

WRITING AND RHETORIC, PHD

Banner Code: LA-PHD-WRTR

Academic Advising

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The doctoral program in writing and rhetoric offers a curriculum that emphasizes theoretical, practical, and productive approaches to composition, professional writing, and public rhetoric. The program is built on the premise that writing and teaching in twenty-first century organizations require the rigorous, integrated study of rhetoric, technology, pedagogy, culture, and research methodologies. In addition to our core curriculum, the program's proximity to Washington, D.C. makes it uniquely situated to provide opportunities for research and internships that go beyond and enrich the student's writing and rhetoric coursework.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions. Applicants to the PhD in writing and rhetoric must already have earned a master's degree in a relevant field before being admitted to the program.

For further information specific to the PhD in writing and rhetoric, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (<http://english.gmu.edu/programs/la-phd-wrtr/application>) on the college website.

Policies

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see Graduate Policies.

Reduction of Credit

Students must have a master's degree before being admitted to the PhD in writing and rhetoric. Most students receive a reduction of study of 30 credits based on their previous master's degree.

Program Requirements

To receive the PhD in writing and rhetoric, students complete a minimum of 78 credits of coursework, 48 beyond the master's degree. Beyond the basic coursework, a dissertation is required.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 78

Doctoral Coursework

Core Courses

| Code | Title | Credits |
|---------------|--|---------|
| ENGH 720 | Histories of Institutional Rhetorics | 3 |
| ENGH 722 | Composition Pedagogies and Programs in Context | 3 |
| ENGH 724 | Professional Writing Theory and Research | 3 |
| ENGH 726 | Rhetorical Theory and Public Spaces | 3 |
| Total Credits | | 12 |

Required Research Methods Course

| Code | Title | Credits |
|---------------|--|---------|
| ENGH 702 | Research Methods in Rhetoric and Writing | 3 |
| Total Credits | | 3 |

Primary Focus Area

With a faculty advisor, students complete any combination of the following courses totaling 12 credits. The selected courses should form a consistent area of research around a specific object, practice, method, set of theories, or sub-field.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|---------------------------------|--|---------|
| Select four from the following: | | 12 |
| ENGH 822 | Studies in Composition ¹ | |
| ENGH 824 | Studies in Professional Writing ¹ | |
| ENGH 826 | Studies in Public Rhetorics ¹ | |
| Total Credits | | 12 |

¹ May be repeated up to four times when topic differs.

Secondary Focus Area

The selected courses form a consistent secondary area of research that supports the student's primary area and developing research interests. It is strongly suggested that the secondary focus courses be taken in other programs or disciplines.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|--|--------------------------------|---------|
| Select 3 courses from another program or discipline (see below) and/or the primary area courses, with faculty advisor approval | | 9 |
| | Anthropology | |
| | Art and Visual Technology | |
| | Communication | |
| | Cultural Studies | |
| | Education | |
| | English | |
| | History | |
| | Linguistics | |
| | Literature | |
| | Modern and Classical Languages | |
| | Public Policy | |
| | Sociology | |

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Women and Gender Studies | |
| Total Credits | 9 |

Electives

| Code | Title | Credits |
|---------------|--|---------|
| | Students receiving a reduction of credit of less than 30 will complete the remaining credits through additional elective courses chosen in consultation with an advisor. | 0-30 |
| Total Credits | | 0-30 |

Advancement to Candidacy

Prior to beginning dissertation research (normally after completion of 66 hours of coursework), students will take a written examination, successful completion of which will demonstrate a qualification for advancement to candidacy. The examination will cover foundation knowledge acquired in the writing and rhetoric core courses and in the student's area of primary focus.

Dissertation

The dissertation process, which begins after the student has completed 66 credit hours and passed the written qualifying exam, includes an oral exam on the dissertation proposal, the production of the dissertation, and an oral defense of the dissertation. The student's progress at all stages will be evaluated by the dissertation committee. The dissertation should use theoretical, historical, qualitative, and/or quantitative methods to address a rhetorical problem within an institutional or public context that is framed within a disciplinary field. While these projects are often multidisciplinary in approach, they should address a gap in a discipline's research as well as solve a public rhetorical problem.

Once enrolled in ENGH 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal, students in this degree program must maintain continuous registration in ENGH 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal or ENGH 999 Doctoral Dissertation each semester (excluding summers) until the dissertation is submitted to and accepted by the University Libraries. Once enrolled in ENGH 999 Doctoral Dissertation, students must follow the university's continuous registration policy as specified in the Academic Policies section of the catalog. Students who defend in the summer must be registered for at least 1 credit of ENGH 999 Doctoral Dissertation.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|-----------------------|---|---------|
| At least 3 credits of | | 3 |
| ENGH 998 | Doctoral Dissertation Proposal (3 credits required) | |
| At least 9 credits of | | 9 |
| ENGH 999 | Doctoral Dissertation (minimum of 9 credits) | |
| Total Credits | | 12 |