



# Cross-Listing Courses and Developing Core Courses with CAST: Guidelines for Instructors

To request that your course be considered for cross-listing with CAST, please send the syllabus (or, for a new course, your course proposal) and a *brief* narrative of how you plan to engage the following criteria, to Barbara Strauss, CAST administrator ([bstrauss@brandeis.edu](mailto:bstrauss@brandeis.edu)).

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## OVERVIEW

The minor in Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation (CAST) offers a coherent curriculum designed to support Brandeis undergraduates with interests in the arts and creative expression as well as commitments to understanding and advancing social justice and the transformation of conflict. For additional information, see the [overview of the CAST program](#) and our [Objectives and Learning Goals](#), available on [the CAST website](#).

## CAST ELECTIVES (Departmental courses in CA, HUM, or SS cross-listed with CAST)

### ***Courses considered for credit toward the CAST minor will ideally:***

1. Provide opportunities to think critically about such topics as the following:
  - Power, inequality, and/or conflict;
  - Social justice and/or ethics;
  - Models of social transformation;
  - Creativity, aesthetic expression, and cultural production as ways of analyzing and transforming conflict, building resilience, and/or imagining and rehearsing change;
  - The contributions of cultural institutions (museums, theater ensembles, festivals, radio stations, etc.) in creating more just, more resilient, and less violent communities;
  - The relationship between aesthetic quality and socio-political efficacy; and
  - The risks of doing harm, and other issues of ethics and efficacy pertinent to creative and cultural workers seeking social transformation.
2. Demonstrate inclusiveness and equity in selection of materials and pedagogical approaches;
3. Be open to students from multiple disciplines, allowing interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge production (e.g., to creative, embodied, and/or experiential ways of knowing) and to research and the presentation of research (e.g., performance as a research method or platform for sharing research);
4. Offer opportunities to explore creative media and forms (such as narrative and story telling; literature; the visual arts; music; the performing arts; film, television, and interactive media) and to think critically about the properties and histories of media and forms and the ways artists, performers, and other cultural producers have used specific media and forms to respond to conflict and imagine and/or rehearse social change.
5. Include theory and practice. Ideally CAST courses will both examine significant examples as models of practical engagement by artists and cultural producers (both everyday and formal practices) and provide opportunities for practical engagement by students. Such practice may include (but is not limited to) journaling, performance, production of a portfolio, and conducting and/or presenting research through aesthetic and creative processes.

## CAST CORE ELECTIVES

CAST core electives link theory and practice in a sustained fashion across the semester and provide CAST minors the opportunity to produce a significant project practically engaging and critically reflecting on topics relevant to the specific course and to the minor.

## Recommendations

1. We recommend that instructors offering core electives require both practical engagement and critical reflection in an accompanying written document (e.g., a formal report documenting and evaluating process and outcomes, a curator's statement, an analysis of the ethics of the project).
2. We recommend that instructors offering core electives ask CAST minors enrolled in the course to meet with them early in the semester to discuss possible course projects.
3. Instructors of core electives are invited to contact the CAST co-chair(s) and teaching faculty for advice about project design, discipline-specific rigor, the ethics of engaging community, criteria for evaluating projects, opportunities for the public presentation of projects at CAST events, funding assistance, and other issues.

## Sample criteria for evaluating projects in core elective courses

1. Identification and analysis of the issues, problems, and/or concerns to which the project responds; these may be aesthetic, social, political, or historical considerations;
2. Narrative of project motivations, goals, the process of creation, and reflection on outcomes;
3. Engagement with materials, the medium, or the practice: Have prior artists or change agents used these methods? How did prior uses of, and critical commentary on, methods and materials inform the student's own choices?;
4. Relation of analysis and engagement/practice: How does analysis inform practice, and practice inform analysis?;
5. Engagement with other individuals and/or communities: Were research subjects a part of the process? How did other individuals and community partners contribute to the project design, implementation, and evaluation? What capacity to contribute did other individuals and community partners have? Does the project acknowledge community collaborators and consider its impact on the community?;
6. Reading list and commentary: What had to be researched, explored, and found out in order to conceptualize and create this project?; and
7. Links among courses taken for the CAST minor: How have other CAST courses taken by students shaped the questions they've asked, the materials chosen, the project created, and methods of assessing and reflecting on the project? Has the student's participation in the CAST minor suggested a possible career choice or life practice located at the nexus of arts, culture, social justice and peace—for example, as witness, participant, artist, facilitator, administrator, educator, or policymaker?

## Discipline-specific rigor: some considerations

*Forthcoming.*