

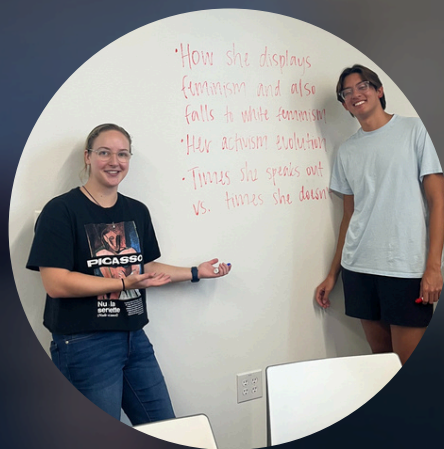
SIDECAR FACULTY MANUAL



Interdisciplinary Exploration and Scholarship Fellowship
A project of the Institute for the Liberal Arts

WHAT IS A SIDECAR COURSE?

A Sidecar course is a one-credit pass/fail course taught by two faculty from different departments who have a common interest. These courses are designed to facilitate innovative interdisciplinary teaching, including experiential and community outreach components, and to create spaces for intellectual risk and exploration for both faculty and students. One or two teaching assistants from the IDEAS Fellowship join each Sidecar course to help faculty plan and instruct. They also provide additional perspectives on interdisciplinary learning and connect the course to the larger Emory community.



WHY ARE SIDECARS IMPORTANT?

Sidecar courses were explicitly developed to achieve four specific goals regarding innovative, integrative, and interdisciplinary undergraduate experiences, including:

1

To facilitate interdisciplinary faculty team-teaching across diverse disciplines and perspectives; to increase faculty awareness, interest and skills in providing a broad interdisciplinary framework for their students.

2

To cultivate relationships both between faculty across the college and between faculty and students as collaborators in creating shared learning environments, and in this way, to flatten traditional hierarchies.

3

To increase and support both faculty and student access to experiential and community components in their curricular choices.

4

To provide a space where students can take intellectual risks to explore new areas of study, learn multiple perspectives on an issue or problem, and approach learning in new ways.

As opt-in courses, Sidecars present unique opportunities to faculty, teaching assistants (IDEAS fellows), and student to engage with topics they care about in an environments of like minds.

HOW DO I CREATE A SIDECAR COURSE?

The origin of all Sidecar courses is a point of connection between faculty areas of interest. Faculty may already recognize such a connection and have the motivation to further explore it, or IDEAS fellows (potential TAs) may suggest connections to faculty whose classes they have taken. Existing relationships between faculty members or between faculty and students who are IDEAS fellows are often the best places to begin exploring ideas for Sidecar courses.



Some example of previous Sidecar course titles and their parent departments are:

- “Your Brain on Rhetoric: Rhetoric and Evidence in Political Speech” - English and Psychology
- “Bodies in Space: Dancing Dynamical Systems” - Theater and Mathematics
- “Green Gentrification and the Atlanta Beltline” - Economics and Political Science
- “Marx Beyond the Manifesto” - Comparative Literature and Philosophy

A call for proposals for Sidecar courses is circulated to all Emory College and Oxford faculty shortly after the Course Atlas goes live each semester. The call will ask for a brief description of the proposed course and a meeting time that is convenient to the instructors.

Class meeting patterns can be innovative and flexible, to allow for experiential learning. For example, previous Sidecars have included Saturday field trips or longer meetings for half the semester. It is essential however that the one-credit total number of contact-hours be met and that students are able to attend all sessions (for example, a student who has another class during the meeting time of the proposed Sidecar cannot be given permission to register). The Registrar strongly recommends that irregular courses choose one of the available Friday meeting slots.

The call for proposals also asks if the instructors already know any IDEAS fellows who would be appropriate as TAs for the Sidecar; if not the IDEAS Fellowship will match a fellow to the instructors of the Sidecar.

Once the Sidecar proposal is approved, the ILA will list the course in the Course Atlas/OPUS at the designated meeting time (further registration details, below).

Faculty are each compensated \$1,000 per Sidecar course, payable at the end of the semester.

How do I identify an IDEAS Fellow as my TA and what is the role of the TA?

Once a Sidecar class is approved for a subsequent semester, selection and/or solicitation of an appropriate IDEAS Fellow to serve as TA for the class will be discussed in the weekly meeting of the IDEAS Fellowship, which includes 28 selected undergraduates and the five regular ILA faculty members. One or two IDEAS Fellows with similar interests or experience with the topic will be assigned as teaching assistants for the course to help navigate course planning and organization. Faculty sponsoring the Sidecar can express their preference for particular fellows, if they are familiar with members of the fellowship; in some cases, the fellows themselves may have suggested the idea of the Sidecar and would thus be naturally suited as TAs. ILA faculty will inform the Sidecar instructors and introduce the IDEAS fellows who will TA the course, if need be.

Sidecar TAs serve a purpose distinct from a typical undergraduate TA. In accordance with the second goal of Sidecar courses, TAs are critical collaborators in the design and weekly pedagogy of a Sidecar course. TAs should be involved in planning course sessions, creating learning goals for students, leading discussion, and proposing topics and pedagogical strategies. TAs receive payment or academic credit for their work with Sidecar courses. Faculty and TAs will meet as soon as possible after the approval and listing of the Sidecar course topic to begin planning specific components of the course. Weekly meetings between faculty instructors and TAs are encouraged. It is expected that faculty instructors and TAs will attend all meetings of the Sidecar class.

Do I need a syllabus for the Sidecar course and what should it include?

Yes. Like any course, a syllabus should be distributed and supplied for ILA files.

Each Sidecar course syllabus should include information about the purpose and scope of the course, mandatory meeting dates and times, attendance and makeup work policies, and learning outcomes or goals. The syllabus should be available to interested students at the time of registration.

a. Course description and learning outcomes

Faculty and TAs should work together to determine students' learning outcomes or objectives of a Sidecar course, and it should be evident how meeting times and activities relate to such goals.

Faculty and TAs should also discuss the TAs' own objectives for the course. Since this is an opportunity to experience planning and instructing a course with mentorship, it is helpful for TAs' professional development if there are separate learning objectives for them.

b. Hours requirement

To fulfill the requirements for a one-credit, pass/fail class, Sidecar courses must meet for a total of fifteen hours of instruction during the semester. These hours do not necessarily need to be filled through weekly meetings. For example, if a field trip to a location related to the topic lasted for four hours, those four hours count towards the fourteen hours requirement. Faculty and TAs can determine the structure of how these hours are filled in whatever manner they deem appropriate for the content of the course from weekly meetings to field trips. Students should be informed of all Sidecar meeting dates and times during course registration. Students in Sidecar courses are not typically assigned out-of-class work unless necessary to enhance the subsequent class meeting or to complete makeup work.

c. Attendance policy and makeup work

Each Sidecar course syllabus should include an attendance policy and requirements for makeup work if a student misses a scheduled meeting. Students should be informed that they risk receiving an unsatisfactory grade in the course if they do not attend class meetings or complete makeup work as directed.

Student registration

Registered Sidecar courses will be listed in Emory's Course Atlas as soon as possible after the Sidecar course is approved. It is important that the registration process be completed before the end of add/drop/swap.

Sidecar courses are typically most successful when about ten students enroll, but the class size is up to the discretion of faculty and TAs

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES IN EACH CLASS MEETING AS A SIDECAR INSTRUCTOR?

Sidecar courses challenge traditional pedagogical methods. They are a collaboration between faculty, IDEAS fellow TAs, and students and provide a chance for everybody to learn from each other. While faculty plan and instruct Sidecar courses, TAs are also involved in planning and instruction. Further, students' individual interests should be considered as the semester progresses to allow for maximum participation.

Including IDEAS TAs

It is the responsibility of faculty to ensure that TAs are included in planning, organizing, and instructing appropriate class meetings. Faculty should work together to make the final decisions in curriculum and plans. The core of Sidecar courses are the topics of overlap among the faculty and TA's regarding the central topic. TAs should be coached to become familiar with such topics, so that they can suggest student perspectives on pedagogy and extensions of the questions that will lead to lively discussion and shared experiences in the class.

Instructing classes

Sponsoring faculty and TAs should be present at all Sidecar meeting times.

Student engagement

Sidecar courses support students in their intellectual pursuits inside and outside the classroom. In accordance with the fourth goal of Sidecar courses, we encourage faculty members to create spaces where students to learn in new ways and leave with newfound abilities to think and solve problems in interdisciplinary ways. To make the most of students' time and experience in a Sidecar course, we encourage faculty and TAs to ask students for their interests about the topic, motivation for taking the class, and their own objectives for their learning experience.

- For additional questions, concerns, and troubleshooting, please contact: Dr. Kim Loudermilk, director of the IDEAS Fellowship: klouder@emory.edu