



# STUDENT DIRECTED SEMINARS

## COORDINATOR INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDE

2014-2015

Application deadline: Friday, April 11th, 2014 by 11:59pm.

The following guide contains information about the Student Directed Seminars Program and the application components you need to complete to apply to coordinate a Student Directed Seminar for the 2014-2015 academic year.

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### APPLICATION COMPONENTS TO BE SUBMITTED:

#### Online

- Coordinator Application Form (submit online at [studentdirectedseminars.ubc.ca/apply](http://studentdirectedseminars.ubc.ca/apply))

#### PDF or paper

- Seminar Proposal (See guide on Page 3)
- Budget Request Form (Page 5)
- Faculty Sponsor Form (Page 6)
- Faculty Recommendation Form (Pages 9-10)
- One copy of grades; all years (Download from SSC)

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2014 at 11:59 PM.**

If you have any questions about the application process please contact:  
Tlell Elviss at [tlell.elviss@ubc.ca](mailto:tlell.elviss@ubc.ca)

### HOW TO APPLY

1. Submit the Coordinator Application Form with completed paper forms uploaded as PDF files at [studentdirectedseminars.ubc.ca/apply](http://studentdirectedseminars.ubc.ca/apply)
2. If you would rather submit the required paper documentation in hard copy, please mail or drop them off at:
3. Centre for Student Involvement and Careers  
Attn: Tlell Elviss  
Brock Hall  
1874 East Mall  
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1

### IF YOU ARE PROPOSING A COURSE WITH TWO COORDINATORS

Each student will need to separately complete and submit a Coordinator Application and attach their own: Transcript of Grades and Faculty Recommendation Form. On behalf of both students, one student can submit a joint: Faculty Sponsor Form, Seminar Proposal, and Budget Request Form. These documents can be attached to either Coordinator Application.

### SDS Use Only

Application #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved with Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_ Not Approved: \_\_\_\_\_



## COORDINATOR INFORMATION

### Role of the coordinator

The Student Coordinator is NOT an instructor. The Coordinator's role is that of a facilitator. S/he is responsible for organizing the learning resources (e.g., guest lectures, reading materials, and films) to be used in the class, and sets the parameters of course content, structure, and evaluation procedures in conjunction with the faculty sponsor. Coordinators should not position themselves as leading or lecturing in every class throughout the term. Coordinators must also undertake and complete the same coursework as all participants.

Students in their third year of study or above can apply to coordinate a Student Directed Seminar. Coordinators are selected by the Advisory Committee, based on the quality of their proposal and the suitability of the student to be a Coordinator, including their academic record.

### Evaluation and credit

Most SDS courses are evaluated on the standard alpha-numeric scale used in the rest of your courses. Occasionally, courses can be set up to be graded on a pass/fail basis. The grading scheme and allocation of grades for each course is determined by the coordinator and the participants, with support and approval from the faculty sponsor, and applies to both participants and the Coordinator. Coordinators should not be grading the work of their peers unless the responsibility is being shared with all participants and grading is fully peer-based.

Final responsibility for assigning grades to all students, including the coordinator, rests with the faculty sponsor but most seminars will undertake rigorous peer grading for a good portion of the assignments and class activities. In some cases, Faculty Sponsors may agree to mark final papers, projects or assignments.

Coordinators and participants earn upper-level credit, either through a department or through an interdisciplinary Arts credit option (ASTU). Decisions on whether a seminar can be used to fulfill specific program requirements (i.e. major/minor credits), for yourself or other participants, are made by the students' program department.

### Seminar guidelines

Seminars may only run once. Students who would like to offer a course similar in content to a previously-offered seminar will need to clearly demonstrate how their offering is different in approach, scope, and content. Additionally, seminars should not replicate a course that is currently offered at UBC. Do your research and ensure that the course doesn't overlap with a current UBC course.

While Student Directed Seminars can run during both semesters of the Winter Session, most are offered during the January-April term. September to December is used to complete coordinator training, order textbooks, prepare a syllabus, create a reading list and grading rubrics, recruit students into the seminars, and obtain a course number and room. If your course is given approval to run in September, then the preparatory work needs to be done from May-August.

### Registration

Seminars will be listed on the SSC once they are open for registration. You can choose whether you want to have open registration, in which students register themselves directly, or if you want to pre-select the students by asking them to submit a statement of interest. In the latter case, once students are selected they would then be registered into the course by either the SDS Program or the Department. The minimum enrolment for each seminar is eight; the maximum is fifteen. Student coordinators have to pay for their seminar as they would for any other UBC course.



## SEMINAR PROPOSAL GUIDE

Make sure to consider and address the following four topics when drafting your proposal. Use the bullet points as guidelines. Your proposal should be no more than 2-3 pages in length.

### 1. Course Content and Rationale for why this course should be offered at UBC

- What is the academic focus of the course?
- What are the broad research theories that have influenced your interest in this topic?
- Who might be interested in the course?
- Why would you like to see this course offered at UBC? What gap do you see this course filling?

### 2. Course Structure/Format

- How often will the course meet?
- What role will you play in the course? How do you envision participants taking a role in the class? Will everyone have a chance to lead or facilitate a class?
- How do you see the structure of the class? (e.g. lecture, seminar, discussion group, films, field trips, etc.)
- Will the class include guest lecturers? Discussions of readings? Debates? Case studies?

### 3. Course Requirements and Evaluation

- What are the assignments? What are the readings?
- What form will the assignments take? (e.g. collaborative research projects, class presentations, essays). Keep in mind that SDS's are 4th year classes and assignments should be at the 4th year level.
- How will the assignments be evaluated? (e.g. by faculty sponsor, peer evaluated, through an expert in the field) and what is the breakdown of marks?
- On what other criteria are students evaluated? (e.g. participation, facilitation of a class etc.)
- How will you ensure your seminar is sufficiently academically rigorous?

*Remember that the course is an exploration with other students and a democratic process. Be prepared for changes to this section during your initial class meetings. It is vital to get the course marking scheme and criteria for assessment finalized with the class before the UBC course withdrawal date.*

### 4. Student Recruitment and Selection

- What kind of demand do you anticipate for this course? Why?
- How will you select and recruit students into your course?
- Will interested registrants need to have prerequisite courses, certain grades, or submit an expression of interest? Why are these prerequisites needed?
- Do you think a department will be willing to provide you a course number? If so, which department?



## BUDGET INFORMATION

The Student Directed Seminars Program has a limited amount of money to cover necessary course expenses. If you will need to purchase materials and/or pay for services for your course, please read this sheet carefully before submitting the Budget Request Form. Budget requests have no impact on the likelihood of a class being approved or rejected.

### What the SDS program will generally pay for:

- Photocopying: Class handouts, syllabi, etc. Please provide detailed descriptions of how much you need for each syllabus or handout.
- Learning and Facilitation Supplies: Flip chart paper, white board markers, or other tools that enhance the learning environment for students and are necessary to support the course goals. Some Coordinators have also chosen to purchase small food items for the class to build a strong student community. This is also an acceptable expense to include here.
- Technology: You may need to rent videos/films (of reasonable cost) that are relevant to course content.
- Other Stuff: Budget-permitting, we will try to cover any other reasonable materials of important educational value to your course. This may include thank you gifts for guest speakers, faculty sponsors etc.

**Outside Income:** If you need more funds then you might check out AMS grants, departmental funds or institutions that might like to sponsor some of your costs.

**Research:** The SDS committee believes that preparing a budget is an important step in the course proposal process. It should, therefore, receive the same kind of thoughtful attention in its preparation as do your proposal and course syllabus. This includes researching the costs, locations, and availability of the materials you wish to purchase/rent before you submit your budget. As coordinator, you are entirely responsible for this aspect of your class. We suggest that you begin thinking about and researching your budget as soon as possible.

**Request Process:** At the time you submit your proposal, you should have a rough budget worked out. Be prepared to ask and answer budgetary questions. After the review process you may have to finalize your budget and resubmit it to the committee before classes begin.



## BUDGET REQUEST FORM

Student Name:

Student Number:

Seminar Name & Number:

*Please Note: Your final budget cannot exceed \$100.*

DATE	ITEM	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
Publications (includes movie rental)			
Photocopies (number of pages & cost per page)			
Office Supplies			
Food			
Gifts			
		GRAND TOTAL:	

*Attach additional sheets if necessary*



## FACULTY SPONSOR FORM

Coordinators, please provide this form and the attached FAQs to your potential faculty sponsor for signing.

Coordinator Name(s):

Title of Seminar:  
(no abbreviations please)

Academic Year of Seminar:

**THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY THE FACULTY SPONSOR BEFORE YOUR SEMINAR CAN BE APPROVED.**

Dear Faculty Member,

You have been chosen by the above individual(s) as a potential faculty sponsor/advisor for a Student Directed Seminar (SDS). To understand the roles and responsibilities of a Faculty Sponsor, and for more information on the SDS program, please read the attached information.

If you agree to become a Faculty Sponsor, please fill in the information below and return it to your potential SDS student coordinator. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Tlell Elviss at [tlell.elviss@ubc.ca](mailto:tlell.elviss@ubc.ca).

Faculty Sponsor Information:

Name:

Title:

Faculty/Department:

Phone:

Email:

I have read the FAQs for Potential Faculty Sponsors, and understand the roles and responsibilities of a Faculty Sponsor. I agree to sponsor the above Student Directed Seminar in the upcoming academic school year.

Signature:

Name (please print):

Date:



## FACULTY SPONSOR FAQs

### How did this program develop?

The Student Directed Seminars (SDS) program is modeled after a similar program at the University of California at Berkeley and is an expansion of the directed studies option offered by most departments. UBC's SDS program has grown significantly since its inception in 1999. During the 2012/2013 academic year, 24 upper-year undergraduate student coordinators worked with 19 faculty sponsors to design, develop, and run 18 seminars for 179 of their peers.

### What are the benefits of sponsoring a seminar?

Sponsoring a Student Directed Seminar is a great opportunity to:

- Work collaboratively with a motivated student to create a student-directed peer learning environment for undergraduates;
- Cultivate a student's academic development by offering mentorship and guidance;
- Explore an integrated or interdisciplinary topic.

### What is my role as a faculty sponsor?

As Faculty Sponsor, you will guide the student coordinator(s) in the various academic processes required for seminars, including: developing the course outline, generating reading lists, and presenting grading options. To further assist in ensuring a high level of academic rigor, you may agree to mark, or read and comment on, the academic material produced by students in the class. While you are not expected to attend class meetings, you will need to be available to the student coordinator(s) for guidance, and to participants in the seminar, if needed. You are also required to sign-off on and submit final marks to the appropriate administrative contact.

### How much time is involved with being a faculty sponsor?

The time commitment depends on the seminar, and will vary accordingly. In many cases, you will be most involved in the facilitation of the key administrative and logistical details of the course. These tend to require attention at the beginning and end of the semester.

### Do faculty sponsors earn teaching credit?

Individual departments will recognize their faculty members' contributions to the SDS program in different ways. Please check with your Department to determine how they recognize this contribution.

### If I am a visiting or sessional instructor, am I eligible to sponsor a seminar?

The Advisory Committee expects that SDSs will be supervised by tenured or tenure-stream faculty members. SDS sponsorship requires additional work that may not be recognized by colleagues with other appointments. For example, sessional instructors would not be paid to oversee SDSs. However, with the support and approval of a Department Head, the SDS Advisory Committee will consider approving seminars sponsored by colleagues who are not tenured or tenure-stream faculty. It is imperative that non-tenured or non-tenure-stream faculty who agree to take on such a supervisory role do so voluntarily, and with the understanding that it is not a condition of their UBC employment.

### Are Student Directed Seminars academically rigorous?

Yes. Student Directed Seminars are based on the same academic principles that guide other classes at UBC and have been approved by the UBC Senate's curriculum committee. A committee of faculty members, staff and students reviews all seminar proposals for approval. Student Coordinators are given training from CTLT and are prepared for facilitating a seminar. In many cases, the students' passion for the subject and future plans for graduate level study, make these seminars considerably more challenging than traditional courses.



### **What kinds of students are drawn to this program?**

Our student facilitators are some of the most motivated, dedicated, and talented students at UBC. They are academically-strong students who have a passion for learning and the desire to critically impact the learning experience of their peers. SDS participants are equally-motivated and many actively select an SDS experience to participate in new and innovative learning opportunities.

### **If there is no 'instructor', how are students evaluated?**

Most SDS courses are evaluated on the standard alpha-numeric scale. On occasion courses will be graded on a pass/fail basis. The grading system for each course is determined by the coordinator and the participants, with support and approval from the faculty sponsor, and applies to both participants and the student coordinator.

Final responsibility for assigning grades to all students, including the coordinator, rests with the faculty sponsor but most seminars will undertake rigorous peer grading for a good portion of the assignments and class activities. Faculty sponsors may agree to mark final papers or assignments.

### **How many students can register for a seminar?**

The minimum enrollment of each seminar is eight; the maximum is fifteen.

### **Is there a limit on how many times a seminar can be offered at UBC?**

Seminars may only run once. Students who would like to revive a previously-offered seminar will need to clearly evidence how the second offering is different in approach, scope, and content. Additionally, seminars should also not replicate a course that is currently offered at UBC.

### **When do classes run?**

While Student Directed Seminars run during both semesters of the academic year, most are offered during the January-April term. September to December (or the summer months for Term 1 seminars) is used to complete coordinator training, order textbooks, prepare syllabi, create reading lists and grading rubrics, recruit students into the seminars, and secure course numbers and rooms.





## **FACULTY RECOMMENDATION FORM**

Coordinator Name:

Seminar Title:

(No abbreviations please)

Recommendation Due Date:

(Same as application due date)

Dear Faculty Member,

The above individual has expressed interest in coordinating a Student Directed Seminar. As part of the application process, we are looking for information and insights about the individual's interest in the field of the proposed seminar, their ability to work as a group leader and their ability to facilitate, coordinate and engage their peers in a learning process. Please answer the following questions with as much honesty as possible; your comments will be strictly confidential.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Tlell Elviss at [tlell.elviss@ubc.ca](mailto:tlell.elviss@ubc.ca). Please attach additional sheets if necessary. For more information about the SDS program, please visit: [studentdirectedseminars.ubc.ca](http://studentdirectedseminars.ubc.ca)  
Thank you for your time and assistance.

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How long have you known this individual?

2. What has been your relationship to this individual?

3. How would you assess this student's coordination and organizational skills?



4. How would you assess this individual's interest in and commitment to the proposed course material?

5. Please comment on the personal characteristics of this student (e.g. responsibility, communication, leadership, etc.)

6. Additional comments regarding this person's ability to lead a Student Directed Seminar:

Signature:

Name:

Date:

After completion, please email, mail, or drop off this form to:

Tlell Elviss, Centre for Student Involvement and Careers  
Brock Hall, 1874 East Mall  
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1  
tlell.elviss@ubc.ca