

**UCSC Disciplinary Communication Grant  
Final Report**

Grantees: Assoc. Prof. Peter Limbrick; Asst. Prof. Jennifer Horne  
Film and Digital Media

We are pleased to submit this report on our work, funded by the Disciplinary Communication Grant, towards a new DC requirement in Film and Digital Media.

As noted in our application in December 2013, Film and Digital Media previously housed its DC requirement in one single course: Film 120 (Introduction to Film Theory and Criticism).

We have successfully made the transition towards a new DC structure. Our changes are summarized in this table:

**DC Requirements:**

<b>Pre-2015</b>	<b>FILM 120</b>	<b>/</b>	<b>1 course</b>
<b>Beginning Fall 2015</b>	<b>FILM 130/132AB/134AB</b>	<b>FILM 19x</b>	<b>2 courses</b>

- **This involves no change to what undergraduates are already required to take in the major.**
- **All FILM 130/32/134 courses will continue as they are currently taught, with the addition of library research training. We have shifted a small amount of TA support from 120 to 130/132AB/134AB to better support student writing in those courses; the ratio there is now 15:1 instead of 22:1. Written work in these courses will count towards a students' fulfillment of the DC requirement.**
- **All sections of FILM 19x will continue as currently taught. All written/edited/composed assignments in these courses will now be recognized as writing and will count towards a students' fulfillment of the DC requirement.**
- **Film 132C has been renamed Film 165G to better reflect its nature and function in the overall curriculum. It is not part of the DC requirement.\***

**Further Explanation and Justification of the Changes and the Place of DC in the Curriculum:**

Our consultation with faculty and comprehensive review of the entirety of the curriculum showed that, because the foundation for research and for advanced creative and critical expression in the major is carried out at two distinct levels of our curriculum—in the

historical surveys (130/32/34) and the senior seminars (19x)—these two levels are far better suited for integrating the instruction of critical and creative expression. Our change to the DC requirement is that students now satisfy it by completing two five-credit courses: a 130/132/134 course and a 194x/195/196/197 course. Since these courses are already required for our majors, the change we have implemented is mainly a redistribution of writing instruction and support for writing in courses featuring longer and more developed creative and critical production.

All students must take one or more of the courses in the 130/132/134 bracket to advance further through the major. And all students must fulfill the exit requirement of a 194x/5/6/7 course. Thus the new DC structure is simple and effective.

The requirement for FILM 130, 132A, 132B, 134A, 134B is 12-15 pages of writing spread across written, research-based or critical analysis assignments. The courses have a similar structure and similar outcomes, with assignments that involve techniques of academic research resulting in analytical research papers of substantial length and depth. These courses offer an ideal place for students to learn the foundational disciplinary communication skills of tuning their individual voices. Written feedback is given on the 12-15 pages of writing typically assigned, and discussion sections are taught by graduate student Teaching Assistants.

At the senior level, students will fulfill the second part of the DC requirement in one of the required exit courses. Those who complete 195 work with a professor in a supervised independent study to produce a thirty page senior thesis in written form. In the senior seminars and project workshops (FILM 194x, 196x, 197), students individually produce a minimum of either 16 pages of writing or its equivalent in the form of creative production. In all cases, students are engaged in intensive projects, with the evaluation of their writing serving as the central assessment tool. We wanted to acknowledge that our students' senior year projects in seminars and their independently-designed senior thesis projects are exemplary of intensive writing and expression taking a wide variety of media and mixed- and trans-medial forms. As a result, these courses now carry a DC designation as the second part in our requirements.

### **Implementation:**

After discussion at a full faculty meeting, these changes were proposed to CEP and were subsequently accepted. They are now active for Fall 2015.

### **Curricular Consistency and Further Evaluation:**

To ensure that these courses continue to function effectively for the DC requirement we are producing templates for 130/132/134 courses.\* This move is also prompted by our Program Learning Outcomes project which has focused us on successfully preparing students to graduate with the skills listed in our PLO documents; the 130-series core courses also include key research and citation skills that are integral to our learning outcomes (especially #1,5,6,7).\*\* While individual faculty will still have flexibility in exactly how they structure material in the courses, the template of minimum requirements will ensure continuity course by course and year by year.

In addition, students and instructors will be reminded of the place of both sets of courses (130s and 190s) within the structure of Disciplinary Communication by the following statement, to be included in all syllabi for these courses: *“This course partially fulfills the DC requirement in FDM by requiring a minimum of [12-15 for 130s; 16 for 190s] double-spaced pages of writing (including drafts) or its equivalent as created in pre-production, production, and post-production processes.”*

As indicated in our grant proposal, we will study the efficacy of the changes after one year: in late spring 2015, the heads of undergraduate critical studies and production will convene with the chair and the grantees to discuss their impressions of the first year of the new requirements. Minor changes could thus be made to courses for 2016-17 if necessary. The changes will be discussed again at the end of the new two subsequent years and our Learning Outcomes reports over this time will also be analyzed to assess how the changes have worked.

\*Our curriculum review and work on the DC also found that, within the 130/132 bracket, the previously-named 132C was an anomaly: topic-based rather than historical, focused around a select group of films rather than a survey of many, and with a different set of assignments, it was out of place in this bracket. Thus to better serve the DC structure, the FDM learning outcomes, and to better reflect its place in the curriculum, this course has been renumbered so as to sit within a bracket of similar upper-division courses at the 165 level.

\*\*Film and Digital Media Undergraduate Learning Outcomes:  
<http://film.ucsc.edu/program>

Peter Limbrick, Associate Professor, Film and Digital Media  
Jennifer Horne, Assistant Professor, Film and Digital Media