doing so we will consider the current university requirements*, the views of the Brandeis community, and the student experience. The Task Force will consider whether our current requirements should change and whether a new set of requirements should include formalized instruction in new areas, including the consideration of requirements that address issues of diversity and inclusion.

The Task Force will examine approaches taken by other university and examine the societal context of requirements to define overarching themes and goals. This will involve reaching out to faculty, students, and staff to understand and take advantage of the thoughts and ideas in the community. The Task Force will develop a new set of recommendations for undergraduate education at Brandeis, with goal of producing a set of recommendations that will be presented to the undergraduate curriculum committee and the faculty for approval.

*these include:
Writing
Oral Communication
School requirements (Social Sciences, Science, Hum, Creative Arts)
Non-western
Language
Quantitative reasoning
Appendix II

Brandeis First Year Experience
(University Writing Seminar plus “Critical Conversations”)

The Brandeis First Year Experience aims to build cohort identity, introduce new students to faculty and their different disciplinary perspectives, model civil discourse, demonstrate the advantages of participating in the rich intellectual, co-curricular life of the university, and emphasize and elevate the importance of the University Writing Seminar as a cornerstone of foundational literacies and general education.

Relation to Existing Requirements
The University Writing Seminar (UWS) is currently a required course for first year students. The UWS will now be enhanced by new curricular and co-curricular elements.

Description of Requirements
UWS, an essential part of the Brandeis First Year Experience, will continue to be a shared first year requirement. UWS students will be required to attend one of two “Critical Conversations” featuring Brandeis faculty each semester. These programs, described in detail below, will model the key UWS learning goals of making arguments while analyzing evidence and considering counter-positions. Additionally, students will participate in a co-curricular opportunity chosen by the UWS instructor in consultation with Experiential Learning staff to complement their course design. Each UWS instructor will require one writing assignment linked to the Critical Conversation and another linked to the co-curricular experience.

University Writing Seminar
Rationale
Writing is a complex task, and the ability to write well is critical for success in the academic and professional world. Becoming proficient in writing involves developing an interlocking set of skills whose relationships vary with the task, the rhetorical and disciplinary situation, and the audience. These skills mature over time and continue to develop with revision.

The UWS Course as Currently Offered
The four-credit UWS course, taken during a student’s first year, provides the foundation upon which our students build to develop into proficient writers during and after their Brandeis studies. Writing involves becoming fluent in new dialects, different from what one speaks at home, and also different from what one uses in class discussion. Each UWS course introduces students to college-level writing through a variety of writing assignments. Current assignments include a "close reading" in which the student explores the nuances of a prose passage; a "lens essay" in which a student analyzes a written or visual text through the lens, or frame of another; and a research paper in which the student engages the
ongoing scholarly conversation about a text, problem, or theme examined in the course. UWS is designed to be embedded in disciplines and the areas of the instructors’ expertise, but the writing lessons taught should be transferable to other disciplines. Students learn skills and approaches to writing that they will employ throughout their academic and professional lives.

In UWS courses, the readings and writing topics reflect subject areas chosen by the instructors, typically narrowed to a set of essential questions and readings after extensive consultation with the Director of First Year Writing. Every UWS course teaches the same writing tasks: close reading, motivating an argument, defining a thesis, assessing and analyzing evidence, and presenting an invitation to a specific audience for further investigation. Students complete a series of mini assignments that lead to longer papers. They also engage in writing exercises in class and peer review revision sessions both in and out of class. Approximately 50 pages of writing in total are completed. From 52 to 55 sections, each enrolling up to 18 students, are offered every year.

**UWS Staffing**
Currently UWS courses are mostly staffed by graduate students in English, History, NEJS, Music, and Politics, supplemented by full time lecturers on multi-year contracts and part time lecturers on one-year contracts. Because we would like to encourage core Brandeis faculty to consider teaching UWS courses, thereby widening the range of teaching and learning experiences for both our faculty and students, the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences will formally invite faculty to participate in the UWS program, beginning in the first year of implementation for the proposed curriculum (2019-2020). Faculty participation in the program will not diminish the number of courses that graduate students are either required or hired to teach. For the last four years, the university has been hiring lecturers to teach a dozen or more UWS courses each year due a shortfall in graduate student instructors, who are given first preference for teaching. Brandeis faculty may choose to teach a UWS as either a banked course, an overload, or in substitution of a current course (with course replacement, if necessary). Because there is demand from students for UWS courses with a science focus, we may also supplement the roster of UWS instructors with lecturers hired specifically with this expertise. Training, support and professional development would continue to be offered, with commitments to new instructors set by the beginning of the spring term before a subsequent fall or spring teaching assignment.

**Learning Goals for UWS**
**Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing**
- Use writing and discussion to work through and interpret complex ideas from readings and other texts (e.g., visual, musical, verbal)
- Critically analyze your own and others' choices regarding language and form (e.g., in student texts or formally published texts)
- Engage in multiple modes of inquiry using texts (e.g., field research, library-based inquiry, web searching)
- Incorporate significant research (as above) into writing that engages a question
and/or topic and uses it as a central theme for a substantive, research-based essay

- Use writing to support interpretations of text, and understand that there are multiple interpretations of text

**Processes**

- Understand that writing takes place through recurring processes of invention, revision, and editing
- Develop successful, flexible strategies for your own writing through the processes of invention, revision, and editing
- Experience and understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Learn to critique your own and others’ work
- Be reflective about writing processes

**Knowledge of Conventions**

- Understand the conventions of particular genres of writing
- Use conventions associated with a range of dialects, particularly standardized written English (but not necessarily limited to it)
- Recognize and address patterns in your writing that unintentionally diverge from patterns expected by their audience/s
- Practice using academic citation systems for documenting work

**Critical Conversations**

Two Critical Conversations will be scheduled each semester, in approximately the third week of September and third week of October, or comparable spring term dates. Each will feature two professors from different divisions, moderated by a professor, most likely from a third division. The moderator might “interrupt” the conversation to point out rhetorical arguments or use of evidence, ask faculty if they would construct a written argument differently from an oral argument, or ask students to think about the argument/counter argument just presented. Topics (such as Climate Change and Environmental Justice, The Meaning of Truth, Health Policy in America, Immigration and the Politics of Race and Racism, The Concept of Time, Life in the Universe, Issues of Authority, Ethics, Civil Discourse) will be selected by the oversight committee, which will invite faculty to propose topics and/or conversation “partners” and moderators a year in advance. Mandating attendance at one, with announcements about the other Conversation, will give students first-hand experience with ways in which their intellectual lives can be enriched by participating in university and departmental public lectures and colloquia, and contribute to the integration of curricular and co-curricular life for students at Brandeis. First year students will also be introduced to the faculty presenters, the distinctive approaches and methodologies of their disciplines, their disciplinary perspectives on the same topic, and their ways of utilizing different types of evidence in support of their arguments. For example, how is the “truth” defined in the sciences and in the humanities? Faculty will demonstrate passionate, but civil argumentation, the difference between facts and opinions, and how data and information, both printed and electronic, is evaluated and utilized in academic settings. The Conversations will also situate UWS in the context of learning about argumentation and evidence.
UWS instructors will assign students to attend one Conversation, which best works into the syllabus of their course, and will link a writing assignment to the event.

Faculty involved in the Conversations will be invited to meet with UWS instructors in the spring before UWS courses are taught, and will also be invited to meet with UWS students at social events (lunch, dessert, etc.) sized to facilitate conversation; these informal meetings will provide first year students with another opportunity to learn how to make connections and interact informally with faculty. Appropriate compensation for faculty participation will be provided.

Linking this aspect of the Brandeis First Year Experience to UWS will help students understand the course’s relevance, make the writing program more visible, and provide more resources for what is already a shared first year experience. Persuasive argumentation is one of the learning goals of UWS. Oral conversations showcasing different ways of arguing in different disciplines aligns well with UWS goals of teaching students how to assess the quality of an argument and the quality of evidence utilized in writing assignments.

**Co-curricular Learning**

UWS instructors will receive pedagogical training and support from the Office of Experiential Learning to assist them in integrating their choice of a co-curricular learning opportunity, preferably on-campus, into the content of their course in a meaningful and intentional manner. This experience should involve three to five hours of out of classroom time and be followed with a writing assignment. An example of a writing assignment linked to such an activity might be a brief reflection paper before and/or after the activity. Examples include visits to local cultural sites, science/art/history museums (including the Rose Art Museum) or performances, including those offered at Brandeis; research assignments using the Brandeis archives; digital media production; a visit to the Maker Lab; attendance at public advocacy or activism events on campus; cultural studies analysis of visual pop culture artifacts; participant/observation; interviews of faculty, juniors and seniors about their writing assignments and practices; and attendance at a Brandeis departmental colloquia or events sponsored by such groups as SACNAS or Women in Science. EL staff are eager to support UWS instructors in choosing and shaping activities and subsequent assignments integrated with their course design.

**Other Elements**

Trained peer advisors could be assigned to two or three UWS sections per semester, in a manner similar to past assignments to the departed University Seminars in Humanistic Inquiries, to provide peer advising to this cohort as another element of cohort building. These undergraduates might make a brief visit to or attend a full UWS class, organize an additional meeting for students in the UWS courses to meet with one another and debrief after the Critical Conversation, attend the lunch or dessert parties organized with Critical Conversations faculty, and/or be available to answer questions. They would not be writing tutors.
Relation to Existing Requirements
Every Brandeis student (with some exceptions for transfer students) must take the UWS during the first year. (Exceptions to this rule also include Gateway students, non-native speakers of English who need to take a specially developed ELL writing course --- or in some cases two courses --- before taking Composition and UWS.) Some students take Composition as a preparation for the UWS.

Administration of the program
The oversight committee for the First Year Experience/University Writing Seminar/“Critical Conversations” would include four division representatives, an EL staff member, the Director of First Year Writing and one other instructor representing the writing program. The Gateway, Composition, and UWS programs would continue to be administered by the Directors of the English Language Program and First Year Writing.

Possible Overlap/Integration with other proposed requirements
The UWS requirement will be satisfied by one purpose-built course, as in the current requirements. The UWS establishes the Foundational Literacy base for Writing Intensive courses in the major. UWS courses do not currently double-count for other requirements, nor will they in the proposed curriculum.
**Appendix III**

**Foundational Literacies**

**Foundational Literacies** identify essential learning goals for undergraduates to acquire and practice across the entire liberal arts landscape. These requirements are designed to facilitate written, oral, digital, and quantitative communication as students become critical thinkers, researchers, writers, artists, and performers.

**Description of Requirements**

The University Writing Seminar (UWS), which is now at the center of the First Year Experience, and the Quantitative Reasoning (QR) requirement remain as stand-alone requirements. Writing Intensive (WI), Oral Communication (OC), and the new Digital Literacy (DL) requirements will be integrated into and administered within the majors.

Moving the WI, OC, and DL into the departments and interdisciplinary programs will allow students to fulfill General Education requirements while also completing major requirements. While supporting the goals of the General Education curriculum, in some ways, these are no longer General Education requirements; they will become major requirements designed to conform to department and program standards. All departments and programs with majors will need to clarify learning goals in each skill building area (WI, OC, DL). As they work to clarify learning goals, and define the courses and experiences needed to meet those goals, resources will be provided to support departments and programs with this new charge.

**University Writing Seminar**

For more detailed information about the University Writing Seminar (UWS), please refer to the First Year Experience Appendix.

**Quantitative Reasoning**

**Rationale**

Quantitative reasoning, defined as the ability to understand numerical data and analysis in its many forms, is a vital skill for everyone in the twenty-first century. Quantitative reasoning ability is necessary for students to adequately assess the accuracy and truthfulness of information. Being able to reason about quantitative information is a crucial component of critical thinking, a skill that all Brandeis student should possess upon graduation.

**Relation to Existing Requirements**

The current QR requirement will be updated to reflect quantitative skills needed in today’s world. The QR oversight committee will continue to assess and add courses, as is the current practice.
**Description of Requirement**
All students will take [1] four-credit course that is designated to meet the quantitative reasoning requirement. QR courses from various disciplines share a commitment to enabling students to understand, interpret, analyze and evaluate statistical and numerical data and other quantitative information.

**Learning Goals**
The quantitative reasoning requirement has been established to develop students’ abilities to:
- Collect, summarize and analyze numerical data
- Apply statistical analysis
- Think critically about the accuracy and soundness of conclusions based on data or on mathematical models

**Criteria for Course Approval**
The following is Brandeis University Bulletin text describing the current Quantitative Reasoning requirement, but the criteria for course approval will be reviewed and updated by the Quantitative Reasoning committee to reflect quantitative and statistical skills needed today and in the future.

“Quantitative reasoning courses usually embed methodological training in their subject matter. These courses vary widely in the skills that are emphasized, but they 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 archives, surveys, lab experiments or other sources

E. Testing hypotheses using experimental or statistical controls

F. Assessing the limitations of research, such as the reliability and validity of measures, adequacy of experimental design, sample size and quality and alternative hypotheses and interpretations

**Sample Courses**
https://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/provisional/req-ugen/qr.html
How requirement will be administered
A QR committee will continue to support the implementation of the requirement, undertaking new outreach efforts to increase the number of course options. The committee will both review and further refine the current course list and faculty will be encouraged to think about how existing and newly developed courses can be structured to emphasize these essential skills. The QR committee will work with departments to offer new courses appropriate for majors.

Possible Overlap/Integration with other proposed requirements
As is the current practice, double counting with the School of Science is prohibited.

Writing Intensive, Oral Communications, and Digital Literacies in the Majors

Writing Intensive Requirement
Rationale
In addition to completing the University Writing Seminar, every student will take one Writing Intensive course required by their major. The Writing Intensive course teaches writing as a mode of learning, not simply as a way to articulate what is learned. Students become familiar with the conventions and intellectual traditions of a discipline and use writing to acquire knowledge in that discipline.

Relation to Existing Requirements
We propose replacing the current list of WI courses with a requirement that each major devise a way to teach the writing skills appropriate to its own discipline.

Description of Requirement
Departments and interdisciplinary programs will be tasked with determining which writing skills and learning goals are relevant to their discipline and their major. Options that may be approved include the following:

- A four-credit Writing Intensive course offered within the major, either in the traditional sense of WI or in the form of a special course on "writing in this discipline," in which the writing conventions of the discipline are the explicit subject
- A practicum devoted to writing offered in coordination with a course or courses in the major
- Cross-listing courses from different departments and programs to fulfill the requirement
- An e-portfolio demonstrating key aspects of writing skills relevant to the learning goals established in the major

Learning Goals
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

- Grasp the specific problem-finding and thesis-defining conventions of a discipline
• Understand how to make a contribution to the ongoing progress of research in that discipline
• Write clear, persuasive, and expressive prose in a disciplinary context

Processes
• Become adept in the research and composition procedures of a discipline
• Learn to evaluate one’s own written work as a contribution to a discipline

Knowledge of Conventions
• Become proficient in the formal writing conventions of the discipline concerning form, style, methods of citation

Criteria for Course Approval
Brandeis now offers a selection of writing intensive courses, with instructors submitting syllabi to a committee that oversees the requirement. A reconstituted WI Committee will oversee the departments’ and programs’ implementation plans, which will continue to include instruction and feedback on writing assignments and exercises. WI instructors use writing exercises as part of the pedagogy of the course, and not merely as part of evaluation of student progress. Students learn through writing, so papers should be distributed over the term rather than due only at the end of term, and students should have several opportunities to write (either writing several shorter papers or developing the several stages of a longer project). Students also should complete a required revision, and instructors should pay some attention to making clear the writing tasks of the course.

Sample Courses
Courses currently designated as Writing Intensive, which count toward over 30 majors may be found at http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/provisional/req-ugen/wi.html

How requirement will be administered
A reconstituted WI committee will be necessary to support the new implementation of the WI requirement. This committee will be responsible for assuring that the departments and programs interpret the learning goals in ways that are appropriate and attainable. The WI Committee will also provide guidance and support to connect departments and programs with the resources needed to mount the curriculum.

Possible Overlap/Integration with other proposed requirements
WI courses may double count with Global Engagement courses and Schools of Thought courses.

Oral Communication
Rationale
Oral Communication (OC) is grounded in active learning, putting theory and knowledge into practice. The OC requirement recognizes that students need to be prepared for a variety of ways to communicate effectively in various fields of study including oral presentations, interviews, active debate, critique, and performances.
**Relation to Existing Requirements**
Oral Communications (OC) will be a new requirement in the major, and no longer coupled with the Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.

**Description of Requirement**
Departments and interdisciplinary programs will be tasked with determining which oral communication goals are relevant to their discipline and their major. Satisfaction of the learning goals can be achieved in several ways. Options include the following:

- A four-credit course devoted to oral communication
- A course or courses incorporating oral communication resources into the pedagogy of courses.
- A two-credit practicum devoted to oral communication offered in coordination with a course or courses in the major
- Cross listing course from different departments to fulfill the requirement

**Learning Goals**
Each department and interdisciplinary program will be required to define the meaning of oral communications within the context of their discipline and their major. For example, these goals might include such things as:

- The ability to communicate and listen effectively in the context of the major
- The ability to critically evaluate orally presented information and arguments
- The ability to consider specific techniques for using language as a communication tool within the major

**Criteria for Course Approval**
The OC Committee will oversee the departments’ and programs’ implementation plans, which will continue to include instruction and feedback on oral presentations and exercises. At least two oral presentations in either a single course, or series of courses or experiences will be required in each major.

**Sample Courses**
Courses currently designated as Oral Communication, which count toward 16 majors may be found at [http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/provisional/req-ugen/oc.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/provisional/req-ugen/oc.html)

**How requirement will be administered**
A revised OC committee will be necessary to support the new OC requirement. The OC committee will be responsible for assuring that the departments and programs interpret the learning goals in ways that are appropriate and attainable. The OC Committee will also provide guidance and support to connect departments and programs with the resources needed to mount the curriculum.

**Possible Overlap/Integration with other proposed requirements**
OC courses may double count with Global Engagement courses and School of Thought courses completed outside the major.
Digital Literacy

Rationale
The ability to engage in the digital world plays an increasingly important role in intellectual life. Every discipline has been affected by the digital revolution in its own way. We would like our students to master the critical digital resources and techniques relevant to the scholarly or creative endeavors of their discipline.

Relation to Existing Requirement
This is a new requirement.

Description of Requirement
Each department/program will determine which Digital Literacy goals are relevant to their own discipline. Satisfaction of the requirement could be achieved through completion of one of the following:

- A four-credit course
- A course or series of courses incorporating digital literacy resources into the pedagogy of courses
- An e-portfolio demonstrating key aspects of digital literacy skills relevant to the learning goals established in the major
- On-line modules, coupled with online exams demonstrating competencies
- A two-credit practicum offered in coordination with a course or courses in the major
- Cross-listing courses from different departments to fulfill the requirement

Learning Goals
Each department and interdepartmental program will be required to define the meaning of digital literacy within the context of their major. For example, these goals might include one or more of the following abilities:

- The ability to evaluate the validity of digital sources
- The ability to create original work in a digital medium or a work of scholarship that engages digital media
- The ability to discover, create, analyze, present, and reason about large sets of disciplinary relevant data
- The ability to negotiate intellectual property, for example copyright and appropriation of works of art
- The ability to solve disciplinary problems using scripting languages
- The ability to discover and utilize appropriate digital tools (including software and databases)

Digital approaches and tools will be specific to field and change over time. Examples in 2017 include, for digital media: blogs, e-portfolios, mapping projects, websites, video essays, audio podcasts; and for digital tools: GIS, STATA, SPSS, MatLab, Excel, ArtStor, Zotero, ATLAS.ti.

Criteria for Course Approval
The DL committee will be responsible for ensuring that departmental and program learning goals are appropriate, attainable, and rigorous.

**How requirement will be administered**
A DL committee will be appointed to support the new DL requirement. The DL Committee will also provide guidance and support to connect departments with existing resources such as Rabb, LTS, and the Center for Teaching and Learning.
Appendix IV

Schools of Thought

Brandeis undergraduates will complete at least one course in each of the four schools of Arts and Sciences to experience the diverse ways of thinking and the range of subjects across academia.

Rationale
As students gain more specific tools and knowledge of foundational literacies in their major fields it becomes even more important that they maintain a broad understanding of the approaches, perspectives, insights, and methodologies of a variety of disciplines. It is this combination of deep engagement and expertise in the major with a broad perspective across the liberal arts that will best allow our students to contribute and succeed beyond the university.

Description of Requirements
All students will complete the Schools of Thought requirement by taking one course in each of Brandeis’s four Schools of Arts and Sciences: Creative Arts, Humanities, Science and Social Science.

Relation to Existing Requirements
These requirements are very similar to existing school distribution requirements, except that Advanced Placement (AP) course equivalents will no longer count toward their satisfaction. Learning goals will be further articulated by each Division/School Council, which will evaluate courses to ensure that the core methodologies and approaches of the school are demonstrated and understood.

Learning Goals
Through completing the School of Thought requirements students will:

- Become acquainted with the range of approaches followed, perspectives taken, insights gained, and methodologies practiced across the Four Schools in Arts and Sciences
- Gain an appreciation of the breadth of the spectrum of human scholarship
- Become familiar with some examples of the objects of study and the ways of thinking characteristic of each of the four schools

Within the four Schools of Arts and Sciences students will address one or more of the following:

In the Creative Arts: Develop capacities of the imagination, creativity, intellect and cultural understanding through theory, practice, critical analysis, and the creation, interpretation and examination of visual, musical, theatrical, and other works of art.
In the Humanities: Analyze expressions of human experience that address human aspirations, achievements, and values; learn how to read texts, artifacts, and arguments carefully and closely; examine literary and philosophical texts in their appropriate historical, political, social, literary, artistic, and philosophical contexts; articulate how texts and arguments stylistically or intellectually engage other texts and arguments; develop the ability to make and evaluate interpretive and critical arguments; and demonstrate an awareness of different moral and ethical points of view.

In the Social Sciences: Explore and think critically about human social conditions and contexts, including the past and present behaviors of individuals, the workings of social institutions and distinctions, and the nature of social-cultural-political-economic values and ideologies; and learn to utilize case studies, historical data, comparative analyses, laboratory research, fieldwork, theoretical critiques, and/or statistical analysis.

In the Sciences: Become familiar with scientific discoveries, processes, principles, theories, and experimental design; develop an understanding of scientific methods, including observation, hypothesis testing, scientific sampling techniques, and data analysis and interpretation; and develop scientific literacy when analyzing scientific texts and communicating science in written and oral formats.

Criteria for Course Approval
Courses counting for the Schools of Thought requirement will be curated by each Division/School Council to ensure the inclusion of core methodologies and disciplinary approaches. Divisions/School Councils will be asked to review courses currently designated as ca, hum, sn, ss and to select appropriate courses to count toward the requirement.

Sample Courses
See current Bulletin for examples.

How requirement will be administered
School Councils/Divisions

Possible Overlap/Integration with other proposed requirements
May double count with Global Engagement components including World Languages and Cultures upper level language and literature courses, and with Digital Literacy, Oral Communication, and Writing Intensive components. May also double count with four-credit Health/Wellness/and Life Skills courses (e.g., the rare four-credit course that will also count toward this requirement). Will not double count with University Writing Seminar or World Language courses in 10-30 sequences or with Quantitative Reasoning if the latter is completed in the School of Science.
Appendix V

Health, Wellness, and Life Skills

Throughout their lives Brandeis students will navigate a complex set of social, professional, and community interactions that require balancing of work, family, community and global relationships. The goal of this requirement is to provide students with the tools to manage these many commitments and relationships by acquiring an understanding of how to navigate difficult and potentially dangerous situations, by providing a solid foundation in the skills for physical, mental and spiritual health and global stewardship, and by promoting healthy habits of mind and body. This section defines a flexible curriculum that will help students to make healthy and sustainable choices, manage stress, and gain new life skills to foster personal success inside and outside the classroom and beyond the university.

Learning Goals
Core learning goals include, but are not limited to:

- Acquire skills and understanding that will set healthy lifelong attitudes towards physical and mental wellness and sustainable environmental practices
- Acquire awareness of and the ability to navigate situations that pose potential threats to personal and group safety
- Develop career and life skills needed to manage changes in life circumstances

Description of Requirements
Health, Wellness, and Life Skills (HWLS) requirements will be taken as a set of non-credit modules that address at least two of the three HWLS components: Navigating Health and Safety, Mind and Body Balance, and Life Skills. In addition to non-credit modules, some credit-bearing courses (for example, “Suzuki,” “Movement for Stage and Physical Theater,” “Dance in Time,” “Moving Women/Women Moving,” “Diet and Health,” and “Inner and Outer Peace” for Mind and Body Balance and “Human Voice for Life and Art” for Life Skills) may also serve as the equivalent of modules counting toward these components.

Students will enroll in six-week module courses during regular enrollment periods. All first year students will automatically be enrolled in the core Navigating Health and Safety module in their first semester at Brandeis, and students will then choose one module from Mind and Body Balance and one other module from any of the three groups.

Relation of HWLS Modules to Existing Requirements
HWLS will replace the current Physical Education requirement, which is satisfied by successful completion of two semester-long, non-credit courses, two full seasons of participation on a varsity athletics team or by passing a fitness test taken during the first two years. Physical Education/Fitness modules will now be offered within the required Mind and Body Balance component, accompanied by a required module in Navigating Health and Safety.
Health and Safety, and one other module from any of the three areas.

Varsity athletes who complete one season and students who have served in the military may now count these experiences as the equivalent of one module in Mind and Body Balance. The physical fitness test waiver will be eliminated.

Navigating Health and Safety

Rationale
Students confront issues of sexual assault, alcohol and drug abuse and personal safety both on and off campus. The university has a commitment to provide training that will allow students to gain awareness of potentially dangerous situations and to develop strategies for maintaining the safety of themselves and others. The core module will include Alcohol and Drug Education along with Sexual Assault Prevention in a program organized by the Brandeis Counseling Center and the Office of Prevention Services. Elements will include online and small group bystander, sexual misconduct, and alcohol and drug training. Additional modules will provide opportunities for students to expand their understanding and training in areas of health and wellness.

Learning Goals
Learning goals for this component will include one or more of the following:

- Acquire ability to assess potential problem situations and develop a framework for resolving them
- Evaluate the personal safety of self and others; protect oneself in various environments
- Make healthy choices in regard to alcohol and drug use

Sample modules
- Core First Year Health and Safety Module
- CPR/First Aid
- Self-defense

Mind and Body Balance

Rationale
Lack of physical activity has been linked to the development of high blood pressure, heart disease, anxiety, depression, and even some types of cancer. Inactivity tends to increase with age, suggesting that setting patterns and habits of activity early in life can provide a lifelong health benefit. In academically rigorous environments like Brandeis, students also encounter many sources of stress and challenges to maintaining mental equilibrium. Beyond Brandeis, students and graduates face challenges associated with careers, relationships and community, national and global issues. The experiences in the Mind and Body Balance component are designed to provide students with the tools and understandings of a healthy mind and body, and the ability to navigate stressful situations and environments. Modules in this area provide the opportunity to learn skills and develop interests in activities that can provide benefits long after graduation.
Areas of instruction include:

- Physical Fitness
- Healthy Eating
- Stress Management
- Faith and Spirituality
- Maintaining positive relationships

**Learning Goals**
Learning goals for this component will include one or more of the following:

- Acquire skills to engage in sports and individual athletic challenges
- Attain habits of activity to promote a lifelong healthy lifestyle
- Acquire the knowledge and skills to manage stress, and live a healthy, engaged life

**Sample Modules**
- Fitness and Physical Education
- Brandeis Counseling Center group sessions
- Yoga
- Keeping Stress in Check

**Life Skills**

**Rationale**

*Life Skills* offerings support students in achieving their personal and professional goals by helping them make connections to their academic learning and by equipping them to navigate a lifetime of opportunities and challenges. Students aspiring or transitioning to graduate school and the life of a working professional are faced with new experiences, issues and challenges for which many feel unprepared. By providing structured opportunities for intentional reflection and assessment, identifying interests, values, skills and strengths, developing long-term goals, and practical, professional and life skills, we will better equip students to become more effective professionals and citizens.

Areas of instruction include:

- Financial literacy
- Career readiness
- Professional communication and workplace navigation
- Organizational and management skills
- Team building
- Reducing your carbon footprint

**Learning Goals**
Learning goals for this component will include one or more of the following:

- Apply skills developed in the academy (e.g., critical thinking, oral and written communication, research, digital literacy) to personal and professional issues
- Identify and articulate one’s skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to desired career goals
• Navigate and explore job or graduate school options, and take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities
• Connect with resources and networks to support and inform decision-making
• Apply environmental literacy skills and practices for global stewardship
• Engage in civic life and participate in the cultural life of a community
• Be informed managers of personal finances and consumers of financial products

Sample Modules
Career Readiness (self-exploration of career goals, reflection on post-graduation plans, networking, career decision-making skills)
Career Skills (networking, strategic internship/job search, application materials, interviewing, financial skills related to salaries, budgeting, paying off loans)
Financial literacy
Environmental literacy
Reducing your carbon footprint
Diversity training
Implicit Bias training

Notes on Implementation- Course Approval and Administration of Requirements
The HWLS requirement will be coordinated through the Office of Students and Enrollment. An oversight committee will review and evaluate courses and modules for potential HWLS designation. The committee may include faculty and representatives from the Department of Athletics, Brandeis Health and Counseling Centers, and the Offices of Student Affairs, the Dean of Arts and Sciences and Registrar, as needed. This committee will approve new course offerings, design tracking methodologies, and propose budgets and resources required for the new requirement.

Starting in Fall 2019 existing Physical Education courses will be offered as 6-week module courses, and students subject to the old (i.e. our current) requirements will need to complete two such modules to equal one of their required PE courses.

Possible Overlap/Integration with other proposed requirements
There will be no overlap between HWLS and other General Education requirements when HWLS requirements are taken as 6 week modules. In some cases, an existing four-credit course may be approved for an HWLS requirement; such courses can also count toward Schools of Thought, Global Engagement, or major requirements.

Additional note: The Task Force thanks Jacob Edelman ’18 and Sheryl Sousa, Vice President for Student Affairs, for their contributions as members of the subcommittee on Health, Wellness and Life Skills.
Appendix VI

Global Engagement

In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, Brandeis students are encouraged to explore and think critically about social, political, cultural and linguistic diversity and difference, as well as learn about issues of climate change, environmental justice and sustainability. The newly formulated ‘Global Engagement’ requirement prepares students to understand the roots of injustice, and movements to pursue justice, globally, nationally and locally.

Description of Requirements
There are three core features of this requirement: (1) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Studies in the US; (2) Difference and Justice in the World; and (3) World Languages and Cultures. These proposed requirements build upon the strengths of the current Non-Western and Comparative Studies and Foreign Language requirements (currently up to three courses or proficiency equivalent to a level 30 language course), to recognize evolving discourses on difference, an increasingly diverse nation and a growing number of international students at Brandeis. The curriculum is framed as a two to five course requirement that can take any of the configurations noted in the chart at the end of this section. In keeping with current curricular requirements, students with previous experience in foreign language study may be exempted from part of the World Languages and Cultures component, which would enable them to reduce the requirement to as few as two courses.

Relation to Current Requirements
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Studies in the US is a new requirement. Difference and Justice in the World replaces the current Non-Western and Comparative Studies requirement. The World Languages and Cultures requirement replaces the current Foreign Language requirement.

Learning Goals
The new requirement’s aims include, but are not limited to:
- Analyzing the historical and contemporary relationships between and within societies, institutions, regions, and peoples in English-speaking North America and in the world at large; (DEIS-US, DJW)
- Understanding dynamics of social difference, including power, privilege, prejudice, discrimination, inequality, injustice, identities and political and environmental changes; (DEIS-US, DJW, WLC)
- Understanding the histories, cultures, expressions and experiences of historically marginalized peoples in the United States and in the world; (DEIS-US, DJW)
- Exploring linguistic and cultural competence beyond one’s own culture (WLC)
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Studies in the United States (DEIS-US)

Rationale
Contemporary U.S. society is marked by demographic and cultural changes that have both advanced and challenged the nation’s commitment to the realization of individuals’ unalienable rights as human beings. Scientific, technological, legal, political, and aesthetic developments have created significant opportunities throughout the U.S., even as they have also entrenched existing injustices. A Brandeis education should prepare students to engage with the dynamics, developments, and divisions within U.S. society in the twenty-first century.

To be active and productive participants in a society undergoing significant ethno-racial, political, environmental and cultural change, students will need to understand the important role that a commitment to social justice has played in the advancement of the United States. They will also need to address the role that inequality has played in the country's formation and continues to play in its development. Courses may draw on a variety of disciplinary approaches to address any of the following:

- The critical study of race, class, gender, sex, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, age, color, nationality and religion, with a specific emphasis on historically marginalized populations;
- The close assessment of laws, regulations, procedures, and policies that have enforced or opposed inequity and injustice;
- The analysis of theories that explain, analyze or critique inequality;
- The empirical examination of coalition and community-building, collaboration across difference, and other practices aimed at increasing inclusion.

Learning Goals
- Articulate evidence-based understandings of difference and how they work within frameworks of social hierarchy in the United States
- Increase one’s ability to learn from, and demonstrate respect towards, different peoples, cultures, and world-views
- Identify historical and contemporary strategies to address issues of social justice in the United States
- Examine US political, economic, legal, educational, environmental, social, religious, and cultural institutions, values and practices and their historical and contemporary impact in shaping power, privilege and disadvantage

Criteria for Course Approval
The content must focus on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion, with at least 50% of the material addressing US national and/or regional issues. Historical and comparative perspectives are encouraged, as is the study of theoretical frameworks. Assignments must require students to demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills.
Sample courses
AAAS 5a: Introduction to African and Afro-American Studies
AAAS/ENG 141b: Critical Race Theory
AAAS 136a: Black Feminist Thought
AAAS 156a: #BlackLivesMatter: The Struggle for Civil Rights from Reconstruction to Present
AMST 40a: Women in American History
AMST 50b: Religion in American Life
AMST 55a: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration in American Culture
AMST 139b: Race and Gender in the News
AMST 140b: The Asian American Experience
ECON 69a: Economics of Race and Gender
ED 170a: Critical Perspectives in Urban Education
ENG 38b: Race, Region, and Religion in the 20th Century South
ENG 57b: Writing the Nation: James Baldwin, Philip Roth, Toni Morrison
ENG 87a: Sex and Race in the American Novel
HSSP 114b: Racial/Ethnic and Gender Inequalities in Health and Health Care
HSSP 192b: Sociology of Disability
HIST 171b: Latinos in the U.S.
SOC 104a: Sociology of Education
SOC 112b: Social Class and Social Change
SOC 117a: Sociology of Work and Gender
SOC 122a: The Sociology of American Immigration
SOC 138a: Sociology of Race, Gender and Class
POL 125a: Women in American Politics
THA 144b African-American Theater
THA 145a: Queer Theater
THA 147a Latino Theater
WMGS 5a: Women, Gender and Sexualities

Difference and Justice in the World (DJW)

Rationale
Today’s world has been shaped by forces that cannot be understood without taking a broad global perspective. Human experience has been influenced by the expansion of democracy; technological, environmental, moral and aesthetic changes; greater attention to the protection of human rights; and the improvement of economic conditions for many. However, progress has not been equal, and for many, circumstances have worsened. Our world and its peoples continue to be deeply challenged by new forms of age-old problems. Religious, ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual differences are used as grounds for persecution, exclusion, and other forms of unequal treatment. The effects of climate change are likely to exacerbate already growing global economic inequality, food insecurity, and competition for natural resources. These phenomena are interrelated with the legacy or colonialism; world, civil and regional wars; diasporic migration; and terrorism.

As members of local and global communities, our students must be able to engage with the
world’s greatest problems and issues with courage and resiliency by applying critical analytical skills and historical perspectives, and by developing empathy for, and a deep understanding of other cultures and perspectives, and how they have been formed and continue to evolve. By learning to appreciate diversity and communicate across difference, Brandeis students enter the world better prepared to replace conflict with cooperation.

In this component of the requirement, students will pursue courses that focus on the social, cultural, political, environmental and economic diversity of human experience within the global/transnational context. Looking beyond singular or dominant understandings of the world, students will engage in the study of peoples outside the U.S., their histories, arts, cultures, politics, economies, environments, and religions. They will address problems such as:

- the ways in which different cultures, societies and social groups define and express themselves and are defined by others;
- how categories of difference are constructed, and how they intersect with one another;
- the production and mediation of social and cultural power in different contexts;
- the unequal effects of globalization and climate change on different cultures and groups in all spheres of human experience, across histories and geographies.

Within this context, we strongly encourage the creation and promotion of courses exploring environmental, scientific and artistic phenomena as global equity issues.

**Learning Goals**

- Increase one’s ability to understand different perspectives and learn from peoples, cultures, and world-views different from those that are familiar
- Develop skills to engage in comparative analyses of how historical legacies have shaped contemporary global and environmental realities
- Understand global, transnational and interconnected issues of social justice beyond the United States
- Evaluate strategies that address relevant challenges of global or local significance
- Promote alternative non-traditional ways of knowing that challenge conventional disciplinary logics

**Criteria for Course Approval**

At least 50% of the content must focus on issues and areas outside the United States. Historical, comparative and scientific perspectives are strongly encouraged, as is the study of theoretical frameworks. Assignments must enable students to demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills.

**Sample courses**

AAAS 115a: Introduction to African History
AAAS 125b: Caribbean Women and Globalization: Sexuality, Citizenship, Work
AAAS 163b: Africa in World Politics
ANTH 1a: Introduction to the Comparative Study of Human Societies
World Languages and Cultures (WLC)

**Rationale**

Study of another language is intrinsic to a liberal arts education. Language contributes to cultural identity, structures the way we view the world and ourselves, and shapes the literary and philosophical heritage at the heart of advanced learning about human societies in a global context. Language skills enhance one’s career opportunities in government, business, education, and research.

Studying another language enhances cultural literacy skills, increases tolerance for divergent points of view, and promotes empathy, social responsibility, and awareness of the value of human diversity beyond one’s immediate community. Because language is also implicated in structures of inequality and exclusion—within a given language (with some dialects of styles of speech being advanced at the expense of others); across languages in multilingual societies; and across regions and cultures of the world—language learning becomes a valuable tool for promoting inclusion. Even basic foreign language skills can
help to break down barriers between people and promote trust and cooperation.

The cognitive benefits of learning another language include the strengthening of analytical skills, pattern recognition, attention span, and problem-solving skills. As part of a liberal arts education, learning to communicate in another language challenges unexamined habits of mind, enhances understanding of the challenges of cross-cultural communication, enriches the imagination, grants access to diverse bodies of knowledge through sources in languages other than English, and enables one to speak with, and listen and write to friends, colleagues, and strangers whom one encounters in work, travel and community settings.

**Learning Goals**
- Achieve at least an “Intermediate” proficiency in a single language
- Understand the role of language in the formation and expression of cultural identity
- Address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in non-Anglophone languages and cultures

**Criteria for Course Approval**
Qualifying courses should aim to develop intermediate proficiency upon successful completion. “Advanced Courses in Language and Culture” should be taught entirely in a language other than English and should ideally address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in the target language culture

**Language Exemptions**
Students may be exempted from the WLC requirement by demonstrating at least intermediate proficiency in a language other than English* in speaking, writing and reading and listening comprehension. The total Global Engagement requirement for WLC exempt students is reduced to two courses. Students may also receive partial exemptions (one or two courses) toward the qualifying level of proficiency, which reduces the total GE requirement to three or four courses.

*Proficiency may be demonstrated by Brandeis placement exam or documentation of equivalent proficiency (including AP or IB tests, etc.).

**Course sequences leading to intermediate language proficiency**
Satisfactory completion of one of the qualifying courses in the last column satisfies the proficiency requirement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Preliminary courses</th>
<th>Qualifying Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>ARBC 10a, 20b</td>
<td>ARBC 30a</td>
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<td>Chinese</td>
<td>CHIN 10a, 20b</td>
<td>CHIN 30a (CHIN 29b?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>FREN 10a, 20b</td>
<td>FREN 32a</td>
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<td>German</td>
<td>GER 10a, 20b</td>
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<td>GRK 10a, 20b</td>
<td>GRK 30a or GRK 110b</td>
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<tr>
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<td>HBRW 34a or 35a</td>
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<td>Hebrew (Biblical)</td>
<td>HBRW 10a or 19a, 20b or 29b</td>
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<td>ITAL 30a</td>
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<td>JAPN 30a</td>
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<td>Russian</td>
<td>RUS 10a, 20b</td>
<td>RUS 30b (RUS 29b?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>HISP 10a, 20b</td>
<td>HISP 32a, 34a (or 108a?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yiddish</td>
<td>YDSH 10a, 20b</td>
<td>YDSH 30a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Courses (Advanced Courses in Language and Culture)**

ARBC 40b: Intermediate Arabic II
ARBC 106a: Advanced Arabic I: Contemporary Arabic Literature
CHIN 40b: Advanced Intermediate Chinese
CHIN 120a: Readings in Contemporary Chinese Literature: Advanced Chinese Language
FREN 104b: Advanced Language Skills through Culture
FREN 125b: Mediterranean Crossings
FREN 131a: Orientalism and Literature
FREN 134b: Masculine/Feminine
GER 103a: German Culture through Film
GER 105a: Writing on the Wall: Literature, the Arts, and the Fall of the Wall
GER 121a: Der Eros und das Wort: Lyrik, Prosa, Drama
Configurations of Requirements for Global Engagement

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Starting language level at Brandeis</th>
<th>DEIS-US</th>
<th>DJW</th>
<th>WLC</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

**How requirement will be administered**
The DEIS-US and DJW components of Global Engagement will be administered by a single faculty oversight committee appointed by the Dean of Arts and Sciences. World Languages and Cultures will be administered by a separate oversight committee.
**Possible Overlap/Integration with other proposed requirements**
Courses used to fulfill the Global Engagement requirement may double count to fulfill requirements in Schools of Thought and Foundational Literacies. Only language courses above level 30 may be taken in fulfillment of the Humanities School of Thought requirement and only if those courses are specifically designated as fulfilling that requirement.