UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

English, Rhetoric and Composition MA and Professional Writing Graduate Certificate Program Handbook - 2023/24

Reference this handbook to learn about policies, requirements, procedures, and resources for graduate students in the English, Rhetoric and Composition MA offered by the Department of Writing and Rhetoric in the College of Arts and Humanities.



Last updated: July 23, 2023

Letter of Welcome

Dear Graduate Student:

Welcome to the UCF Department of Writing and Rhetoric. We are excited to have you in our program. Whether you are exploring the possibility of joining our program, starting the Graduate Certificate in Professional Writing, wrapping up your MA in Rhetoric and Composition, or anywhere else along the way, we look forward to the opportunity to work with and learn alongside you.

Throughout your program, you will work with an energetic and engaged group of graduate faculty members who will invite you to learn about established as well as cutting edge research in the field. To assist you in your educational journey, the graduate program team will help you to plan your course schedules, track your progress toward meeting requirements and deadlines, understand your rights and responsibilities, and choose the best professional development opportunities for you.

We are committed to being accessible and responsive to your needs. To contact the program email us at: rhetgrad@ucf.edu. We can help you to set up an advising meeting, schedule a time to talk about challenges you're having or opportunities you're considering, and more. If we cannot answer a question you raise, we will help you to reach out to offices across campus and connect you with the resources you need to succeed.

To stay in touch with the program and aware of university news, check your @ucf.edu email regularly. Stay tuned to the program listserv to learn about department news and events and opportunities on campus and beyond.

Welcome to the 2023-2024 academic year!

Sincerely,

Melody Bowdon, Ph.D., Director of Graduate Programs
Steffen Guenzel, Ph.D., Graduate Academic Advisor
Sydney Mills, B.A., Administrative Assistant II

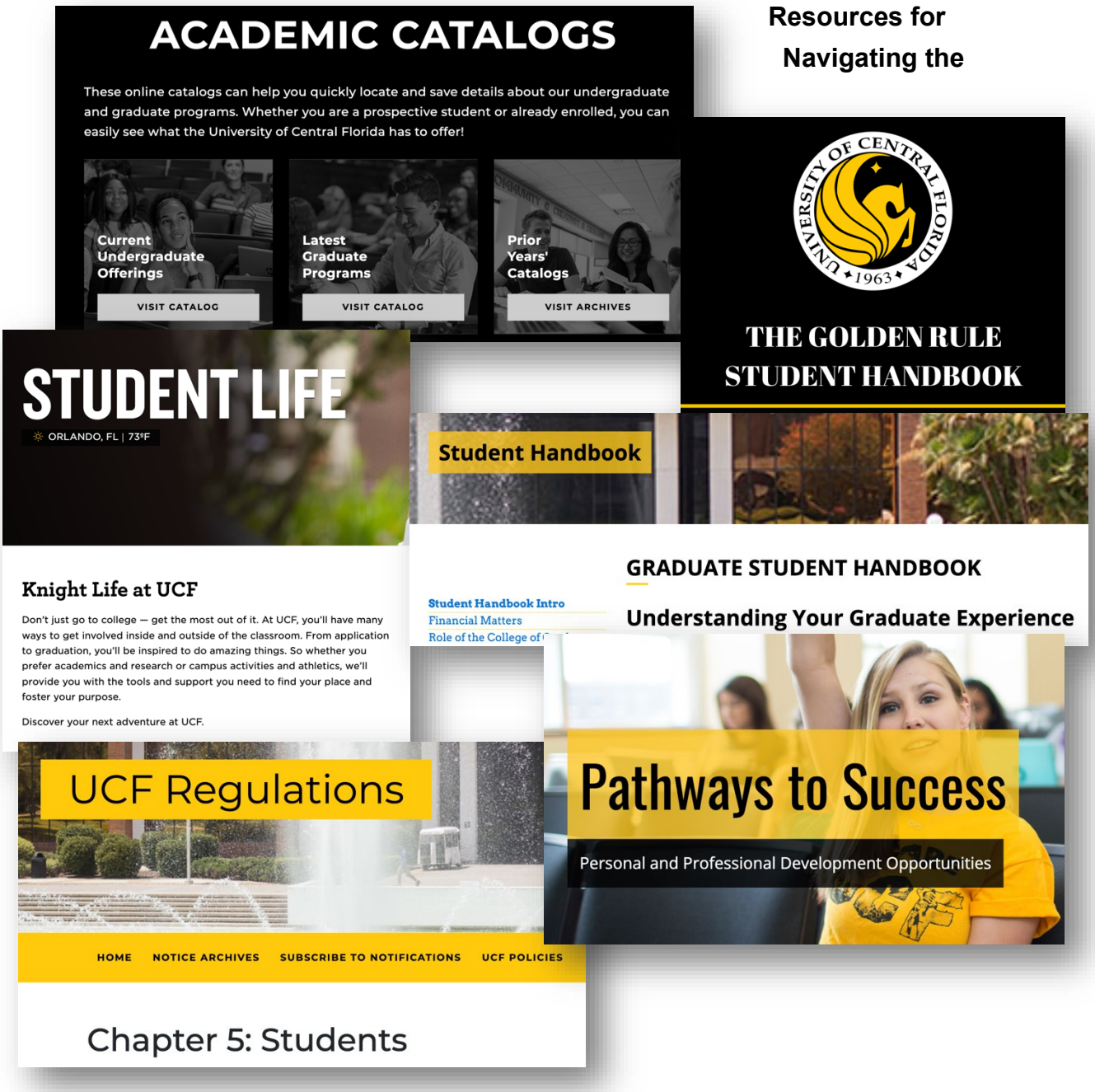
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Navigating Policy and Resources at the University of Central Florida

This handbook is one of many sources to consult as you become familiar with the policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms of graduate education at the University of Central Florida.



Graduate Student Experience

Together, the Graduate Student Handbook, published by the College of Graduate Studies, and this program handbook can serve as guides to assist you throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements, and guidance for all graduate students. This program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both handbooks are useful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

Whom to Contact with Questions

Many of your questions about how to succeed and thrive as a graduate student will be answered in the policies, procedures, requirements, and resources listed in this document. When you need further information, consider reaching out to the contacts below.

Department of Writing and Rhetoric Graduate Support Team

The main method of communication for the graduate program in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric is via email: rhetgrad@ucf.edu. The graduate leadership team monitors this email account and responds regularly to messages sent there. Use this address to ask general questions and request advising appointments.

You are also welcome to reach out to the graduate leadership team as individuals. If you have a question about which courses to take or how your degree requirements are shaping up, reach out to the Graduate Academic Advisor, Dr. Steffen Guenzel, via email at steffen.guenzel@ucf.edu. If you have more general questions about career planning, course projects, choosing your graduate committee, or specific concerns about your experience in the program, reach out to the Director of Graduate Programs, Dr. Melody Bowdon, via email at melody.bowdon@ucf.edu or via phone at 407-823-2168. (Dr. Bowdon is referenced as Program Director throughout the remainder of this document.) We are both available to assist you if you're not sure where to turn.

Graduate School Services

For general graduate inquiries and graduate student services from the Graduate School, please review the College of Graduate Studies website as an additional resource. To contact the College of Graduate Studies reach out via email at graduate@ucf.edu or via phone at 407-823-2766.

Introduction/Overview Section

Complete Names of Programs

English, Rhetoric and Composition MA
Graduate Certificate in Professional Writing

College

College of Arts and Humanities

Department

Department of Writing and Rhetoric

Program Type

Master of Arts and Graduate Certificate

Program Websites

Rhetoric and Composition, M.A - Writing and Rhetoric (ucf.edu)
Professional Writing Graduate Certificate - Writing and Rhetoric (ucf.edu)

Years of Program Inception

2010 (MA) and 2000 (Certificate)

Program Overview

The graduate programs of the Department of Writing and Rhetoric include the MA in Rhetoric and Composition and the Professional Writing Certificate. Our graduate programs prepare students to excel in ethical analysis as well as create, edit, and curate multimodal texts in professional writing environments. Our students gain or continue jobs as educators, non-profit writers, and digital content developers, and some students go on to doctoral programs.

Our MA program is designed for students interested in the fundamentals of the theory and practice of writing. Our program offers online and in-person classes to prepare students to work as writers and to teach writing. The program provides students with a background in Writing Studies to apply ethical approaches to writing, research, and the teaching of multimodal writing in a variety of environments.

Our **Graduate Certificate**, which is fully online, features a flexible curriculum appropriate for working professionals. It provides students with rhetorical theories and practices to consider ethical approaches to creating and consuming multimodal texts in professional writing environments.

Our faculty have a range of research expertise in rhetoric and composition, allowing students opportunities to take special topics courses and engage in directed research in areas of study such as:

- Civic and Public Writing
- Cultural Rhetorics
- Digital Rhetoric and Multimodal Composing
- Immigration Rhetoric
- Professional and Technical Writing
- Rhetoric of Health and Medicine
- Social Media and Networked Writing and Rhetoric
- Sociohistoric Perspectives of Literacy and Learning
- Transnational Literacy and Rhetoric
- Visual and Material Rhetorics
- Writing Program Administration

Offering small and student-centered programs with the resources of a large research institution, our faculty provide one-on-one attention to students as they develop as researchers, teachers, and professionals.

Our program is especially committed to:

- Preparing students to engage in technologically adept, theory-informed research and teaching about rhetoric, writing, and literacy.
- Sustaining diverse and inclusive learning environments predicated on ongoing practices of advocacy, social justice, anti-oppressive pedagogy.
- Providing a robust and supportive infrastructure for gaining career-enhancing experiences such as opportunities to work in the University Writing Center, Composition Program, and Writing Across the Curriculum Program.
- Supporting students as they develop their own interests and career trajectories.

The programs are housed in a stand-alone Writing and Rhetoric department, the first of its kind in the state of Florida. Here, students are part of a vibrant community of scholars who engage one other through reading groups, teaching workshops, department symposia, and other events. Many students are supported through working in the

University Writing Center and in teaching assistantships, which cover the price of tuition and provide a yearly stipend. Students may also be awarded university fellowships.

Information for Prospective Students

MA Program Admission Requirements

For information on general UCF graduate admissions requirements that apply to all prospective students, please visit the **College of Graduate Studies** website. All applicants must apply online and all requested materials must be submitted by the established application deadlines. Incomplete applications cannot be considered after the deadline has passed.

In addition to the general UCF graduate application requirements, applicants to the Rhetoric and Composition MA must:

- hold an earned bachelor's degree in English, Rhetoric, and Composition, Writing Studies, Communication Studies, or a related discipline, or a bachelor's degree with substantial coursework in one of the aforementioned areas, from an accredited institution recognized by UCF or recognized foreign institution prior to entering graduate program.

- provide one transcript from each college/university attended, demonstrating a competitive GPA in the student's major field of study.

- provide three letters of recommendation. These should be from faculty members, university administrators, colleagues, or employers. The letters should be current to the application and should address the relevant skills of the applicant, the aspirations of the candidate, and an assessment of the applicant's ability to perform graduate-level research. Letters that provide specific examples are more helpful than those that speak about the applicant's abilities in vague generalities. Confidential letters are preferred.

- submit a personal goal statement of 500-750 words. Applicants should explain their motivation to pursue a graduate degree in this field. The statement should discuss:
    - relevant professional background and any previous professional and research experience
    - why the MA in Rhetoric and Composition **in particular** is appropriately aligned with the applicant's future professional and research goals

    - the particular area(s) of research interest and the names of any UCF faculty member(s) who share a similar research focus and with whom the applicant would like to work.

- provide a substantial academic writing sample (approximately 10 double-spaced pages) to demonstrate ability to identify a question and construct a research-based argument. Acceptable writing samples may include a chapter from a undergraduate or honor's thesis, a term paper for a seminar, or other research projects that demonstrate the applicant's ability to pursue the type of research that could possibly lead to a completed research project. Another option is a (digital) portfolio, for example in the form of a teaching portfolio for current educators, that illustrates the applicant's ability to engage in advanced inquiry and academic work.

Other admission notes:

- The GRE is not required for admission to this program.

- Applicants to this program, except those that have earned or will earn a Master's or Doctoral degree from an accredited U.S. institution recognized by UCF, who have attended a college/university outside the United States must provide a course-by- course credential evaluation with GPA calculation. Credential evaluations are accepted from World Education Services (WES) or Josef Silny and Associates, Inc. only.

- Meeting minimum UCF admission criteria does not guarantee program admission in a given semester. Final admission is competitive and is based on a comparative evaluation of each applicant's proficiencies, past performance, recommendations, as well as the match of this program and faculty expertise to the applicant's career/academic goals, and the applicant's potential for completing the degree. Students who are not admitted may reapply in a future semester. Our faculty and department are committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for students of all backgrounds. If you are considering applying to the program, reach out to Dr. Melody Bowdon, melody.bowdon@ucf.edu, for more information about the program and the admission process.

Graduate Certificate Admission Requirements

Admission to the certificate is open to those with a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution. An application to the graduate certificate program and official transcripts must be submitted. Applicants must apply online. All requested materials must be submitted by the established deadline. For more information, email rhetgrad@ucf.edu.

Onboarding Information for New Students

As you join or continue to belong to our program community, you will have a variety of opportunities to participate in onboarding events.

UCF first-time graduate students are encouraged to attend a university-wide New Student Orientation. You can find information about this session here.

The Department of Writing and Rhetoric will also host events for you throughout the year. Information sessions designed to share updates on policies, answer questions about new programs, etc., will take place via Zoom. We will also host in-person social events on campus periodically. We will offer a Zoom-based onboarding session for new students each semester.

Before you begin the semester, complete the onboarding steps described at this URL: https://graduate.ucf.edu/admitted-students/.

They include:

- Respond to Your Admission Offer
- Submit Official Final Transcripts
- Verify Your Residency Status for Tuition Purposes
- Submit Required Immunizations
- Attend Orientation
- Get Your UCF ID and Student ID Card
- Explore Your myUCF Portal
- Set up Your Knights Email
- Review Holds
- Complete the Pressures to Plagiarize Course
- Register for Classes
- Review Graduate Student Resources

You should also check out The Graduate Student Center, which is your space on campus to connect and network with other graduate students for professional development and study space. This center is conveniently located in Suite 213 of Trevor Colbourn Hall.

Information for Current Students

Enrollment Process

Enrollment for graduate courses is managed by the Department of Writing and Rhetoric. To protect space in the courses for our students, the department marks all graduate courses in the online class schedule as closed. To register, students must obtain course enrollment permission numbers from the Graduate Program. Requests for permission numbers should be submitted via the program e-mail rhetgrad@ucf.edu. Remember to work with the graduate advisor to choose classes that fit your plan of study and advance you toward your goals.

Advising

Advising relationships are an important part of your academic experience, shaping both the experience and development of students and faculty members alike.

Each semester as you prepare to enroll for the coming term, you should reach out to the Graduate Academic Advisor for advice and insights about your schedule. To schedule this meeting, email rhetgrad@ucf.edu. The advisor can meet with you via Zoom or in person.

In addition to the program advisor, each graduate student will work with a faculty mentor / thesis advisor who has two main roles:
1) To assist you in acquiring the highest possible level of knowledge and competence in the field, and
2) to chair the committee that will determine whether you have performed at an acceptable level in each of your degree milestones.

Other roles of your advisors may include tracking your progress in completing your degree, assisting with course selection and planning your academic path, and helping you identify possible research mentors, committee members, and research opportunities.

Both the student and advisor are responsible for making their expectations clear to each other. Work with your advisor to establish a mutually positive and productive relationship. If you have communication or other challenges working with your advisor

that you cannot resolve, reach out to the Program Director, Dr. Melody Bowdon, meldoy.bowdon@ucf.edu, for support.

The MA Curriculum

The MA program requires 33 credits (9 in required, including ten classes and a final project).

The **required courses** in the program as of Fall 2023 are below.

You must complete both of these courses:

- ENC5920 - Colloquium in Rhetoric and Composition
- ENC6720 - Research Methods in Rhetoric and Composition

You must complete one of these courses:

- ENC5703 - Composition Histories and Theories
- ENC6335 - Rhetorical Traditions
- ENC6712 - Studies in Literacy and Writing

The remaining five classes are **electives,** which fit into the restricted and non-restricted categories.

Three courses are **restricted electives**, which means they must be chosen from a specific list developed by the faculty. The list of restricted elective options is below. **Please note that not all courses listed below are offered regularly.**

- ENC5237 - Writing for the Business Professional (3)
- ENC5276 - Theory and Practice of Tutoring Writing (3)
- ENC5337 - Rhetorical Theory (3)
- ENC5703 - Composition Histories and Theories (3)
- ENC6245 - Teaching Professional Writing (3)
- ENC6247 - Proposal Writing (3)
- ENC6306 - Persuasive Writing (3)
- ENC6332 - Gendered Rhetoric (3)
- ENC6333 - Contemporary Rhetoric and Composition Theory (3)
- ENC6335 - Rhetorical Traditions
- ENC6338 - The Rhetorics of Public Debate (3)
- ENC6339 - Rhetorical Movements (3)

- ENC6421 - Digital Rhetorics (3)
- ENC6428 - Digital Literacies (3)
- ENC6701 - Professional Writing Studies (3)
- ENC6712 - Studies in Literacy and Writing
- ENC6945 - Community Literacy Practicum (3)
- LIN5137 - Linguistics (3)
- LIN5675 - English Grammar and Usage (3)
- LIT6435 - Rhetoric of Science (3)
- ENC5705 - Approaches to Teaching College Composition (ucf.edu) (3) (Note: Graduate Teaching Associates are required to enroll in this course before they become instructors of record.)
- ENC6740 - Topics in Rhetoric and Composition (3) (Note: this course may be used in the degree program a maximum of two times when the course content is different.

Your final two courses will be **unrestricted electives**, which means that the options are flexible. You may either choose additional courses from the restricted electives list above or identify other suitable graduate-level courses offered by Writing and Rhetoric or other programs and departments, such as Texts and Technology or English. Talk with the graduate academic advisor before selecting outside courses to ensure their relevance to your study. Note that not all courses you find in the catalog will be available to DWR MA students each semester. Enrollment in these courses requires permission from the home departments and is at their discretion. Request help from the grad leadership team to request such permissions. Further, if you want to take a restricted or unrestricted elective from another program, it's important to request permission as early as possible to maximize your chances of taking the course.

With program permission, you can also take up to six hours of ENC 6918 **(Directed Research)** as independent study, which would count for unrestricted elective credit. To obtain approval to enroll in an independent study course, students must submit a draft proposal of a topic, a list of readings, and a set of assignments to a DWR faculty member for their consideration. After the student and faculty member agree on the final details, the proposal (with faculty approval) must be submitted to the program via email at least one week prior to the last day of classes in the term before you will enroll in the course. Please note that faculty members are under no obligation to teach independent study courses, but many will do so if the student demonstrates a high level of motivation and the topic has connections to their own teaching and research. Independent studies may not duplicate courses in the catalog, whether or not those courses are being

offered during the semester of enrollment. Check in with the graduate academic advisor as you develop your independent study to ensure its relevance to your plan of study and graduation path.

The Major Research Project (Thesis/Non-thesis)

The final three credits in the MA program come from a **major research project**. Our program offers two options for completing this requirement: thesis and non-thesis. You are not eligible to register for thesis hours until all your course requirements have been completed.

The **thesis** option is arguably the more traditional approach to graduate program completion. It requires the student to work with a faculty committee, including an advisor, to create a substantial research-based project, typically about 70-100 pages in length. This kind of project prepares the student to engage in sustained, independent research, which can be particularly useful for those students who wish to pursue a PhD after completing the MA. The thesis option requires students to complete three credits of ENC 6971 (Thesis Hours).

The **non-thesis** option also involves a committee, an advisor, and a sustained research project, but generally yields a shorter final product that is focused on an external audience. It might be an article for publication, a grant proposal for a project, a digital portfolio, or a curriculum project. The non-thesis option requires students to complete three credits of ENC 6918 (Directed Research).

You do not have to know which of these options you plan to pursue when you begin the program, but it's smart to begin thinking about which is the best fit for your goals as soon as possible. Take opportunities to talk with faculty members, program alumni, and students who are farther along in the program to determine what is best for you. Ideally you should have a general plan in place by the time you have completed 15 credits, or half of your course work.

Major research projects completed by DWR alumni here at UCF may be accessed and viewed online through the **UCF Library STARS Repository**.

College of Graduate Studies Major Research Project Requirements

All MA students engaging in thesis or non-thesis research must be continuously enrolled every term, including summer, until they finish their thesis.

The Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse, maintained by the College of Graduate Studies, is the primary resource for all thesis and dissertation information. Accessing this resource requires an active UCF Canvas account, and students are automatically enrolled in this non-credit course upon enrollment in thesis or dissertation hours. All thesis/dissertation students should also review the College of Graduate Studies Thesis and Dissertation page. The College of Graduate Studies provides extensive directions, requirements, deadlines, etc., on this site, and all graduate students are required to follow them in order to complete their degrees/.

Registration for Thesis/Non-Thesis Hours

Before you register for thesis hours, your Thesis / Non-thesis Advisory Committee Form must be approved by the College of Graduate Studies.

To register for thesis hours, you must have a current Thesis Advisory Form on file. Then for each semester you are taking thesis hours, you register for thesis hours. You initiate **a Restricted Registration form**. Review the thesis requirements and full-time enrollment requirements in the UCF College of Graduate Studies Catalog.

Master's Thesis and Non-thesis – Defense

Thesis and Non-thesis students will publicly defend their research projects during a one-hour defense following the deadlines published by the College of Graduate Studies. The defense can be in person on campus or via video, such as Zoom or Teams.

- Scheduling the defense
    - Follow the CGS timeline with deadlines for scheduling the 1-hour defense. Reserve the room / block time on the calendar for at least 90 minutes.
    - The date, location and time need to be announced to rhetgrad@ucf.edu
    - Send a thesis or non-thesis defense announcement to rhetgrad@ucf.edu at least 16 days before the schedules defense so that it can be disseminated as required.

- Preparing for the presentation

    - Students usually have about 20-25 minutes to present their research. They should use visuals and follow best practices for presenting in front of an audience. Avoid reading from slides and overwhelming the reader with language dense slides.

- What happens during the defense

    - Welcome from thesis committee chair
    - Preview of agenda
    - Student presents their research for 20-25 minutes
    - Feedback and questions from committee members (15-20 minutes)
    - Questions and comments from audience members. (5-10 minutes)
    - Committee discusses the presentation and votes on completion of the degree requirement without the public. The committee might provide a revision plan to student. (5-10 minutes)
    - Committee chair announces the result of the vote

- What needs to be done after the defense

    Thesis student needs to make requested edits and revisions and submit the revised final draft by the deadline. **Non-thesis students** need to make requested edits and revisions and submit the revised final draft to rhetgrad@ucf.edu.

Finding & Selecting a Research Project Advisor

The Department of Writing and Rhetoric regularly offers opportunities for on campus and online graduate students to meet each other and faculty. Sometimes the events are tailored for a group of students, such as on campus students, and sometimes for the entire cohort (on campus and online) and all graduate students in the program. These kinds of events are one opportunity to meet with faculty who might be a good fit as mentors and/or committee members, in addition to attending department events and taking courses.

No faculty member is obligated to accept a student's request to serve as advisor, though invitations are often accepted unless the faculty member judges that a different advisor would serve your needs better.

Changing Your Advisor

As the advisor-student relationship is one of mutual agreement, it may be terminated by either party. If you decide that you would prefer to work with a different advisor, discuss this with your prospective advisor and Dr. Melody Bowdon to seek the change. After you secure the agreement with the new advisor, inform the pervious advisor and also inform the Graduate Program via an email to rhetgrad@ucf.edu. Changes to the advisor, committee, and possibly timeline need to be recorded with the College of Graduate Studies and be reflected in the Graduate Plan of Study (GPS).

Research Methods

As a broad and inclusive field, rhetoric and composition embraces a wide variety of research methods. Successful students will be exposed to bibliographic, historical, theoretical, qualitative, and quantitative methods in their courses, and should demonstrate proficiency in at least one such area in their major research project.

Ownership of Intellectual Property Policy

Although most of the research conducted by T&T students does not require significant financial support by UCF, T&T students should be aware that the products of some graduate student research may be the property of UCF.

UCF has three fundamental responsibilities with regard to graduate student research. They are to (1) support an academic environment that stimulates the spirit of inquiry; (2) develop the intellectual property stemming from research; and (3) disseminate the intellectual property to the general public. UCF owns the intellectual property developed using university resources. The graduate students as inventor will, according to this policy, share in the proceeds of the invention.

The full policy is available online from the Graduate Catalog: Ownership of Intellectual Property Policy.

Research Ethics

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

It is essential to scholarly work that students adhere to the rules and regulations as stipulated by the University of Central Florida and the MA Rhetoric and Composition handbook.

Here are some general resources to help you better understand your responsibilities.

- Academic Honesty
- Plagiarism
- Academic Integrity Training – Complete the “Pressures to Plagiarize" Webcourse (Open to all graduate students at no cost)

The field of rhetoric and composition in particular is deeply committed to ethical research practices, and this subject will be an important part of your coursework. Below are links to some resources that may be helpful to you:

- CCCC Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Research in Composition Studies - Conference on College Composition and Communication (ncte.org)
- Anti-Racist Scholarly Reviewing Practices: A Heuristic for Editors, Reviewers, and Authors - Google Docs
- Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Professional Writing Graduate Certificate Curriculum

The certificate program requires 15 credits (5 courses).

The **required courses** in the program as of Fall 2023 are below.

You must complete both of these courses:

ENC5337 - Rhetorical Theory
ENC6701 - Professional Writing Studies

The remaining three classes are **electives,** which should be chosen from the list below. **Please note that not all courses listed below are offered regularly.**

ENC5237 - Writing for the Business Professional
ENC5276 - Theory and Practice of Tutoring Writing

ENC5705 - Approaches to Teaching College Composition
ENC5930 - Current Topics in Professional Writing
ENC6216 - Editing Professional Writing
ENC6217 - Technical Editing
ENC6245 - Teaching Professional Writing
ENC6247 - Proposal Writing
ENC6257 - Visual Technical Communication
ENC6261 - Technical Writing, Theory and Practice
ENC6292 - Project Management for Technical Writers
ENC6296 - Interactive Design in Technical Communication
ENC6297 - Production and Publication Methods
ENC6306 - Persuasive Writing
ENC6332 - Gendered Rhetoric

Professional Development

Graduate students have access to a number of opportunities, resources, experiences, etc. on campus and beyond to encourage them to develop as professionals as they build their career pathways through the degree. This can include professional seminars, networking opportunities, or workshops. Furthermore, graduate students should think about what knowledge, skills, and dispositions they should be developing as they go through the program and seek input from graduate program leaders and faculty about how to achieve their goals.

The Graduate Student Center

Located in Trevor Colbourn Hall on the second floor, this Center offers graduate students a series of workshops as part of the Pathways to Success program as well as events and opportunities to network and learn. Students can also simply use their study spaces.

Spring Semester Events

- Research Week
- 3-minute thesis
- Research Talks

Social Media Engagement

Students can join a variety of social media groups, including listservs, forums, Facebook groups, etc., or follow relevant practitioners, scholars, and organizations in the fields of rhetoric theory, professional and technical communication and composition studies on various platforms.

Professional Organizations

All students in the program should consider becoming members of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), a branch of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE); this membership includes subscriptions to the flagship journals *College Composition and Communication* and *College English*. You can learn more about CCCC at ncte.org/cccc. Other memberships to consider, depending on your interests and career or graduate school plans, include the following:

- Rhetoric Society of America (RSA): rhetoricsociety.org
- Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW): attw.org/
- Coalition of Women Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition https://cfshrc.org/
- Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA): wpacouncil.org/
- International Writing Centers Association (IWCA): writingcenters.org/

Conferences and Travel Support

Attending one or more major rhet/comp conferences is an excellent way to learn more about the field and connect with others doing similar research. While conference presentations are not required for the MA degree, such presentations are professionally valuable, and graduate students are encouraged to pursue them if possible. Your faculty members will likely mention conference opportunities in your classes, and you will receive email announcements about them from the program as well.

Most professional organizations and conferences offer special rates for graduate students, and some (including the CCCC Convention and RSA) offer modest grants or scholarships to graduate students. Each year CCCC sponsors Scholars for the Dream Travel Awards to encourage scholarship by graduate students in historically underrepresented groups.

The College of Graduate Studies offers Presentation Fellowships to students who are presenting research at a professional conference. Information is available at graduate.ucf.edu/presentation-fellowship/. UCF graduate students presenting at a conference can also get funding from the Student Government Association (ucfsga.com/) and Graduate Studies (graduate.ucf.edu/), the latter of which offers graduate travel. The Department of Writing and Rhetoric may also be able to provide limited travel funds for MA students presenting at a rhetoric and composition conference. Reach out to the Program Director, Dr. Melody Bowdon (melody.bowdon@ucf.edu) for more information.

The following are major conferences that cover a range of topics about writing, rhetoric, and literacy, several of which are affiliated with an organization mentioned above:

- Rhetoric Society of America (RSA): rhetoricsociety.org
- Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW): attw.org/
- Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA): wpacouncil.org/
- International Writing Centers Association (IWCA): writingcenters.org/
- CCCC Convention: ncte.org/cccc/conv
- RSA Biennial Conference and RSA Summer Institute: rhetoricsociety.org/aws/RSA/pt/sp/conference
- Thomas R. Watson Conference (biennial): louisville.edu/conference/watson
- Computers and Writing: cccc.ncte.org/cccc/committees/7cs/candwcall
- Feminisms and Rhetorics: femrhets.cwshrc.org/
- ATTW: attw.org/attw-2018-conference-2/
- WPA: wpacouncil.org/wpa-conference
- IWCA: writingcenters.org/annual-conference-2/

Scholarly Publications

Scholarly publications are not required for the MA degree, but students are encouraged to submit at least one manuscript for publication while in the program, particularly if they are planning on applying to Ph.D. programs. Publications need not be full-length journal articles or book chapters; indeed, book reviews, professional newsletter articles, and other smaller publications might be better places to start.

Although all of the field's journals are open to publishing graduate student work, and even the larger journals frequently publish book reviews by graduate students, the following journals publish articles by graduate students more frequently:

- Kairos: kairos.technorhetoric.net/
- Community Literacy Journal: www.communityliteracy.org/index.php/clj
- Composition Forum: compositionforum.com/
- The Writing Lab Newsletter: wlnjournal.org/
- Enculturation: enculturation.net/
- Present Tense: presenttensejournal.org/
- Prompt: A Journal of Academic Writing Assignments: thepromptjournal.com

Academic Environment and Expectations Policies

Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Central Florida considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. UCF expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events. Dimensions of diversity can include sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, intellectual and physical ability, sexual orientation, income, faith and non-faith perspectives, socio-economic class, political ideology, education, primary language, family status, military experience, cognitive style, and communication style. The individual intersection of these experiences and characteristics must be valued in our community.

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.

If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this program that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please notify Dr. Melody Bowdon as soon as possible and/or contact Student Accessibility Services.

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – Office of Institutional Equity and askanadvocate@ucf.edu
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services and sas@ucf.edu
- Diversity and Inclusion Training and Events

- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office and complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- Ombuds Office

Harassment

The University of Central Florida values diversity in the campus community. Accordingly, discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, parental status, veteran status, sexual orientation, or genetic information is prohibited.

Sexual harassment, a form of sex discrimination, is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including any of these three situations.

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or enrollment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or enrollment decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or enrollment, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. Occurrences will be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines above and university rules. Employees, students, or applicants for employment or admission may obtain further information on this policy, including grievance procedures, from the OIE Coordinator. The Director of the Office of Institutional Equity Programs is the campus Equity Coordinator responsible for concerns in all areas of discrimination. The office is located on the main campus, in Barbara Ying CMMS Building 81, Suite 101. The phone number is (407) 823-1336. Policies and guidelines are available online here.

Accommodations

Students needing accommodations for disabilities will be supported. Please work with Student Accessibility Services to determine appropriate accommodations and then reach out to the grad leadership team and/or your individual course faculty members to navigate the process.

Student Responsibility for University Communication

UCF uses email as the official means of notifying students of important university business and academic information concerning registration, deadlines, financial assistance, scholarships, student accounts (including tuition and fees), academic progress and problems, and many other critical topics for satisfactory completion of a UCF degree program. The university sends all business-related and academic messages to the student's UCF email address to ensure that there is one repository for that information. Every student must register for and maintain a UCF Email account at https://extranet.cst.ucf.edu/kmailselfsvc and check it regularly to avoid missing important and critical information from the university.

Starting in Summer 2023 and continuing through Fall 2023, all knightsemail accounts (the previous student email system) will transition to UCF emails to improve communication across campus using Microsoft 365. For more information see https://it.ucf.edu/studentemailmigration/project/

Any difficulty with establishing an account or with accessing an established account must be resolved through the UCF Computer Services Service Desk to ensure that you receive all important messages.

Additionally, each student must have an up-to-date emergency e-mail address and phone number (preferably cellular) through which to be reached in case of a crisis on campus. This emergency contact information will be used only for emergency purposes. Also, both permanent and local mailing addresses must be on the record, so that any physical documents that must be mailed can be delivered.

It is critical to maintain and regularly check your UCF email account for official announcements and notifications. Communications sent to UCF email address on record will be deemed adequate notice for all university communication, include issues related to academics, finances, registration, parking, and all other matters. The University does not accept responsibility if official communication fails to reach a student who has not registered for, or maintained and checked on a regular basis, their UCF email account. Please ensure that this information is current and that any changes in contact information are made online through the myUCF portal at https://my.ucf.edu/.

Continuous Enrollment

All graduate students are required to enroll in at least one class over the span of each academic year. Failure to enroll in three consecutive terms will result in dismissal from

the program. For more information around these policies, see Continuous Enrollment and Continuous Enrollment and Active Students.

Students engaged in thesis work must be continuously enrolled every term. Master's students who have completed their required course work and are completing their thesis requirement are required to be continuously enrolled (including summer) until the thesis or non-thesis project is completed. Students with extenuating circumstances that will prevent them from enrolling continuously may apply for a leave of absence. If you are having difficulty maintaining your engagement with the program, please reach out to the Director of Graduate Programs to discuss options for ensuring your success and well-being.

Full-time students with assistantships are required to enroll in at least nine hours of credits per fall and spring semester during their coursework.

Satisfactory Progress

In accordance with the College of Graduate Studies' policies and with the minimum university standards for satisfactory performance to continue graduate study, our program maintains the following requirements for all students:

- Students are required to maintain a 3.00* GPA in all coursework included in the program of study in order to maintain regular graduate student status, receive financial assistance, and qualify for graduation.
- A grade of B- (2.75) negatively impacts one's GPA. Students are allowed to have no more than six hours of C (2.00) grades or lower (including U and I) in their program of study. Grades of D+ and lower count against a graduate GPA and cannot be used toward completion of a degree requirement.
- A course in which a student has received an unsatisfactory grade may be repeated; however, both grades will be used in computing the GPA.
- A program GPA below 3.00 at the end of any semester will result in a student being placed on 'academic provisional' status. In this status, a student is not eligible for tuition waiver support or employment in a graduate position. Such students are given the next nine hours of their program coursework to improve their GPA to 3.00 or better.
- Exceeding six hours of C or lower grades or a program GPA or 2.00 or lower will result in removal from the program.

* All references to GPA refer to graduate status Grade Point Average. A graduate status GPA will be calculated based on the graduate courses taken at UCF since admission

into each degree or certificate program. See the UCF Graduate Catalog for more information.

Golden Rule

The Golden Rule is the university's policy regarding non-academic discipline of students and limited academic grievance procedures for graduate (grade appeals in individual courses, not including thesis and dissertation courses) and undergraduate students. Information concerning The Golden Rule can be found at www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/. Section 11, Student Academic Behavior, addresses appeals of graduate program actions or decisions.

Appeals/Grievances

If at any point you do not agree with an assessment related to your development or progress in your program, please reach out to the grad leadership team to discuss the situation. If we are unable to reach a mutually satisfying agreement, you can consult the Academic Grievance section under General Graduate Policies in the Graduate Catalog for how to proceed.

Academic Probation

Per College of Graduate Studies' policy, if your graduate status GPA falls below the required 3.00, you will have 9 credit hours to bring the GPA above a 3.00 in order to have the Academic Probation removed. Students will receive notice in writing about academic probation issues from the College of Graduate Studies.

Conduct Probation

Any violation of the professional conduct expectations listed in the handbook may result in conduct probation. Dr. Melody Bowdon, the Rhetoric and Composition Director of Graduate Programs, will determine the severity of the violation by reviewing the documentation provided and will notify the student of their status based on the procedures outlined in the following section. A severe conduct violation, which may lead to dismissal from the program, will always require the review of an ad-hoc disciplinary committee as described below.

Conduct Violation Process:

1. If a violation of a conduct policy occurs, it will be reported to the Program Directory, Dr. Melody Bowdon in writing. This should include specifically which aspects of the professional conduct policy the student has allegedly violated, when these violations allegedly took place, and any available evidence to support the allegation, to allow Dr. Bowdon to understand the situation and counsel the student appropriately.

2. Dr. Bowdon will evaluate the matter and determine an appropriate course of action, ranging from a written warning to convening an ad-hoc disciplinary committee of the graduate faculty for evaluation, based on the egregiousness of the violation. The committee will be composed of faculty members who do not have a relationship with the student as adviser, exam/dissertation committee member, or RA/TA supervisor and who are not involved in the complaint. Dr. Bowdon will serve as an ex officio member of the committee unless barred by the relationships listed above.

3. If a disciplinary committee is convened, members will discuss the student's professional conduct. The committee will consult the complaining party, the student, and the student's adviser, and recommend appropriate action based on the severity of the violation, up to and including program dismissal.

Graduate Teaching Assistantship Policies

Required Training for Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs)

All students employed as GTAs must complete GTA training.
Completing the 12-week Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program offered by the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning will satisfy the requirement for GTA Grader, Assistant, and Associate Trainings, but will only meet the GTA Training requirement if completed prior to beginning employment as a GTA. It is not sufficient to attend the Certificate course concurrently with your first teaching experience, if you have not taken the GTA Grader, Assistant, and Associate Trainings.

Only those graduate students who have satisfactorily completed and passed more than eighteen credit hours of graduate course work in the major may be classroom Instructor of Record (Graduate Teaching Associate-9183). Departments must verify the 18 hours for these students on the Teaching Qualifications form before a student may be employed as instructor of record.

Expectations

Assistants must work their scheduled number of hours (standard: 20).

Assistants are expected to communicate with their supervisor consistently, as discussed at the beginning of the assistantship. It is the responsibility of the assistant to be proactive in starting the conversation with their supervisor. If an assistant is having trouble communicating with their supervisor, they should contact the Program Director for help.

Teaching Assistants must hold class as scheduled, grade student work in a timely fashion, respond to student emails, hold regular office hours in accordance with the policy of the department, and submit final grades by the deadline each semester. Further, they must be mindful of the power relationship between themselves and the students in their classes and maintain a professional relationship with students, without social interactions, for the duration of the course.

Research Assistants must perform the tasks specified in their assignment description in a timely fashion. They must be mindful of research ethics and work to minimize any potential harm to human or nonhuman participants or communities in such research. Moreover, they should be fully cognizant of the purpose or purposes for which their work is intended and recognize that research-based decisions and actions may have long-term consequences for communities and individuals being studied.

Assistantship Review Procedure

A faculty member supervising an Assistant who is not meeting the expectations of their assistantship will first inform the student in writing, reminding them of the expectations and clearly indicating which expectations are not being met and when the failures to meet expectations have taken place.

If, after the faculty member has communicated with the student, the expectations continue not to be met, the faculty member will notify Dr. Bowdon, the Program Director, in writing. This should include specifically which expectations are not being met, when the failures to meet expectations have taken place, and any other pertinent information to allow Dr. Bowdon to understand the situation and counsel the student appropriately.

The student will be provided with a Letter of Counseling/Instruction from Dr. Bowdon about the expectations of their assistantship, in addition to having a face-to-face or videoconference meeting with her to discuss the expectations.

Any further failure to meet the expectations of the assistantship after an Assistant has been counseled should be documented as above and provided to Dr. Bowdon in writing.

Students who establish a pattern of failure to meet the expectations of their assistantship will not be offered a continuing assistantship in subsequent terms.

Performance Evaluations

UCF requires that the teaching-related performances of all Graduate Teaching Associates (Position Code 9183), Graduate Teaching Assistants (Position Code 9184), and Graduate Teaching Assistant-Graders (Position Code 9187) be assessed at the end of each term that the student serves as a GTA.

To retain a graduate assistantship, students must complete their duties satisfactorily. All graduate assistants who teach courses for the university are evaluated annually by both the College of Arts and Humanities and the College of Graduate Studies. Those who do not pass these evaluations may lose their assistantships unless they can be assigned other responsibilities. Graduate assistants with assignments other than teaching are evaluated by their supervisors and/or Dr. Bowdon, the Program Director.

English-speaking Ability for Graduate Teaching / SPEAK Test

Students who are non-native speakers of English and who do not have a degree from a U.S. institution must pass the SPEAK test before they will be permitted to teach as Graduate Teaching Associates (position code 9183) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (position code 9184). The SPEAK test is not required for students who will be appointed as a Graduate Teaching Grader (position code 9187).

The SPEAK test is administered by the Center for Multilingual Multicultural Studies and takes about 20 minutes.

English-speaking ability will be evaluated at UCF using the Versant test. The university provides you with free English-speaking training if your scores are between 68 and 68 on the initial Versant test.

Reporting Unethical Behavior or Concerns

Let's Be Clear

If you've experienced sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual and interpersonal violence, stalking, or sexual exploitation, you can find resources, support, and reporting options on the website LetsBeClear**.**

Report a Problem or Concern

Faculty expect to be treated with dignity and respect and graduate students should be treated the same way. Experience teaches us that graduate school can be complicated for many different reasons. For instance, there can be conflicts, which can leave graduate students feeling frustrated, angry, and powerless. You can reach out to the College of Graduate Studies for advice. Report a problem or concern.

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