

**Application for UCSC DCG Funds**  
**Submit to the Academic Senate Office, c/o Susanna Wrangell**  
**([swrangell@ucsc.edu](mailto:swrangell@ucsc.edu))**  
**by December 19, 2014 or March 20, 2015**

Proposals must be approved by the department or program chair and Dean. They are due in the Academic Senate Office by Friday, December 19, 2014 or March 20, 2015 at 5 p.m. submitted by email to [swrangell@ucsc.edu](mailto:swrangell@ucsc.edu).

- 1) Proposed title for Disciplinary Communication Grant (DCG)?  
Rethinking the Disciplinary Communication and Methodology Course: HAVC 100A
- 2) Department/Program:  
History of Art and Visual Culture
- 3) Amount requested: \$39,700 over two years (\$22,650 in 2015-16 and \$17,505 in 2016-2017)
- 4) Number of students affected:  
Directly affected (ie: enrolled in course): 44 per year  
Indirectly affected by specially-trained TAs: approximately 3000 per year
- 5) Overview of the program's DC requirement:  
The Disciplinary Communications requirement for the History of Art and Visual Culture is HAVC 100A: Approaches to Visual Studies. This class introduces the major to the main issues of method and critique in study of art and visual culture. It focuses on understanding disciplinary and critical modes of scholarly inquiry in the visual arts, including role of historical research. Finally, it emphasizes intensive reading, discussion, and writing. The writing component takes students through the research and writing process as appropriate for our discipline.
- 6) What is proposed?  
We propose a partnership with the Writing Program to undertake a stepped approach to reworking our DC course:
  - we would redesign the course so as to enhance the learning of theory and method through writing assignments;
  - we would teach and collect assessment data on the efficacy of the new course design (see item #10 and the attached rubric);
  - we would then convene a workshop to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and utilize the assessment data to tweak the syllabus for the next year.The outcome is that, upon completion of the revised course, the student will be able to:
  1. understand the history of our discipline and the progression of theoretical models used
  2. understand the difference between art history and visual culture/visual studies
  3. critically read texts within the discipline and be able to articulate, both in oral and written argument, the strengths and weaknesses of the text
  4. conduct research in the discipline, including formulating research questions, identification and analysis of primary and secondary resources, and developing independent results

5. write an well-articulated paper with a well developed thesis/argument that demonstrates the appropriate use of source material to make the argument. This proposal primarily concerns developing and assessing 3-5, which are the DC components.

**Proposed Fall 2015 work:** As HAVC 100A is taught each winter quarter, we would begin by spending time in Fall Quarter, with the assistance of the Writing Program, rethinking the course content, the integration of theory and writing, and the assignments. We would hire a Visual Studies graduate student, preferably one who would then TA the course the following quarter, to organize the logistics of the planning process. This planning process would be done in collaboration with the Writing Program. By the end of the quarter, we would have the course ready for Winter Quarter.

**Proposed Winter 2016 work:** During the first iteration of the newly redesigned course, we would assess its effectiveness throughout the course. Specifically, we would evaluate all the desired outcomes for the course (see above for list of outcomes). This would be done through a combination of evaluation of all written assignments using a grading rubric (draft attached), self-reported data from the students, surveys, and focus groups. Finally, we would use anonymous mid-term written evaluations and final course evaluations in which there would be specific DC specific questions added (to be developed). We would also, with students permission, collect writing samples to use as examples for TA training purposes. For the evaluations, surveys, and focus groups, we will develop a set of questions that will ask the students to reflect on all of the five outcomes and give suggestions for improvements.

**Proposed Spring 2016 work:** In the Spring Quarter, we would convene a workshop with our faculty, the Writing Program, and the TA to discuss the new course and its effectiveness. This workshop would revolve around the assessment data and how well the new syllabus fulfills the needs of the program. Based on the assessment and the consensus of the faculty, changes would be made to the course. We would like to run this program for two years so that we could test the 2<sup>nd</sup> version of the course in 2015-16.

**Proposed 2016-2017 work:** Having worked through a complete revision and assessment cycle in AY 2015-2016, we then intend to formalize the curriculum in its second run, which will take place in AY 2016-2017.

At the end of the grant, we will have a completely redesigned course that will have multiple components. First, it will have a syllabus that will define the intellectual framework for the course and show the student's progress through the course material. For each of the intellectual units, there will be defined readings agreed on by all the faculty. Second, we will have developed a training program for our Teaching Assistants to teach writing (which is one of the PLO for our department). Third, we will have developed the research and writing component that is integral to the success of our student in our discipline.

- 7) What problem will this proposal solve?  
The current version of HAVC 100A was originally problematic and has become more so over the past decade as we tried to do too much in a single class. It was originally designed as a simple elective historiography class, a History of Art History. When the External Review highly recommended that we have a mandatory methods class, this

class was adapted to fill that requirement. Then the old “W” requirement was added, the very diversity faculty wanted their research methods and theory to be represented, and now the Disciplinary Communications has been superimposed. Once the class became mandatory for our majors, the seminar size became a bottleneck and the class was changed to a lecture with sections. Through all of this, there was no real rethinking of what we wanted to accomplish in the class and how to best do it. Because the class is problematic, students avoid taking it as long as possible so that, rather than being a foundational class that gives our majors the skills they need to succeed in upper division classes, they take it as seniors in order to enroll in their senior exit class. In addition, I have heard rumors that we are losing majors because potential majors do not want to take the class.

At present, our objectives are for students to gain:

- an understanding of and ability to use discipline specific methods
- a basic understanding of the discipline’s historiography
- advanced reading skills
- discipline specific research skills
- academic writing skills.

To achieve these objectives, we need to step back from the syllabus that is trying to serve too many masters, many of whom no longer exist, and completely rethink the course. We have attempted to do this as a group but, because there was no one faculty member charged with redesigning the class, the attempt faltered.

8) How does the DC fit within your program’s learning outcome goals?

HAVC 100A addresses each of our Program Learning Outcomes.

*PLO 1: Breadth of Cultural Knowledge:* In this class, the students are introduced to the the fundamentals of the study of visual studies.

*PLO 2: Critical Thinking:* The class ideally will be structured so that the students are reading, analyzing, and evaluating both the theory of the discipline and examples of culturally based analyses.

*PLO 3: Research Proficiency:* The student will be guided through a series of research exercises, with the goal of teaching the student disciplinary specific research skills.

*PLO 4: Written Communication:* An important focus of the course is in giving the student disciplinary specific writing skills. In the old syllabus, the students write a series of small papers that lead up to a major research paper (description, annotated bibliography, analysis based on two different methods, and final paper). Obviously we would rethink this process as part of the course redesign.

9) Detailed budget: (you may attach additional spreadsheet)

2015-16	GSR for Graduate Student (50% Fall)	12,600
	Course relief for Writing Program	8,050
	Teaching writing workshop for VS Grad Students	1,000
	Supplies (assessment workshop, photocopies & books)	1,000
	<i>TOTAL FOR 2014-15</i>	<i>22,650</i>
2016-17	GSR for Graduate Student (part-time, Fall & Spring)	7,000
	Course relief for Writing Program	8,050
	Teaching writing workshop for VS Grad Students	1,000
	Supplies (assessment workshop, photocopies & books)	1,000

TOTAL for 2014-15

17,050

**Total for 2015-2017:**

**\$39,700**

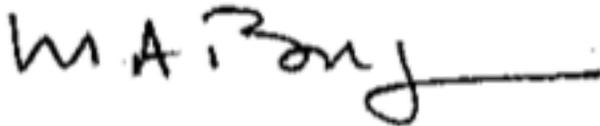
- 10) Assessment plan. How will the effectiveness of this change be measured?  
During the first iteration of the new syllabus, we would assess its effectiveness throughout the course. This would be done through a combination of evaluation of all written assignments using an anonymous grading rubric, mid-term written evaluations of the students, discussions with students, and final course evaluations. We would evaluate all the learning objectives for the course, including visual studies method, theory, research, and writing.
- 11) Sustainability. How will this innovation be continued without DCG funding?  
Once the course has gone through two cycles of testing and revision, we would be prepared to move forward with that syllabus. If the assessment indicated that the presence of the Writing Program was an integral part of the success of the class, HAVC would factor that into their own teaching budget.

Recommended by (or attach dated email approval):



\_\_\_\_\_  
Dept. Chair or Program Director

December 16, 2014  
Date



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Dean

Date

December 18, 2014

**Approved by CEP October 15, 2014**