

Chiron Studies

COURSE PROPOSAL APPLICATION

Welcome

Welcome to the Chiron Studies program of Portland State University. One of the very few programs of its type in existence, Chiron Studies helps students develop and teach University-accredited courses with the support and guidance of a faculty sponsor. Chiron was formed under the belief that students not only contribute significantly to the educational process, but that peer-to-peer learning is one of the most fundamentally successful and potentially innovative forms of education available. Many students, through independent research or life experience, possess valuable knowledge that is not otherwise available through other courses at Portland State University. From its beginnings in 1969, Chiron has grown in both the number of course offerings and the academic quality of our courses. We thank you for your interest in developing a course with us.

How to Get Help

Please contact the Chiron Studies office if you have any questions regarding our organization, your course proposal, or any material contained in this workbook:

Phone: 503.725.2998
Room: CH 345
Email: chironstudies@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.chiron.pdx.edu>

General Instructions and Information

Library

If you will need library materials for longer than the usual loan period, you will need to ask your faculty sponsor to get them for you. You are personally responsible for any items you borrow from the library to use in class.

Evaluations

Your students will evaluate your work once in the middle of the term and once at the end of the term. All reasonable and useful evaluation information will be furnished to you and discussed with you so that you may continue to develop professionally. Be sure to speak with the Coordinator before the end of the term to review the criteria on which you will be evaluated.

Teaching Stipends

As a Chiron Instructor the commitment you have made to Chiron Studies and Portland State University is important to us. As such you will be compensated accordingly for your time and service. Ostensibly, while we would like to provide a definitive amount for Instructors, our fiscal allocations will vary from year-to-year and budget-to-budget. Thus, you should ask the Chiron Coordinator how much Instructors will be paid during the term you will be teaching.

HR paperwork will be completed when you meet with the Chiron Coordinator. At that time it will be decided how you will be compensated (salary, hourly, stipend), and any payroll questions should be asked at that point.

Scheduling

The Registrars office is responsible for scheduling all rooms. If your course is approved by the Chiron Committee you will meet with the Coordinator to select a time for your class. In order to come prepared with your ideal class time please review the ***PSU TIME GRID*** in the Documents section of our website.

Textbooks

We encourage Chiron Instructors to embrace cost-effective textbooks. As a student yourself, you are no doubt aware of the rising cost of textbooks. As such, you may want to consider cost-saving options for your students such as: Course Reserve, Electronic Publications, Petitioning the Publisher, Second-Hand Bookstores (i.e., Cedric's, Powell's), Course Packets rather than textbooks. Additionally, Chiron has set aside minimal funds to help allay the cost of textbooks, and to furnish Instructors with desk copies

Multiple Listing

As you may have already noted on the Course Proposal Approval Sheet, we often have our instructors obtain permission from various Department Chairs to multiple list our course (IST 199) with their Department. Multiple Listing allows classes from our department (IST) to be listed under another department heading in the Schedule of Classes. This listing is in addition to (it does not replace) the normal class heading of IST. Multiple Listing is one of the many successful ways that instructors are able to advertise for their class.

COURSE PROPOSAL

Outline of a Finished Course Proposal

Your completed Course Proposal must include the following components. Please submit your proposal according to the order or components below. All of the following will be detailed herein:

1. The Course Proposal Approval form
2. The Faculty Sponsor Agreement form
3. Introductory Letter – in 500 words or less please explain to the committee why you are qualified to teach this course, what you hope to gain by teaching this course, and how Chiron Studies and Portland State University will benefit from the offering of your course.
4. The Course Syllabus – which includes the instructors contact information, the course delivery methods, grading criteria, required/optional reading, and topics and assignments.
5. Community Connection – a brief description of how your course, including materials and students, will connect with the community. This should include relevant organizational/individual contact information.
6. A Resumé – which includes your academic record and practical experience, including, if applicable, any academic publications or conference presentations.

In the following pages we will take you through the steps to making a Course Proposal.

Step 1: Introductory Letter

In 500 words or less please explain why you are qualified to teach this course, what you hope to gain by teaching this course, and how Chiron Studies and Portland State University will benefit from offering of your course.

Step 2: Determine the Boundaries of Knowledge

You probably will not be able to write an accurate course description or syllabus until you have determined the boundaries of knowledge you wish to present. For example, your topic may be the work of a certain author; to make information fit within the time allotted, you may choose to cover only one or two major works rather than the entire collection. When you present adequate amounts of information, rather than too little or too much, you give your students a fair chance to absorb the material.

Step 3: Course Title

Give your course a title. The title should be simple and self explanatory. As this is a 199 level course, most instructors use “Intro to” in their title.

Step 4: Develop a Course Outline

After you have determined how much information you will present, write a course outline which will serve as a conceptual framework. To do this:

- 1) Identify major topics,
- 2) Sequence major topics,
- 3) Break major topics into subtopics,
- 4) Sequence the subtopics within each topic.

You may choose to organize these items chronologically or by increasing conceptual difficulty.

Step 5: Write a Course Description

Write a brief 75-100 word description of the course content. Be sure to base your description on the course outline. Students will look at this information first to decide if they will take your course, so staying brief and to the point while still explaining what your course will offer is a good idea.

Step 6: Set the Course Objectives

What will your students be able to do upon completion of the course. Use verbs that describe something observable, and logical connections between discussion, reading, and writing, and synthesized experience. For example, if you were teaching the novels of a certain author rather than simply stating that students will “know” his/her work, write about their newly developed ability to analyze character development, or interpret significant narrative tropes.

Step 7: Determine Course Delivery Method

Go through your outline and determine how you will present the material, whether in a lecture, a demonstration, with a guest speaker, through media, a tour, and so on.

Step 8: Determine Texts and other Resources

Identify books, articles, websites, and other material you will require your students to read. You should also identify optional or suggested readings for high-achieving students that want more work. Be sure to have the complete information about the materials, including all publisher information (including ISBN if you are requiring particular editions or translations) so that you can complete the textbook requisition form accurately.

Step 9: Determine Grading and Evaluation Methods

Be sure to state clearly your expectations about grading and evaluations. To be sure that all Chiron courses follow the same University Academic standards, follow these guidelines as you develop your grading and evaluation methods:

- 1) Examinations: No more than 50% of the total grade,
- 2) Class Participation: No more than 35% of the total grade,
- 3) Assignments: As this is a lower-division undergraduate elective course, you should not assign individual research papers over four pages. No individual assignment should account for more than 35% of the grade,
- 4) Subjective Evaluation: A subjective evaluation of a student by an instructor may not be used as a basis for A-F grading, but may be used in the case of a P/NP grade.
- 5) Whenever possible base grades on a percentage of the total number of points possible, not on a curve. The standard percentage breakdown is:
 - 90-100% = A
 - 80-89% = B
 - 70-79% = C
 - 60-69% = D
 - 0-59% = F

We encourage Chiron Instructors to not use the plus/minus system, but to simply stay to basic A-F grading. However, if an appropriate situation has been developed and supported by the sponsoring faculty member, plus/minus grading may be used.

Step 10: Prepare a Syllabus

Now you have all the information you will need to prepare a comprehensive syllabus: Course description, course objectives, course outline *with relevant dates added*, assignments and their due dates, required and supplemental texts and other resources, and the grading and evaluation methods. Be sure to include the instructor's contact information. There are two other basic, pre-created components to the syllabus that you will want to add: 1) Disability announcement, and 2) Academic honesty. A typical statement that you may re-use is as follows:

Students with disabilities: If you have a disability and need an accommodation please meet with me outside of class so we can make the necessary arrangements. PSU students requesting accommodations must provide documentation of disability and work with the Disability Resource Center: 503.725.4150 / SMSU 435

Academic Honesty: You are expected to submit your own individual work. Students who misrepresent their work by copying or using information from others sources without proper citation will automatically fail the course.

Step 11: Develop the Community Connection

This may seem like a daunting task to some, and to others this may be inherent to your course content. Either way, we encourage and provide resources for Chiron instructors so

that each proposal can have some form of Community Based Learning (CBL) or Experiential Learning (EL). To make sense of CBL and EL and to give you more of a context for what we are looking for we have outlined some of the myriad ways that this step might be achieved. Lastly, you do not need to have this step completely solidified by the time you send in your proposal; you should simply have a clear idea in mind with the names of some organizations or persons you intend to connect with.

Distinguishing Features of Community-based Learning

- * CBL combines service in the community with student learning in a way that educates the student and improves the community
- * Joins theory with practice
- * Provides students with an understanding of educational relevance
- * Integration of classroom expectations with community-based work
- * Opportunities for students to gain applied experiences

Forms of Experiential Learning

1. *Volunteerism*

- * Primary emphasis is on serve and the intended beneficiary of the service.
Example: Student athletes working as volunteers at a special community event

2. *Community Service*

- * Some may be learned about how the service makes a difference in the recipients life, but the primary emphasis is on the service.
Example: Students delivering food for the Oregon Food Bank. They are aware of hunger in the community, but are primarily focused on delivering the food.

3. *Internships*

- * Hands on experience that is meant to enhance student learning relevant gaining a particular skill. Typically students do these as individuals.
Example: An archeology student works in the paleontology lab at OMSI

4. *Field Education*

- * Students who are involved in learning projects that bring them into environments outside the classroom.
Example: Geology students who spend the weekend in Central Oregon studying rock formations at Smith Rocks.

5. *Guest Lectures*

- * Often times bringing in an experienced member of the community can heighten the 'real-world' context of the classroom content, and can break

down the standard barriers of a classroom.

Step 12: Prepare Your Resumé

Prepare a comprehensive resumé, including all academic and professional qualifications. Include pertinent academic records (i.e., courses taken that pertain to this proposal) and practical experience, including, if applicable, any academic publications or conference presentations.

Step 13: Complete the Course Proposal Approval Sheet and Faculty Sponsor Agreement Form

A copy of the Approval Sheet may be found at the back of this workbook. The approval cover sheet needs the following signatures:

- 1) **Chiron Instructor**: Be sure to complete and sign the approval form before you begin seeking other approvals.
- 2) **Faculty Sponsor**: The faculty sponsor is responsible for the academic content of the course and as such s/he is the first person to approve your course. Be sure to go over your syllabus and other materials you have prepared with the faculty sponsor, and make any suggested changes or corrections. (At this time you should also have this person sign the **Faculty Sponsor Agreement form**)
- 3) **Department Chair**: If you choose to multiple list your course with another Department then you must obtain the approval from the Department Chair of said Department. Because you do not yet have a CRN number, this approval is preparatory. However, the pre-approval helps to ensure that we will be able to easily return to the Department and garner support and approval at a later date. Be sure you have made all corrections and changes from your faculty sponsor before submitting the proposal for the Department Chair's approval. This step is by no means mandatory.

Step 14: Submit the Proposal

Once you have completed Steps 1-13 to your satisfaction and you have checked your application for grammatical and lexical errors you will be ready to submit the proposal to Chiron Studies. All submissions of Course Proposal Applications are online. Go to our website (<http://www.chiron.pdx.edu>) and navigate to the Course Proposal form section (<http://chiron.pdx.edu/forms/course-proposal>). This web form will ask you for all the information you have just completed. Instructions have also been replicated. At the end of the form there is space to upload and attach your resumé and introductory letter. The approval forms must be submitted separately either as emailed PDF attachments (email to chironstudies@gmail.com) or as hard copies dropped of in CH 345. Your proposal will not be considered without the completed approval forms.