

Art Department Disciplinary Communication Grant Application

submitted by:

A. Laurie Palmer, Professor, Art Department

Margaret Amis, Lecturer, Writing Program

March 29, 2018

1) TITLE

Research and Re-structure Writing For Artists Course

2) Department/Program:

This proposal is a collaboration between the Art Department and the Writing Program.

3) Amount requested:

We request \$29,551.64 to launch this program. Please see detailed budget below.

4) Number of students affected:

Approximately 90 - 130 students take this course every year; three TAs are hired each year to teach sections for the course.

5) Overview of the program's DC requirement:

At present, approximately 100 art majors take the Writing for Artists course, Art 190A, each year in the Winter quarter to satisfy the Art Department's Disciplinary Communications Requirement. Students attend two lectures per week taught by the professor (80 – 130 students), and one section taught by a TA (capped at 25 students). The course includes weekly writing exercises, readings, and assignments that emphasize writing in support of creative practices, including as a means to generate and communicate ideas, to analyze visual and other aesthetic experiences, and to build professional practice skills (artist statement, proposal writing, website). The course requires students to consider a range of existing and potential contexts for contemporary artmaking, and to imagine how and where their work will function in the world.

6) What is proposed?

We propose to evaluate and re-structure the Writing for Artists course in partnership with the Writing program and informed by research into effective methods and materials for teaching writing and reading for artists at other institutions and in other relevant contexts.

We will create lecture materials for faculty to use as an ongoing resource for the class. We will create a curricular outline for TAs to use in teaching section, and we will design a half-day TA training session to administer in advance of the course.

Fall 2018

Research and Re-structuring

- Work with Writing Program Faculty member to evaluate current structure for effective teaching of writing. (Margaret Amis, Lecturer in the Writing Program, has agreed to collaborate on this project if the funding is approved.)
- Research and compile materials and methods nationwide, including texts, videos, writing assignments, and a rich variety of work by practicing artists that will directly support the course goals. (Graduate Student Researcher will help with this research.)
- Re-design the course—including writing and reading assignments, in-class and in-section exercises, lecture content and section curriculum—to increase student engagement with writing as a useful and relevant tool for creative practice, to both encourage and challenge students at all stages of writing ability, and to improve all the students’ writing skills over the course of the quarter.
- Design and facilitate a 4-hour training for TAs that can be repeated each year
- Design rubrics for grading assignments that will facilitate grading by TAs, provide transparent and useful feedback to students, and serve assessment needs.

Winter 2019

Teach the re-designed course and collect assessment data

- Assessments data will include grading rubrics for assignments, examples of student work, in-depth course evaluations, and reports from class and section visits by Art and Writing Program faculty

Spring 2019

Evaluate

- Assess the re-designed course in a workshop with Writing Program and Art faculty
- Re-work the syllabus in response to evaluation results

7) What problem will this proposal solve?

Research: The large lecture format is challenging as a forum for teaching writing, especially when it relates to the idiosyncracies of creative practice and its rapidly evolving forms. Our students represent a wide range of new and traditional creative practices, and they do not all see the relevance of writing to their particular practice which decreases their active engagement in the class. At the same time, there is a strong need for our students to improve their writing in general and to learn to tailor it to their particular practice. We propose to spend dedicated time researching a wide range of texts, artists and artworks to better engage this broad range of students, and to examine pedagogical models nationwide for best practices in teaching writing for artists. We look forward to learning from the expertise of the Writing program at UCSC.

Re-structure: This class is tasked with trying to teach many different things to many different potential art practitioners. These tasks include teaching professional practices, contemporary art history and contexts, relationships between language and visual/aesthetic experience, and analytic reading skills, as well as basic writing skills in relation to all of the above. The latter is the main emphasis but perhaps the least effective given the structure of the large lecture class. In addition, the art major covers a wide range of creative practices, which require a variety of

different professional practice skills, and complicates the question of what preparation is helpful for an art career, setting up different and often divisive expectations among the students. It is complex to assign readings to an assembly of students who are required to take the course but don't all see the same relevance of their chosen path in the course content. Finally, with TAs doing the hands-on work with student writing assignments, the professor doesn't have built-in feedback loops for understanding how the students are learning, what they are absorbing and thinking, as reflected in their writing. No matter how excellent the TAs are, this interrupts the fundamental reciprocity between the professor and the students that is the motor of any effective class. We would like to explore other structures within the requisite lecture /section timeframes to better serve the needs of each student, while serving all of our students.

Evaluate: This will be critical for discovering how the re-design of the course is working and to implement ongoing changes as needed. Evaluation will be based on a combination of assessment rubrics, examples of student work, in-depth course evaluations, lecture and section visits by art department and writing faculty, and TA and faculty reports.

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

The Art Department PLOs are as follows:

Students who earn a B.A. in Art will gain the skills, knowledge, and understanding that will enable them to:

- 1. Demonstrate proficiency in a range of techniques and media.
- 2. Demonstrate the ability to imagine, create and resolve a work of art.
- 3. Communication: Demonstrate familiarity with and ability to analyze both verbally and in writing issues and forms of contemporary art with a clear understanding of historical precedents.
- 4. Critical Thinking: Demonstrate the ability to articulate an insightful response and analysis of a work of art in order to participate in discussions and studio critiques.

Writing for Artists 190A directly addresses two out of four of the Art Department PLOs (#3 and #4), and is implicated in the first two as well.

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

Course Replacement for Art Faculty member (fall)	\$8,000
Writing Program Course Relief (fall)	\$8,000
Graduate Student Researcher (fall)	\$13,020
Grad student stipends for TA training x 3 people @ \$23.47/hr x 4 hours	\$281.64
Food for TA training	\$100
Food for spring evaluation workshop with Art and Writing program faculty	\$150

\$29,551.64

10) Assessment plan. How will the effectiveness of this change be measured?

Assessment data will be collected during the winter quarter when the re-designed course is taught. This data will include a range of student writing samples from the beginning, middle, and end of quarter; in-class visits to lecture and section by art department faculty and from writing program faculty; in-depth course evaluations from selected students across a range of art practices, as well as the regular course evaluations; the syllabus and associated course materials. A workshop will be held in spring quarter with writing program and art department faculty to review and evaluate the materials.

11) Sustainability. How will this innovation be continued without DCG funding?

After the class is re-designed, the design evaluated, and feedback from that evaluation is incorporated into the class, it will be self-sustaining.

Recommended by (or attach dated email approval):



Dept. Chair or Program Director

March 23, 2018

Date



Dean

Date

March 29, 2018

Approved by CEP :

July 5, 2018

A. LAURIE PALMER
Professor, Art Department

MARGARET AMIS
Lecturer, Writing Program

Dear Laurie and Margaret,

Re: DC Grant Proposal Funding

I would like to thank you and your department for your commitment to undergraduate education and disciplinary communication. I am delighted to let you know that, based on the support of the Senate's Committee on Educational Policy, your proposal, *Research and Re-structure Writing for Artists Course*, will receive one of the Disciplinary Communication Grants.

Due to the number of proposals received and requested funding, your proposal budget will be partially funded for the project for a total of \$16,000. This will include:

Course Replacement for Art Faculty member (fall): \$8,000

Writing Program Course Relief (fall): \$8,000

The project is expected to take place during the 2018-19 academic year. Please provide Ted Coddling (tcoddling@ucsc.edu) with your FOAPAL, so the funds can be transferred.

Undergraduate Education maintains a web page (http://www.ue.ucsc.edu/dc_grants) of successful proposals, as well as their short final reports, in order to illustrate the variety of approaches to innovation and improvement to better achieve the goals of the disciplinary communication general education requirement. As your project is planned for the 2018-19 academic year, please provide a pdf copy of your final report, including produced materials, on or before July 1, 2019.

Thank you again for your commitment to undergraduate learning.

Sincerely,



Richard Hughey
Vice Provost and Dean
of Undergraduate Education

cc: Dean Solt, Arts Division
Professor Stephens, Art Department

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