

Department of English

Guide to Graduate Studies



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Preface

This *Guide to Graduate Studies in the Department of English* contains the specific rules and regulations that apply to the MA and PhD programs and graduate certificates offered by the department. The contents comply with the rules and policies of the Graduate College of the University of Cincinnati. No information in this *Guide* shall be deemed to amend or modify the rules of the university.

In addition to this *Guide*, which is binding on graduate programs, graduate students, and faculty in the Department of English, graduate students should familiarize themselves with all regulations and procedures in [The Graduate Handbook of the Graduate School at the University of Cincinnati](#).

The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Manager are happy to assist students in interpreting the regulations and procedures in these publications. Please feel free to ask.

[Rebecca Lindenberg](#)

Director of Graduate Studies
Department of English
248 A&S Hall
lindenra@ucmail.uc.edu

[Susan Luring](#)

Graduate Program Manager
Department of English
248 A&S Hall
luringsn@ucmail.uc.edu

Goals of the Graduate Programs

Goals of the Literary and Cultural Studies Master's Program

- give students a sense of the textual, intellectual, rhetorical, and sociopolitical history of their areas of study
- enhance their critical-thinking and research skills
- enable them to join the professional dialogues in their areas of study by acquainting them with the sites and rhetorical conventions of that discourse
- prepare them to contribute positively—whether as scholars, teachers, editors, writers, or otherwise—to the ways that language is taught and used in our culture and internationally

Goals of the Professional Writing Master's Program

The Professional Writing program has the following goals/learning outcomes:

- Identify, articulate, and focus on a defined purpose for the creation of written texts
- Respond appropriately to the needs of the relevant audience
- Demonstrate an ability to write in multiple genres (using conventions and formats appropriate to the situation)
- Employ flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading texts
- Demonstrate appropriate technologies and software to write, design, organize, present, and communicate information to address a range of audiences and purposes
- Analyze rhetorical contexts to identify the relationships among language, information, and knowledge and their connection to social, cultural, historical, and economic issues
- Explain the ethical dimensions of information and technology
- Incorporate design principles into documents (both print and online)

Goals of the Doctoral Programs

- acquaint students with the textual, intellectual, rhetorical, and sociopolitical history of their chosen areas of expertise
- introduce them to critical debates in these areas and in the profession at large
- help them develop the skills necessary to participate in these debates by teaching them various interpretive approaches, acquainting them with important research tools both contemporary and traditional, and familiarizing them with rhetorical/argumentative conventions in the discipline
- enable them to complete a sustained piece of scholarship or a long creative work, of publishable or near-publishable quality
- help them to become effective teachers of writing, composition, and/or literature
- enable them to influence the future of English Studies through scholarship, creative work, teaching, and other professional activities

Goals of the Certificate Program in Professional Writing

- extend students' range of writing, editing, design, and publishing skills
- discuss the academic foundation for best current writing practices in their chosen and future careers
- use appropriate technologies and software to organize, present, and communicate information to address a range of audience and purposes

Admission to Graduate Degree Programs

Admission Requirements

[Literary and Cultural Studies MA](#) application requirements, procedures, and deadlines.

[Professional Writing MA](#) application requirements, procedures, and deadlines.

[PhD](#) application requirements, procedures, and deadlines.

Application of Internal Applicants

Students enrolled in the MA program at the University of Cincinnati who wish to apply to the doctoral program must follow the standard application process.

Financial Aid

The Department of English awards a wide variety of financial aid to full-time students based on academic merit. Recipients of awards should familiarize themselves with the [Financial Aid Policies](#) available from the Graduate College. All students receiving Graduate Assistant stipends through the Department must carry a full-time course load (12 credits or more) each term, exclusive of audit and/or undergraduate credits; part-time and certificate students are not eligible for graduate assistantships. For full-time students, any additional employment must be approved by the Graduate Director.

Internal Applications for Financial Aid

Reappointment to any departmental award is not automatic. The Director of Graduate Studies will review academic records at the end of spring semester, and if a student is not making sufficient progress toward the degree, the Director will inform them promptly—generally within one week of the grading deadline. Any funded student who does NOT want to renew an assistantship for the following year should inform the Graduate Director of this intention by March 1. Those wishing to upgrade their aid (e.g., from a tuition scholarship to a Grad Assistantship, or Grad Assistantship to fellowship) may petition the Graduate Director to do so, but the granting of such petitions depends upon both the availability of funds and the student's having made a compelling case. For further details and procedures, contact the Director of Graduate Studies no later than January 15.

Graduate Scholarships

The Graduate College funds scholarships that cover all or part of a student's tuition and fees. In most colleges, the scholarship awards supported by the Graduate College are Graduate Scholarships (GS), with and without assistantships. The Graduate Scholarship (GS) with assistantship is used to support graduate assistants who are additionally awarded a stipend that requires service in return for stipend support. The GS without assistantship is for graduate students who do not receive university stipend support, so no service is required in return for the GS award. These students must fulfill all eligibility requirements in their Graduate Assistant letter to maintain their GS.

Students receiving a tuition scholarship must register for a specified minimum number of graduate credit hours in each semester for which they are receiving support. If an international student is supported by a GS without assistantship, they must register for a minimum load of 10 graduate credit hours per semester during the time they receive the GS scholarship. If a domestic student is supported by a GS without assistantship, they must register for a minimum load of 1 graduate credit hour per semester during the time they receive the GS scholarship. Students supported by a GS with assistantship must register for a minimum of 12 graduate credit hours per semester during the time they receive the GS scholarship. These minimum enrollments in graded courses must be met before using scholarship support for any audited courses.

If a student withdraws from a class funded by a tuition scholarship, with the remaining enrolled credit hours totaling less than the minimum required, the award is canceled immediately and the student is responsible for the tuition balance, based on the date of withdrawal.

Full tuition scholarships cover a maximum of 18 credits per semester. Students registered for more than 18 credits in a semester will be billed tuition and general fees on a per-credit-hour rate for each credit over 18. All rules that govern recipients of tuition support pertain to all students, including international students. Other rules and policies that apply specifically to international students are independent of GS regulations. Both sets of regulations must be met. Neither set of regulations negates or takes the place of the other. ([See 174 Graduate Credit Rule.](#))

Note: Financial awards that require no service may reduce eligibility for educational loans. Students should notify the Student Financial Aid Office of their tuition support if they apply for aid from that office.

Graduate Assistantships

A significant proportion of financial aid offered by the Department is in the form of the University Graduate Assistantship. Availability varies each year, as do the amounts for both the master's and the doctoral stipends. These awards include both a financial stipend and a Graduate Scholarship (GS) that covers 100% of tuition and out-of-state, general, and campus life fees--with the exception of the Information Technology and Instructional Equipment fee (ITIE).([Refer to the University Graduate Scholarships section for more information.](#))

Graduate Teaching Assistants are required to teach one class section per term and hold three office hours each week. Teaching, preparation, conferences, grading, and related activities require approximately twenty hours per week. Doctoral students may have the opportunity to teach a literature, rhetoric and composition, or creative writing class. Eligibility to teach literature or creative writing is generally contingent upon having already taught one full year of English Composition.

In addition to Graduate Assistantships, students may qualify for occasional specialized research, editorial, or administrative assistantships, the duties of which vary but will typically require twenty hours per week.

Graduate assistants are entitled to a discount at the University Bookstore.

To be eligible for the Graduate Student Health Insurance Award (GSHI), graduate assistants must be registered for 10 graduate credit hours or more, exclusive of audit credits, for each fall and spring semester. University assistantships will be canceled if the awardee does not meet their enrollment obligation.

Taft Fellowships

As one of the UC departments with access to the Charles Phelps Taft Memorial Fund, the Department of English may recommend one or two advanced graduate students for a one-year Taft Dissertation Completion Fellowship. These Fellowships carry a full stipend and GS tuition scholarship.

No outside employment during the Taft year is permitted.

Advanced PhD students (typically those who have completed or are about to complete their oral exams) need to submit an application if they are interested in a Taft Fellowship. The Graduate Director invites such applications each December or January and provides guidelines for how to prepare them.

To be nominated by the department for a Taft Fellowship, a doctoral student should show evidence of academic excellence beyond normal academic progress and the ability to profit from a fellowship year free from teaching responsibilities. Academic excellence is based on GPA, progress to degree, publications, service, teaching, awards, and evaluations. Students must be able to articulate their projects for a wide audience and to write a convincing proposal that conforms to the conventions of that genre. The applications are then read and ranked by the members of the Graduate Studies Committee, a group composed of faculty representatives from each area of the program, as well as the Grad Director.

Departmental Fellowships

The department is fortunate, thanks to generous donors and bequests, to have some additional fellowship, scholarship, and enhancement money available for incoming doctoral students with superior academic and/or creative qualifications. The George Elliston Fund supports students of poetry-writing; the Robert and Adele Schiff Fund supports students of fiction-writing and contemporary American fiction; The Helen Weinberger Fund supports students of drama and performance; the Pat Belanoff Summer Research Award and the Russel K. Durst Rhetoric and Composition Research Fellowship benefit students in Rhetoric & Composition. We have a number of other funds that can sometimes provide or enhance stipends for graduate students; these include the Ricking, the Fick, and others. Fellowships or enhancements, with a range of stipends, are awarded competitively to doctoral students each year. Each departmental fellowship is accompanied by a [Graduate Scholarship with Assistance](#).

Reappointments

All tuition scholarships and Graduate Assistantships are granted yearly. An MA student may be awarded aid for a second year, and a PhD student for a second, third, and fourth year, provided the student shows evidence of superior work (both as a student and, if applicable, as a teacher) and evidence of normal progress toward the degree.

It is possible for the PhD student to receive a fifth year of aid while writing the doctoral dissertation, provided resources are available. Paid teaching may be the method of support, and students will need to apply for funding no later than March 15 of their fourth year and specify their plan to complete the degree over the next year.

Superior work as a student means a cumulative GPA of at least 3.3 with no grades below a B- and no incompletes. Superior work as a teacher is indicated by excellent evaluations by supervisors and students regarding all areas of the Graduate Assistant's duties.

Normal progress means that a student appointed as a Graduate Assistant in the first year of graduate work should complete the MA in two years; a doctoral student with an assistantship should complete all coursework and exams for the PhD in three years.

The 174-Hour Rule

Graduate students at the University of Cincinnati are not eligible for financial aid once they have attempted 174 hours (including hours for which credit has been awarded, as well as withdrawn courses, audited courses, and hours in progress or incomplete) attempted at the University of Cincinnati, regardless of program or student status, count toward the total.

Graduate students who have earned a master's degree or other equivalent or higher advanced degree at another institution are not eligible for a university scholarship or fellowship once they have attempted 140 graduate credit hours at the University of Cincinnati.

Professional degrees like a juris doctorate or medical doctorate do not count as a master's or higher equivalent for funding. Students who enter graduate school at the University of Cincinnati with a professional degree and no other advanced degrees are still eligible to receive up to 174 credit hours of funding.

If a student enters the University of Cincinnati with only partial credit toward a degree from another institution, those credits are not deducted from the 174 total—even if the program they are entering agrees to accept transfer of those credits toward the student's degree requirements at the University of Cincinnati.

A student is not eligible for funding beginning with the semester in which said student will reach the 174 (or 140) attempted hours.

Termination/Leave of Absence

Students wishing to terminate a GA or tuition scholarship award should notify the Graduate Director in writing 30 days before the proposed termination date. Except in emergencies, such early termination should occur only at the end of academic terms. This rule applies both to students who intend to exit the program permanently and those who seek a temporary leave of absence. Temporary leave is not automatic but may be granted by the Director of Graduate Studies with approval from the Graduate College under exceptional circumstances.

General Department Procedures

Graduate Student Conduct

Success in an English department (and in an academic or other professional career) requires both intellectual and interpersonal skills and the ability to balance the competing roles of student, scholar, teacher, and colleague. Graduate students are required not only to maintain high standards of academic achievement and integrity but also to adhere to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) (“SCOC”). The SCOC outlines both academic and nonacademic violations, process rights, and possible sanctions.

In accordance with the SCOC, the English department may, before initiating any formal disciplinary process, schedule a conference to discuss behavioral issues with students and their impact on the mission of the University and the department.

Conferences may result in an action plan agreed on by all parties to address the behavior. If the action plan is not honored, the English department reserves the right to initiate a formal review under the SCOC.

Teaching

Most students will teach courses in composition, literature, professional writing, and/or creative writing during their graduate career in English. After the first year, during which most students will teach composition, PhD students may request to teach courses in other program tracks.

Students will be sent instructions for how to request courses during the Fall semester. Requirements are set by the area directors (Director of Composition, Director of LCS, Director of PW, Director of CW, respectively), in conversation with the Department Head and Director of Graduate Studies. Graduate students generally teach in-person courses unless given permission to do otherwise. At no time can student instructors alter the format of a course (from in-person to online or online/in-person hybrid) without the express permission of the area director who oversees the course. All graduate-student instructors must require their students to complete course evaluations at the end of the term and undergo periodic outside evaluation of their teaching by a teaching mentor or area director.

Advising

Area directors serve as initial advisors to incoming students in their respective fields: Literary & Cultural Studies, Professional Writing, Rhetoric & Composition, or Creative Writing. The Director of Graduate Studies is also available to help and to give counsel. Once students arrive and begin their studies, they are responsible for seeking out a faculty advisor to obtain assistance regarding registration, requests for financial aid, formation of special committees, examinations, and other related matters. The advisor must be Graduate Faculty.

Mail Service

Graduate students who are teaching are assigned a departmental mailbox in A&S Hall 241. Students should make sure their address and telephone number are [current in Catalyst](#).

E-mail Accounts

All graduate students are **required** to activate their UC e-mail account and use it as their primary address for university electronic mail. To activate your account, please visit <http://mail.uc.edu/>.

Graduate Organizations

The English Graduate Student Association (EGSA) comprises all graduate students in the Department and is governed by a Steering Committee of elected students. EGSA was formed to protect the rights and hear the grievances of graduate students in English, and over the years its role has expanded to advocating for graduate students and enhancing their professional lives in a variety of ways and contexts. It also arranges seminars, social events, and readings of various kinds throughout the year.

The [Graduate Student Government \(GSG\)](#) represents all graduate students in the University. The English Department is represented by volunteers from the EGSA Steering Committee. The GSG meets the last Wednesday of every month from August – April to discuss changes to policies affecting all graduate students.

Petitions for Reinstatement/Extension

To maintain active status and thus be eligible to graduate, students must register for at least one credit each academic year. Students who allow their active status to lapse, or who have surpassed the time allowed for a program, must petition the Graduate School for a reinstatement and/or extension. For reinstatement approval, the student must pay the required back tuition. Students who allow their active status to lapse for three years must reapply to the program (no reinstatement will be allowed). For help with reinstatement or extension requests, please contact the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Manager.

Graduation

Eligible students may receive degrees at the end of any of the academic terms by formally applying for graduation. Students need to inform the Graduate Program Manager when they wish to apply for graduation. All relevant deadlines are posted [here](#). NOTE: These deadlines typically occur soon after the semester's beginning.

Department Grading Policies

Incompletes and No Grade

Failure to abide by these policies will jeopardize any financial-aid award. The Department of English strictly enforces the following departmental policies of zero tolerance for Incompletes (*I*) and No Grades (*NG*) for Graduate Assistants:

- Any *I* or *NG* received at the end of fall term must be converted to a standard letter grade within one academic semester. Example: Student receiving an *I* for 24FS must have the grade changed prior to the end of 25SS.
- Students cannot withdraw from a class retroactively or be given additional opportunities to seek a different final grade retroactively. If an *F* is in a non-required course or the required course has since been retaken for a passing grade, the Graduate Director at certification may request a waiver of the *F* grade from the Associate Dean of the Graduate College.

For all students *not* categorized as Graduate Assistants, the Department abides by the following Graduate College policy:

The instructor who assigns the incomplete grade should set a specific date by which the student must complete the remaining course work, recognizing that time must be available for any final evaluation and grade change to be made, prior to the deadline when the grade converts to an F... The student must work with the instructor to develop an agreement that indicates the date by which the remaining course work is to be completed and submitted to the instructor. The instructor is not obligated to provide the student with a full year to complete the remaining course work. If the remaining course work is completed within the time agreed upon by the instructor and the student, and that completion occurs within the one year, then the instructor will submit a change of grade online (in Catalyst) based on the quality of the remaining work.

Quality of Work

To graduate, degree candidates in the Department of English must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.3 in all graduate coursework. Any student whose grades fall below that threshold, or who accumulates a total of two semester grades below the B range, is subject--at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Department Head, the student's Area Director, and the Graduate Studies Committee--to rescission of any assistantship and/or dismissal from the program. Any student whose grades remain below the 3.3 threshold at the conclusion of two consecutive semesters, or who accumulates three grades in the C range or below, will be dismissed from the program.

Credits and Courses

Transfer Credits

Except under exceptional circumstances, no more than nine graduate credit hours may be transferred from another college or institution. No more than twelve graduate credits in English taken as a non-matriculated or undergraduate student at the University of Cincinnati will be accepted toward the MA or PhD.

Auditing

Students who desire or need coursework for remedial instruction in areas of their programs may audit classes. The student must discuss course-work expectations with the instructor (e.g., attendance only) prior to auditing the course. A passing audit grade ("T") will be awarded by the

course instructor if the student has academically attended the course to the level of faculty expectation.

Audit hours count toward the [174-hour](#) limit but are not included in the determination of full-time status. A Graduate Scholarship (GS) will cover audit hours, provided the total number of registered hours is 18 or fewer. UGA (University Graduate Assistantship) awardees must be registered for 12 graduate credit hours or more, exclusive of audit credits, for each semester they receive the assistantship. Only one audit course may be taken per term.

Full-/Part-Time

Full-time graduate students must register for at least 10 graduate credit hours (12 if funded by a Graduate Assistantship) per semester. Undergraduate credits or audited courses do not count toward full-time status, or toward the graduate degree.

The MA and the Professional Writing Graduate Certificate can be achieved on a part-time basis.

The PhD may be achieved on a part-time basis, but all doctoral students must complete a one-time residency requirement prior to admission to doctoral candidacy by enrolling in 10 graduate credit hours (12 if funded by a Graduate Assistantship) per semester for two out of three consecutive semesters of study (including summer) in a single academic year (e.g., fall and spring, or spring and summer). Part-time students are not exempt from enrollment requirements to achieve residency. However, full-time UC employees using their tuition remission benefit to complete a part-time doctoral program may request a waiver of this requirement from the Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

Course Levels

Courses with 5000- and 6000-level numbers are introductory in their approach to subjects and can sometimes be combined to carry both graduate and undergraduate credit. To receive graduate credit, English graduate students must register for the 6000-level section of the combined course and may be required to complete a certain amount of academic work in addition to that required of undergraduates in the corresponding 5000-level section. The extra work may consist of reading and reviewing additional books, presenting reports, or doing such supplementary work as the instructor deems advisable.

Access to graduate workshops at the 7000 level is generally restricted to admitted PhD students in creative writing. Exceptions are possible only with the approval of the instructor (who may request a work sample) and the Creative Writing area director. Courses and seminars at the 7000 to 9000 level carry graduate credit only.

Course Credits and General Credits

Students may earn two kinds of graduate credits—course credits and general credits. Students receive graduate course credits in all courses offered by the Department of English numbered 6000 to 9099, except the following, which are not courses and which give general graduate credits: Teaching (ENGL 9095), Professional Practice (ENGL 9096), and Research (ENGL 9099). Course credits count toward the hours required for the MA or PhD; general credits are intended to help the student maintain full-time status while teaching or serving as research or administrative assistants.

Independent Work Course Credits

Independent Study (ENGL 9098 or PWRT 9098) gives course credit. Students wishing to receive credit in Independent Study need to arrange with an appropriate instructor to define a project or course of study and get permission from the Director of Graduate Studies. Those interested in Independent Study should contact the DGS via email for approval. Most tracks discourage independent-study courses except under special circumstances

No more than three course credits from independent work will apply to MA degree requirements, and no more than nine will apply to PhD requirements. Independent work may not be substituted for regular courses in areas typically addressed by the graduate curriculum. Independent Study is *not* an ordinary part of the graduate curriculum.

Teaching General Credits

Credits for Teaching (ENGL 9095) give formal recognition to work done by Graduate Assistants conducting classes. Students may enroll in 3 Teaching credits per term. The grade of P (Pass) is given if the teaching is successfully completed. These credits should not be confused with credits for Teaching College Writing (ENGC 7030/ ENGL 7130), which are course credits.

Professional Practice General Credits

Credits for Professional Practice (ENGL 9096) give formal recognition to work done by students on non-teaching assistantships—for example Graduate Research Assistantships, Graduate Editorial Assistantships, or Graduate Administrative Assistantships. Students may enroll in 3 Professional Practice credits per term, in consultation with the DGS or Program Manager of Graduate Studies. The grade of P (Pass) is given if the assistantship work is completed.

Research General Credits

Research hours are intended to help students maintain full-time status when they are not taking courses but are doing other work related to the degree, such as working on a thesis or dissertation or studying for exams.

Legitimate MA uses of research hours are as follows:

- to maintain full-time status for financial aid once coursework has been completed
- to register for one credit hour during the year of planned graduation to maintain active status (this applies only to students who did not graduate in their second year)

Legitimate PhD uses of research hours are as follows:

- to study for the doctoral exam
- to write a dissertation
- to acquire the minimum overall hours, including both course-credit hours and non-course credit hours, needed for the degree
- to register for one credit hour during the year of planned graduation to maintain active status (this applies only to students who are no longer attending full-time)

Students should limit their use of research hours before finishing coursework. In the eyes of the Admissions and Awards Committee, extensive use of research hours weakens “normal academic progress” and thereby decreases the likelihood of financial aid awards. MA graduates continuing to doctoral studies at the University of Cincinnati must be especially careful that research hours do not exceed the 174-hour limit for students on financial aid.

Requirements for Non-Degree Programs

Graduate Certificate Program in Professional Writing

The graduate certificate program in Professional Writing is geared toward 1) working professionals who seek to extend their writing and technology skills and to gain a more solid academic foundation for their current practices and 2) current graduate students seeking a foundation in the PW field. (Please note: It is not a program in creative writing or publishing.)

Certificate students who decide to pursue the MA in Professional Writing may apply to that degree program at any point. If the application is accepted, all certificate hours will count toward the MA.

Program Design and Requirements

The Graduate Certificate in Professional Writing requires 12 hours of graduate course work, including one technology course, one theory course, and two electives. There is no comprehensive exam or thesis requirement. Courses typically meet one day per week in three-hour blocks.

General Requirements for Graduate Degrees

Course of Study

A student's course of study is planned in consultation with an advisor and is subject to approval by the Director of Graduate Studies. With the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies, it may include course work from other departments.

Time Limit

Students working toward the MA must complete all requirements no later than five years from the date when they entered the degree program.

Students working toward the PhD must complete all requirements no later than nine years from the date when they entered the degree program.

Credit Hours

The Literary and Cultural Studies MA track in the Department of English requires at least 34 graduate course credits. The Professional Writing MA program in the Department of English requires at least 31 graduate course credits.

The doctoral program in the Department of English requires at least 60 overall post-master's-degree hours. This includes at least 34 hours of doctoral course credits, plus teaching and research hours. The Graduate School requires at least seven dissertation research hours.

Teaching Experience

Full-time MA students in the Literary & Cultural Studies track and most students in the PhD program must have classroom teaching experience. This is arranged in cooperation with the Director of Composition. Exceptions to this teaching requirement are noted under the MA in Professional Writing's specific requirements.

Students on Graduate Assistantships generally teach English Composition. PhD-student GAs entering their second year and beyond are invited to submit proposals for 2000-level literature courses, undergraduate creative-writing workshops, or advanced topics-in-composition classes. Any teaching other than composition classes requires permission from the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Director of Composition.

There is a December 15 deadline to apply for teaching outside the composition program; procedures and eligibility vary from track to track, but details about the procedures will be emailed to students each year in October.

Foreign Language

The department no longer has a formal foreign language requirement, but we encourage graduate students who do not have reading proficiency in at least one foreign language to undertake such study while at UC, whether in modern or ancient languages, computer coding, American Sign Language, etc. Learning a foreign language can be immensely valuable to students in helping them become citizens of the wider world (or more rounded job candidates); moreover, such study teaches important lessons about our own language and culture, and about the assumptions built into our ways of thinking by structures like grammar and syntax. The department will do all it can to help students for whom foreign-language study is personally or professionally important to gain access to such training, and to make sure that students on graduate assistantships continue to have access to up to six hours of such coursework per semester for free (always outside the departmental course count). We will also continue to build intra-university alliances and collaborations with other departments and programs, and we will offer translation workshops, bilingual poetry readings, opportunities for peer training, and the like.

Disability Accommodations / Accessibility

The Department of English is committed to supporting equitable learning conditions for all students. To that end, if you have a diagnosed disability that may influence your performance in the graduate program, we are happy to negotiate and arrange any needed accommodations.

The procedure for such accommodation will be a collaboration among the student, Disabilities Services, and the Director of Graduate Studies (who will consult as well with any affected faculty members). For the student's benefit, such accommodations should be sought in advance wherever possible. Please let an advisor and/or the Director of Graduate Studies know if you need our help.

Changing Programs

A student in one MA program or track who wishes to transfer to another within the department must satisfy the admission requirements for the second program or track before making the transfer. Then the student needs to request, in writing, that the Director of Graduate Studies, after consultation with the relevant area directors, approve this transfer.

Specific Requirements for Graduate Degrees

The following requirements are in addition to the general degree requirements that apply to all graduate programs in the Department of English.

MA in Professional Writing

The MA in Professional Writing (PWRT) enables students to practice and hone their advanced writing and editing skills in a variety of media, with a specific emphasis on content generation, information design, and technological literacy. The PWRT program emphasizes a fundamental understanding of communication processes, an understanding that puts theory into practice and bridges disciplines and industries. Upon completion of this program, students may choose to work as professional writers, editors, information managers, web developers, or planners. Some students have chosen to enter PhD programs in rhetoric, communication, and health.

Specific Requirements

Coursework

- Introduction to Professional Writing (PWRT 7001, 3 hours)
- Principles and Practices of Web Design (PWRT 7045, 3 hours)
- Internship (PWRT 7030, 1-6 hours – second year only)
- Capstone in Professional Writing (PWRT 7095, 3 hours)
- Teaching Technical and Professional Communication (PWRT 7002, 3 hours) (only required if student is a TA)
- In addition, students must take one Theory course (3 hours), two Technology courses (6 hours), two Genre courses (6 hours), and two additional electives. A list of categories and courses may be found on the [MA in PW Curriculum Checklist](#).

Internship

The student must arrange a project with at least 120 total hours of work, to be supervised by a professional writer or editor and approved by the faculty advisor. The internship culminates with a report approved by a committee of two faculty members chosen by the student. To find an appropriate internship, students usually make inquiries with local businesses and professional organizations. They should also check with the Professional Writing Area Director and faculty. Once a student has lined up a promising arrangement and cleared it with the faculty advisor, the student should submit a formal internship proposal.

Capstone

Students in the PWRT program take a specialized capstone course. Students have two options for completing the capstone requirement.

1. Students identify a client and propose and complete an appropriate individual project for that client. The project provides an opportunity for students completing the graduate program in Professional Writing to demonstrate their mastery and integration of the skills, principles, and knowledge gained from the courses they have taken. It requires the application of that learning to a field project.
2. Students write a publishable paper. These papers are research-based and include an application of theory to a communication phenomenon, use a research method to investigate that phenomenon, and offer an analysis and discussion of the findings with ideas for future research. Students will target publication in peer-reviewed journals aimed at academic and practitioner audiences (*Technical Communication* or *Communication Design Quarterly*, for example).

MA 4+1 in Professional Writing

The 4+1 option is available to UC undergraduate students majoring in Rhetoric & Professional Writing (RPW) or non-majors taking a minimum of 12 hours in RPW.

The program allows students completing their bachelor's to obtain a master's degree in one additional year. The curriculum for the 4+1 is the same as that for the MA in Professional Writing previously described.

Completion of the 4+1 program assumes the following:

- The student completes three graduate-level (MAPW) courses for graduate credit prior to completing the BA. Grades for the graduate-level classes must average 3.3 (with no grade lower than a B).
- These graduate courses taken during undergraduate years do not guarantee admission into the PW MA.
- Students must apply for the MA in PW program during *the junior year* of their undergraduate studies. Students do not need to apply for the MA in PW to take the three graduate classes.
- The student accepted into the 4+1 program enrolls full-time and typically completes the graduate year in two semesters.

MA in English, Literary & Cultural Studies Track

The MA Literary & Cultural Studies track is designed for students who wish to extend their study of languages, literatures, and culture beyond the bachelor's level, to acquire professional training for teaching in high schools and junior and community colleges, and/or to prepare for the PhD, the degree most often required for teaching literature and writing in four-year colleges and universities.

Specific Requirements

Coursework:

- Introduction to Graduate Study (ENGL 7101, 1 hour)
- Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory (ENGL 7104, 3 hours)
- Teaching College Writing (ENGL 7130, 3 hours)
- Cultural Difference and Alterity Requirement (3 hours)
- Historical Requirement: 3 courses in literature, with at least one of those pre-1900 and at least one post-1900 (9 hours)
- Electives chosen from courses at the 6000-8000 levels (12 hours)
- MA Thesis, ENGL 9090 (3 hours)

MA Research Paper

Students complete the degree with a Master's project, for which the student receives a letter grade. The project is most often a substantial revision of a seminar paper. MA papers are 25-40 double-spaced pages in length (excluding footnotes), modeled after articles published in refereed academic journals, and written under the supervision of two faculty members.

MA in English, Track in Literary & Cultural Studies Expected Timeline

Fall Semester, Year One

- Intro to Grad Studies (ENGL 7101, 1 hour)
- Teaching College Writing (ENGL 7130, 3 hours)
- ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice (3 hours)
- Two graduate seminars (including ENGL 7104 Introduction to Theory if offered in Fall) (6 hours)

Spring Semester, Year One

- Three seminars (including ENGL 7104 Introduction to Theory if offered in Spring) (9 hours)
- ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice (3 hours)
- By May 1 of your first year, you should check with your Area Director and/or with the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure you are on track to complete all required coursework on time.

Fall Semester, Year Two

- Three seminars (9 hours)
- ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice (3 hours)
- By November 15th of your second year, you should identify a thesis director and a second reader. You are responsible for conveying those names to the LCS Director and the Director of Graduate Studies through the Thesis Committee Form.

Spring Semester, Year Two

- Two seminars (6 hours)
- Thesis: Students register for three hours of MA Thesis credit (ENGL 9090) during the term in which they intend to complete the thesis, usually the final semester of study. They are responsible for obtaining permission for ENGL 9090 from the project director; the thesis paperwork must be approved by and filed with the Director of Graduate Studies. Students must submit a final full draft of the paper two weeks before the required oral defense. The thesis director, in consultation with the second reader, submits a letter grade for the thesis hours to the Director of Graduate Studies, who enters the grade.

PhD Program, Expected Timeline: Literary & Cultural Studies, Rhetoric & Composition, and Creative Writing

The PhD program in English features three tracks: Literary & Cultural Studies, Rhetoric & Composition, and Creative Writing. The degree is designed to prepare our students for careers as teachers (primarily as college faculty), as scholars, as writers, and in general as contributors to the future of English Studies, whether through scholarship, creative work, teaching, or other professional activities. Our tracks are designed to offer great flexibility for graduate students to pursue their wide-ranging interests, and in turn to produce versatile graduates who can thrive either in academic jobs or in an increasingly broad variety of related fields.

Important note: This is not an exhaustive list, and some areas have track-specific requirements (for instance the First-Year Review in Rhetoric & Composition). Please consult the information on your specific track (below) for a fuller account of requirements, deadlines, and procedures.

Fall Semester, Year One

- **Courses:** ENGL 7102 Professionalization Seminar; ENGL 7130 Teaching College Writing; ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice¹; two seminars, including ENGL 7104 Introduction to Theory² if offered in Fall.
- **Teaching:** Teach one composition course (or be an assistant)
- **Applying:** CW and LCS students are guaranteed to teach one course in their area next year. Students should secure a faculty member as a teaching mentor and submit a proposal for the course(s) they would like to teach by **Dec. 15**

Spring Semester, Year One

- **Courses:** Three seminars (including ENGL 7104 Introduction to Theory² if offered in Spring); ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice
- **Teaching:** Teach one composition course (or be an assistant)
 - If teaching a CW/LCS/RC course in Fall, (1) turn in a syllabus to your mentor, the Director of Grad Studies (DGS), and the Dept. Head by April 1.
 - By May 1 of your first year, you should check with your advisor within the track and with the Director of Graduate Studies to make sure you are set to complete required coursework on time.

Fall Semester, Year Two

- **Courses:** Three seminars; ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice

- **Teaching:** Teach one course (or be an assistant)
 - If teaching a Fall CW, LCS, or RC course, ask your teaching mentor to observe your class
 - If teaching a Spring CW, LCS, or RC course, turn in a syllabus to your mentor, the Director of Grad Studies, and the Dept. Head by **Nov. 15**
- **Qualifying Exams:** Plan exam areas and find examiners.
- **Applying:** Submit one or more proposals for CW, LCS, or RC courses you would like to teach next year by **Dec. 15**

Spring Semester, Year Two

- **Courses:** Three seminars, ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice¹
- **Teaching:** Teach one course (or be an assistant)
 - If teaching a Spring CW, LCS, or RC course, ask your teaching mentor to observe your class
- **Qualifying Exams:** Turn in the Exam Areas and Committee form to the DGS by Jan. 15, and your Exam List form to the DGS by May 1. If your track or examiner requires a preliminary rationale at the time of list-making, that rationale should be included in the document you file with the area director and the Director of Graduate Studies.
 - Over summer read for Qualifying Exams

Fall Semester, Year Three

- **Courses:** ENGL 9099 Research (usually 9 credits), ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice (usually 3 credits)
- **Teaching:** Teach one course (or be an assistant)
 - If teaching a Spring CW, LCS, or RC course, ask your teaching mentor to observe your class
- **Qualifying Exams:** Read for exams and set exam date
 - Over the summer, read for Qualifying Exams and set your exam date by Nov 15.
- **Applying:**
 - Submit a proposal for courses you would like to teach next year. Submission deadline to be determined by Graduate Committee.
 - Research the [Dean's Dissertation Completion Fellowship](#) and contact faculty for letters if you wish to apply
 - Research the [Taft Dissertation Fellowship](#) and contact faculty for letters if you wish to apply

Spring Semester, Year Three

- **Courses:** ENGL 9099 Research (usually 9 credits), ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice (usually 3 credits)
- **Teaching:** Teach one course (or be an assistant)
 - If teaching a Spring CW, LCS, or RC course, ask your teaching mentor to observe your class

- **Qualifying Exams:** Take exam by Mar. 15
 - The Exam Results form must be turned into the Graduate Program Manager immediately after completion of the oral exam. Once the Director of Graduate Studies approves the student's admission into doctoral candidacy, the Graduate Program Manager will enter the information into the student's record in Catalyst and a candidacy letter will be issued to the student.
- **Applying**
 - Apply for the Taft Dissertation Fellowship by the dept's **Feb. deadline** if substantial work has been completed
- **Dissertation Work:** Assemble dissertation committee and over summer start dissertation

Year Four

- **The fourth year of study is generally devoted to the writing of the dissertation. The student should note that the Graduate School's defense deadline for spring falls around the end of March.**

Fall Semester, Year Four

- **Courses:** ENGL 9099 Research (usually 9 credits); ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice (usually 3 credits)
- **Teaching:** Teach one course (or be an assistant)
- **Dissertation:** Turn in a chapter draft by Sep. 1 and another by Dec. 10
- **Applying:** Apply for the Dean's Dissertation Completion Fellowship by early Dec.
 - Research the [Taft Dissertation Fellowship](#) and contact faculty for letters if you wish to apply

Spring Semester, Year Four

- **Courses:** ENGL 9099 Research (usually 9 credits); ENGL 9095 Teaching or ENGL 9096 Professional Practice (usually 3 credits)
- **Teaching:** Teach one course (or be an assistant)
- **Dissertation:** Complete dissertation, defend and submit your dissertation by the Graduate School deadline in Spring.
 - If not graduating this semester, turn in a chapter draft by Apr. 25
- **Applying:**
 - Apply for graduation by the **Graduate School deadline in Jan.** or inquire about teaching opportunities for next academic year with Dept. Head and Composition Director
 - Apply for fifth-year funding to the DGS by Mar.15
 - Apply for the Taft Dissertation Fellowship by **Feb. deadline**
 - Look for UC Grad assistant jobs at <https://jobs.uc.edu/>
- The department is mindful that students writing research dissertations may need part or all of the fifth year to complete them. Fifth-year funding, often in the form of teaching, may be available, but it is not guaranteed.

Fall Semester, Year Five (if necessary)

- **Courses:** ENGL 9099 Research (0-12 credits)³
- **Teaching:** Teach two courses (or be an assistant)

- **Dissertation:**
 - Remain in close touch with dissertation director and work out a schedule for turning in chapters, ideally a chapter draft by Sep. 1 and another by Dec. 10
 - Look for UC Grad assistant jobs at <https://jobs.uc.edu/>

Spring Semester, Year Five (if necessary)

- **Courses:** ENGL 9099 Research (0-12 credits)
- **Dissertation:** complete dissertation, defend and submit by the Graduate School deadline in Spring.
- **Applying:** Apply for graduation by the **Graduate School deadline in Jan.** or inquire about teaching opportunities for next academic year with Dept. Head and Composition Director

Notes:

¹Students teaching or TAing for the department will sign up for **ENGL 9095**. Students serving as research, editorial, or administrative assistants will sign up for **ENGL 9096**. Unfunded students sign up for neither.

Unfunded students are required to enroll in 10 credit hours to be considered full-time and 5 credit hours to be considered half-time for student loan deferral purposes.

Full-time funded students must register for **at least 12 credit hours** and **no more than 18** per semester. ENGL 9095 and ENGL 9096 are not required; they are filler courses that give funded students 3 credit hours to meet the 12-hour requirement. Funded students can opt out of ENGL 9095/6 if they are enrolled in 12+ credit hours each semester. **Do not sign up for ENGL 9095/6 if doing so puts you over 18 credit hours** a semester.

² Students can take a higher-level Theory course in lieu of Intro to Theory with permission/approval from Grad Director.

³ If you have external (non-English Dept.) GAship funding, sign up for 9 credit hours of ENGL 9099 and 3 hours of ENGL 9096 each semester. If you have fifth-year English Dept. funding and do not want UC student health insurance, sign up for 1 credit hour in the Fall only. If you have fifth-year English Dept. funding and require UC student health insurance, sign up for 1 credit hour each semester. If you have fifth-year English Dept. funding and want to defer student loans, sign up for 5 credit hours each semester.

Specific Requirements for Graduate Degrees

PhD, Literary & Cultural Studies Track

Required Coursework:

- Professionalization Seminar (ENGL 7102, 1 hour)
- Teaching College Writing (ENGL 7130, 3 hours)
- Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory Course (ENGL 7104, 3 hours)
- Historical Requirement: 1 pre-1900 lit course and 1 post-1900 lit course (6 hours)
- Alterity Requirement (3 hours)
- Four graduate courses supporting two fields of study (12 hours)
- Three additional graduate-level electives (12 hours)

PhD Qualifying Exams

LCS students select two fields of study (which may include additional areas within a field). Fields might be constituted in terms of broad literary or theoretical movements; they might be based on historical chronology, national boundaries, and genre study (including narratology and poetic theory), and on pedagogy. They might also focus on visual culture, media and film studies, gender and sexuality, drama and performance studies, or race and ethnicity, for example. The students must secure the faculty members who will examine them. See below for the ways that a third examiner might contribute to a qualifying examination.

- The first field of study includes a substantial theoretical component relevant to the proposed dissertation topic. Along with coverage of primary and secondary texts in the area studied, it begins to formulate the topic and research question (problem) of the dissertation and includes methodological and theoretical positions that will assist in the writing of the dissertation. It should also include some literary or other primary texts to help elucidate the theoretical questions.
- The second field of study may be a single area further supporting work on the dissertation, or it may even include hybrid lists designed to enhance the candidate's areas of special expertise.

While compiling and finalizing reading lists, students also complete specific rationales for each of the chosen areas, clarifying their content, explaining their relevance to the proposed topic and research question of the dissertation, and addressing theoretical approaches to the texts studied in the areas.

Reading lists for each field of study are generally structured under the following plan: 35-40 primary works and 10-15 theoretical and/or critical works chosen by the student and the examiner in collaboration. (For a theory-centered list, the above proportions might be adjusted or even reversed: 35-40 theoretical and/or critical texts and 10-15 primary works.)

The total number of works per list (with “works” to be defined by mutual agreement between the examiner and the student) should be 50 to no more than 55.

The Graduate Program Manager will retain some reading lists and rationales from past Ph.D. exams, and these may be consulted as resources.

Exam Committee

Usually, students will negotiate an area-exam list with each of two faculty members, and then they will ask a third faculty member to serve as a kind of “examiner without portfolio”—someone to read the written exams and ask questions about them, but from the fresh perspective of someone who has been outside the list-making process. Students are strongly encouraged to choose faculty with whom they have taken courses and who are familiar with the student’s work. The student should work closely with the examiners during the entire exam process—in assembling the lists and rationales and in reviewing for the exams.

If an examiner in a desired area is not available among the department’s faculty, that area cannot be included on the exam. However, in unusual circumstances, outside experts or specialists may be invited to serve as additional *ex officio* members of the exam committee.

Once the student has prepared individual reading lists and the rationales for the fields/areas, they must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and filed electronically with the Graduate Program Manager.

Submitting the Reading Lists

Second-year students construct reading lists and, in some instances, may write rationales for their fields in consultation with members of their exam committees. The “Exam Areas and Committees” form, due January 15, requires the student to submit the names of examiners and to identify (at this stage tentative) exam areas. By the end of the second year of study, students should, in consultation with advisors, have compiled full lists and should submit them to the Director of Graduate Studies. (Lists may continue to evolve after this point, with the exam advisors’ approval.)

Submitting the Rationale

At least two months prior to the exam, the student should complete an exam rationale. The rationale should be approximately six double-spaced pages, with three pages on each exam area/list. In each section, the student will articulate the themes they have focused on in their reading for the exam areas. Examiners use the rationale when developing questions for the written and oral examinations. Examples of rationales can be provided by the Director or Program Manager of Graduate Studies.

The rationale follows these guidelines:

- The rationale opens with a paragraph announcing what the two areas are, who the examiners will be, and distinguishes between the two areas.
- The rationale then goes on to explain why the student chose these fields (or half-fields), showing why they make intellectual and practical sense. Then, more specifically, the student must explain the reasoning behind the selection of the readings on the lists.

The Written Exam

Students complete this portion of the exam as a take-home test. The student is given the questions for both areas of the exam on an agreed-upon day and then has four full days to write answers. At 9 a.m. on the first day, the student will receive the questions from the Graduate Program Manager via email, and they will return their answers to the Graduate Program Manager, their area examiners, and the third examiner by 6 p.m. on the fourth day via email.

Students may compose their answers anywhere they see fit. The expectation is that students will wish to write in a comfortable place, near their study materials. The student must return their response via e-mail to the Graduate Program Manager *and the entire committee* before the time expires. Individual faculty members set the word limit (or page count) for their section of the exam.

The Oral Exam

The oral exam should be scheduled one week or less after completion of the written exam. Students should print out the Doctoral Exam Results approval sheet, provided by the Graduate Program Manager, and bring it to obtain signatures from examiners after the oral is completed.

The oral exam is approximately 90 minutes. How to apportion the time is up to the committee, but a typical exam period might be divided this way: Field 1: 25 minutes for the first examiner, 10 minutes each for the second and third examiners. Field 2: 25 minutes for the second examiner, 10 minutes each for examiners one and three. The third examiner should keep time and ensure the exam does not go over the prescribed time.

After the student has finished answering questions, they step out of the room while the examiners confer. Examiners then sign the Doctoral Exam Results approval form, and the student returns it to the Graduate Program Manager.

Once the Director of Graduate Studies approves the student's admission into doctoral candidacy, the Graduate Program Manager will enter the candidacy information into the student's Catalyst record, and a candidacy letter will be issued confirming ABD (All But Dissertation) status.

Grading of the Exam

All examiners read both portions of the written exam. Exams are pass/fail. After the student has completed the written qualifying exams, the Committee will make a preliminary judgment to confirm that the written exam justifies proceeding to the oral component. (There may be instances where the committee decides that the student's written exam is clearly failing in one field. In this situation, the student will be asked to retake the field that they failed.) The student must pass both fields to pass the qualifying exam.

If a student fails the exam, it may be taken again, at a time to be agreed upon by the Director of Graduate Studies, the examiners, and the student. If a student fails the test twice or is found to engage in plagiarism on the exam, they will be dismissed from the program.

Guidelines for Assembly of the Dissertation Committee

As soon as possible after qualifying exams, students should assemble their dissertation committee. Once the student has determined who will serve, they complete and return the [Dissertation Committee Form](#) to the Graduate Program Manager, who will enter committee information into the Graduate College's [GradTracker](#) system.

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee usually consists of a director and a second and third reader, though under certain circumstances, with permission from the dissertation director and the Director of Graduate Studies, faculty members may be added. Committees typically include three English department faculty, but exceptions are possible with the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies. The dissertation director and at least one other committee member must be graduate faculty in the Department of English.

The dissertation committee may—with permission from the dissertation director and the Director of Graduate Studies—include a person or persons from outside the department who has/have special competence or interest in the dissertation area. For example, expertise on the dissertation topic may be available in the person of a former faculty member or an appropriate professional practitioner. We encourage the inclusion of interdisciplinary committee members where appropriate.

Dissertation Proposal

By the end of the third year of study, each student should submit a draft of their dissertation proposal. The proposal should be from six to ten double-spaced pages in length (depending on the extensiveness of the bibliography) and should include:

- a clear statement of the aim, scope, and proposed organization of the dissertation
- a reasoned argument for the importance of the project, and a review of the research in this area
- a bibliography of criticism and scholarship immediately relevant to the subject

Advisors should approve proposals by the summer between the third and fourth years of study. After all members of the dissertation committee have approved the proposal, a copy is filed electronically with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Dissertation Defense

It is the student's responsibility to apply for graduation by the Graduate College deadline for the term in which they intend to defend. Application for graduation requires that the student set a date and announce their defense via the [Graduation Checklist](#). Once the dissertation director and the student have agreed, in consultation with the committee, that the dissertation is ready for defense, the student should complete a [Department of English Room Request Form](#) to schedule a room and a time. Except under exceptional circumstances, the student should provide copies of the complete dissertation to all committee members at least three weeks before the defense. Defenses will last about an hour and a half. After conferring, the committee will convey the results.

Upon successful completion of the defense, the student will submit the Committee Approval Form. The student is responsible for downloading this form from the [Graduation Checklist](#) and for printing and bringing it to the defense for signature. After committee approval of the dissertation, the candidate should scan, upload, and submit the form along with their electronic dissertation.

Dissertation Format

Doctoral students in the LCS PhD program complete a scholarly dissertation formatted according to the [Graduate School's formatting guidelines](#). Information and requirements related to preparing and submitting the electronic dissertation may be found [here](#).

PhD, Rhetoric & Composition Track

Required Coursework:

- Professionalization Seminar (ENGL 7102, 1 hour)
- Teaching College Writing (ENGL 7130, 3 hours)
- Two courses in Rhetoric & Composition, and two in a supporting area (at least one 8000-level course among the four, preferably in dissertation area -- 3 hours each, 12 hours total)
- Two courses in Critical Theory (rhetorical, literacy, professional writing, or literary theory -- 3 hours each, 6 hours total)
- Four electives (3 hours each, 12 hours total)

First-Year Review

This academic review takes place at the end of a student's first year in the doctoral program. The goal is to identify areas of strength, growth, and/or weakness as revealed in completed work and in verbal responses during the review. Faculty members may recommend that the student take particular courses, read more extensively in a specific area, or meet with faculty on a regular basis for a certain purpose (i.e., to improve writing, develop a research agenda, etc.).

The review is a ninety-minute session during which the student and two professors discuss a portfolio of work, consisting of a brief self-evaluation and two unrevised seminar papers completed during the academic year. In addition, the student, in consultation with their advisor, will develop a reading list of 10-15 books (many drawn from the year's coursework), which will shape part of the conversation. Ideally, the review will be a conversation about the reading list and the student's intellectual and rhetorical progress as demonstrated in the papers. The committee's questions can be open-ended or direct. Broad, open-ended questions will ask students to relate texts to each other, to the papers, to the student's goals and understanding of the field. Direct questions will require the student to discuss specific theories, authors, concepts, or ideas that emerge in the written work or in the conversation. The student will be notified verbally of the committee's assessment shortly after the review. Faculty will jointly write an assessment of the student's progress, indicating whether the student passed or failed the review, and then submit a copy of this report to the Director of Graduate Studies and to the student. If a student fails the review, they may be asked to revise one of the included papers, read specific texts and discuss them with faculty, and/or meet regularly with faculty for focused discussion on particular topics.

Second-Year Conference

After the student's second year in the PhD program, they will meet with the two faculty with whom they are working on comprehensive exam lists to reflect on coursework and build momentum toward exams. The sixty-minute conference will allow the student to articulate emerging lines of inquiry influenced by coursework and to discuss the exam reading lists, teaching experiences, and other relevant issues. The committee will help the student fine-tune a summer reading plan and discuss directions for the dissertation.

Qualifying Exams and Dissertation

The goal of the qualifying exam is to ensure that students have both broad and deep knowledge of the field and are prepared to begin work on the dissertation. The Rhetoric & Composition exam consists of two lists. One is made up of a core of 24 texts plus module readings, which, taken together, should amount to approximately 50 texts. See the Exam Guidelines & Core List for developing the core list, the [Resource for Developing a Reading List](#) for ideas on module topics, [Sample Reading Lists](#), and the [Rhetoric and Composition Canvas site](#) for helpful models. In addition to the core list, students develop a second exam list in consultation with an advisor. This list includes another 50 texts, usually divided into a series of modules, that reflect a student's specific interests.

Students ask a third faculty member to serve as the moderator/third examiner, whose task is to read the written exams and ask questions about them from the fresh perspective of someone outside the list-making process. Students should work closely with the examiners during the entire exam process—in assembling the lists and rationales and in preparing for the exams.

Approximately two weeks prior to taking exams, students should submit a double-spaced, six-to-eight-page rationale that describes the central themes and/or critical viewpoints made available in each area of study, articulates interrelationships between areas, and addresses the overall relevance of the exam to the student's future work.

The Written Exam

A student completes this portion of the exam as a take-home test. The student is given the questions for both areas of the exam on an agreed-upon day and then has four full days to write answers. At 9 a.m. on the first day, the student will receive the questions from the Graduate Program Manager via email, and they will return their answers to the Graduate Program Manager, their area examiners, and the moderator/third examiner by 6 p.m. on the fourth day via email.

Students may compose their answers anywhere they see fit. The expectation is that students will wish to write in a comfortable place, near their study materials. Individual faculty members set the word limit (or page count) for their section of the exam. We do not expect or want students to write constantly all day; we are looking for thoughtful, well-shaped essays, and students should leave time for breaks and proofreading.

The Oral Exam

The oral exam should be scheduled one week or less after completion of the written exam. Students should print out the exam approval sheet, provided by the Graduate Program Manager, and bring it to the exam to obtain signatures from the examiners after the exam is completed. The oral exam is approximately 90 minutes.

How to apportion the time is up to the committee, but a typical exam period might be divided this way: Field 1: 25 minutes for the first examiner, 10 minutes each for the second and third examiners. Field 2: 25 minutes for the second examiner, 10 minutes each for examiners 1 and 3. The third examiner/moderator should keep time and ensure the exam does not go over the prescribed time.

After the student has finished answering questions, they should step out of the room while the examiners confer. The examiners then sign the Doctoral Exam Results approval form, and the student returns it to the Graduate Program Manager.

Once the Director of Graduate Studies approves the student's admission into doctoral candidacy, the Graduate Program will enter the information in the student's Catalyst record, and a candidacy letter will be issued confirming ABD status.

Grading of the Exam

All examiners read both portions of the written exam. Exams are Pass/Fail. After the student has completed the written exams, the committee will make a preliminary judgment to confirm that the written exam justifies proceeding to the oral component. (There may be instances where the committee decides that the student's written exam is clearly failing in one field. In this situation, the student will be asked to retake the field that they failed.) The student must pass both fields to pass the qualifying exam.

If a student fails the exam, it may be taken again, at a time to be agreed upon by the Director of Graduate Studies, the examiners, and the student. If a student fails the test twice or is found to engage in plagiarism on the exam, they will be dismissed from the program.

Guidelines for Assembly of the Dissertation Committee

As soon as possible after qualifying exams, students should assemble their dissertation committee. Once the student has determined who will serve, they complete and return the Dissertation Committee Form to the Graduate Program Manager, who will enter committee information into the Graduate College's [GradTracker](#) system.

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee usually consists of a director and a second and third reader, though under certain circumstances, and with permission from the dissertation director and the Director of Graduate Studies, faculty members may be added. The dissertation committee and the exam committee need not be identical, but they can be. Committees typically include three English department faculty, but exceptions are possible with permission from the Director of Graduate Studies. The dissertation director and at least one other committee member must be Graduate Faculty in the Department of English.

The dissertation committee may—with permission from the dissertation director and the Director of Graduate Studies—include a person or persons from outside the department who has/have special competence or interest in the dissertation area. For example, expertise on the dissertation topic may be available in the person of a former faculty member or an appropriate professional practitioner.

Dissertation Proposal

By the end of the third year of study, each student should submit a draft of their dissertation proposal. The proposal should be from 5 to 10 double-spaced pages in length (depending on the extensiveness of the bibliography) and should include:

- a clear statement of the aim, scope, and proposed organization of the dissertation
- a reasoned argument for the importance of the project, and a review of the research in this area
- a bibliography of criticism and scholarship immediately relevant to the subject

The form for the dissertation proposal may be found [here](#).

Advisors should approve proposals by the summer between the third and fourth years of study. After all members of the dissertation committee have approved the proposal, a copy is filed electronically with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Dissertation Defense

It is the student's responsibility to apply for graduation by the Graduate College deadline for the term in which they intend to defend. Application for graduation requires that the student set a date of defense and announce their defense via the [Graduation Checklist](#). Once the dissertation director and the student have agreed, in consultation with the committee, that the dissertation is ready for defense, the student should complete a [Department of English Room Request Form](#) to schedule a room and a time. Except under exceptional circumstances, the student should provide copies of the complete dissertation to all committee members at least three weeks before the defense. Defenses will last about an hour and a half. After they confer, the committee will convey the results.

Upon successful completion of the defense, the student will submit the Committee Approval Form. The student is responsible for downloading this form from the [Graduation Checklist](#) and for printing and bringing it to the defense for signature. After committee approval of the dissertation, the candidate should scan, upload, and submit the form along with their electronic dissertation.

Dissertation Format

Doctoral students in the Rhetoric and Composition PhD program complete a scholarly dissertation formatted according to the [Graduate School's formatting guidelines](#). Information and requirements related to preparing and submitting the electronic dissertation may be found [here](#).

PhD, Creative Writing Track, Specialization in Fiction, Poetry, or Literary Nonfiction

Specific Requirements

Coursework

- Professionalization Seminar (ENGL7102, 1 hour)
- Teaching College Writing (ENGL7130, 3 hours)
- Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory (ENGL7104, 3 hours)
- 4 Workshops (3 hours each, 12 hours total)
- Technique & Form in Literary Nonfiction (ENGL7084), Poetry (ENGL7085), or Fiction (ENGL7086) (3 hours)
- Literature Course pre-1900 (3 hours)
- Literature Course post-1900 (3 hours)
- 3 Electives

The literature courses must be above the 6000 level. Of the required four workshops, one may be in a second genre or in a hybrid course. The theory course should generally be Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory, but with the permission of the Graduate Director the student may either substitute another theory course at UC or seek a waiver based on having taken a very similar graduate course elsewhere.

PhD Exams

In consultation with their advisors, students should pick two areas of focus. One exam list should be craft-based and should be conducted by a professor from their chosen creative writing genre. The other exam should be in a scholarly area (literary and/or theoretical) and must be conducted by a professor in Literary & Cultural Studies or Rhetoric & Composition. Together, the two reading lists should contain 100 works, generally 50 to no more than 55 per list. Though both exams are expected to cover both primary and secondary works and consider texts with attention to scholarly issues, one exam will look at the chosen subject-matter more from the perspective of the practitioner and the other will look at its material from the perspective of the scholar, historian, and/or theorist. A third examiner, in addition to serving as moderator, will be a full member of the committee and respond to exams as a whole. The third examiner can be a professor from any area of the program.

Exam Committee

Usually, students will negotiate an area-exam list with each of two faculty members, and then they will ask a third faculty member to serve as a kind of “examiner without portfolio”—someone to read the written exams and ask questions about them, but from the fresh perspective of someone who has been outside the list-making process. Students are strongly

encouraged to choose faculty with whom they have taken courses and who are familiar with the student's work. The student should work closely with the examiners during the entire exam process—in assembling the lists and rationales and in reviewing for the exams.

If an examiner in a desired area is not available among the department's faculty, that area cannot be included on the exam. However, in unusual circumstances, outside experts or specialists may be invited to serve as additional *ex officio* members of the exam committee.

Once the student has prepared the reading lists for the fields/areas, they must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and filed electronically with the Graduate Program Manager.

Submitting the Reading Lists

Second-year students construct reading lists in consultation with members of their exam committees. An "[Exam Areas and Committees Form](#)" is due by January 15. It stipulates that "Students must have committees formed by the beginning of the second semester of their second year of study and approval of their areas and lists by exam committees and the Director of Graduate Studies by the end of their second year of study."

Submitting the Rationale

Prior to the exam, at a time to be determined in consultation with the examiners, students should complete an exam rationale. The rationale should be approximately 6 double-spaced pages (usually a one-page introduction and 2-3 pages on each exam area/list). In each section, the student will articulate the themes they have focused on in their reading. Examiners use the rationale when developing questions for the written and oral examinations. Examples of rationales can be provided by the Program Manager of Graduate Studies.

The rationale follows these guidelines:

- The rationale opens with a paragraph announcing what the two areas are, who the three examiners will be, and distinguishes between the two areas.
- The rationale then goes on to explain why the student chose these fields, showing why they make intellectual and practical sense and how they are connected.

The Written Exam

Students complete this portion of the exam as a take-home test. The student is given the questions for both areas of the exam on an agreed-upon day and then has four full days to write answers. At 9 a.m. on the first day, the student will receive the questions from the Graduate Program Manager via email, and they will return their answers to the Graduate Program Manager and their three examiners by 6 p.m. on the fourth day via email.

Students may compose their answers anywhere they see fit. The expectation is that students will wish to write in a comfortable place, near their study materials. Individual faculty members set the word limit (or page count) for their section of the exam. We do not expect or want students to write constantly all day; we are looking for thoughtful, well-shaped essays, and students should leave time for breaks and for revision.

The Oral Exam

The oral exam should be scheduled one week or less after completion of the written exam. Students should print out the exam approval sheet, provided from the Graduate Program Manager, and bring it to obtain signatures from the examiners after the exam is completed.

The oral exam is approximately 90 minutes. How to apportion the time is up to the committee, but a typical exam period might be divided this way: Field 1: 25 minutes for the first examiner, 10 minutes each for the second and third examiners. Field 2: 25 minutes for the second examiner, 10 minutes each for examiners 1 and 3. The third examiner/moderator should keep time and make sure the exam does not go over the prescribed time.

After the student has finished answering questions, they should step out of the room while the examiners confer. The examiners then sign the Doctoral Exam Results approval form, and the student returns it to the Graduate Program Manager.

Once the Director of Graduate Studies approves the student's admission into doctoral candidacy, the Graduate Program Manager will enter the information in the student's Catalyst record, and a candidacy letter will be issued confirming ABD (All But Dissertation) status.

Grading of the Exam

All examiners read both portions of the written exam. Exams are pass/fail.

After the student has completed the written qualifying exams, the Committee will make a preliminary judgment to confirm that the written exam justifies proceeding to the oral component. (There may be instances where the committee decides that the student's written exam is clearly failing in one field. In this situation, the student will be asked to retake the field that they failed.) If a student fails the exam, it may be taken again, at a time to be agreed upon by the Director of Graduate Studies, the examiners, and the student. If a student fails the test twice or is found to engage in plagiarism on the exam, they will be dismissed from the program.

The student must pass both fields to pass the qualifying exam. Neither qualifying exam may be retaken more than once; a repeated failure of an exam shall result in dismissal from the PhD program.

Guidelines for Assembly of the Dissertation Committee

As soon as possible after qualifying exams, students should assemble their dissertation committee. Once the student has determined who will serve, they complete and return the Dissertation Committee Form to the Graduate Program Manager, who will enter committee information into the Graduate College's [GradTracker](#) system.

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee usually consists of a director and a second and third reader, though under certain circumstances, with permission from the dissertation director and the Director of Graduate Studies, faculty members may be added. The dissertation committee and the exam committee need not be identical, but they can be. Committees typically include three English department faculty, but exceptions are possible with permission from the Director of Graduate Studies. The dissertation director and at least one other committee member must be Graduate Faculty in the Department of English.

The dissertation committee may—with permission from the dissertation director and the Director of Graduate Studies—include a person or persons from outside the department who has/have special competence or interest in the dissertation area. For example, expertise on the dissertation topic may be available in the person of a former faculty member or an appropriate professional practitioner.

Dissertation

The dissertation director and the student set up a schedule of deadlines and meetings over the student's fourth year; the student should set up a similar schedule to work with the scholarly reader on the critical portion. The goal is a completed and revised manuscript of at least 175 double-spaced pages in prose or 50 pages in poetry, plus a completed and revised critical essay of approximately 20-30 double-spaced pages.

Guidelines for the Scholarly Portion of the Creative Dissertation

Creative writing PhD students must complete both creative and scholarly portions of the dissertation to earn the doctorate.

The scholarly portion of the dissertation should emerge from an interest the student has pursued in coursework or exams, and it should be able to function as an original, stand-alone article in terms of academic rigor and argumentation. While it is fine to begin from work done in a class, students cannot use unrevised work written for a class. The scholarly portion of the dissertation is expected to be substantial, original work completed with the help and oversight of an LCS or RC scholar in the program. The dissertation committee should receive a preliminary draft of the essay at least 2 months before the defense date. Professors must give feedback at least one month before the defense date to ensure appropriate time for revision and conversation.

Dissertation Defense

It is the student's responsibility to apply for graduation by the Graduate College deadline for the term in which they intend to defend. Application for graduation requires that the student set a date of defense and announce the defense via the [Graduation Checklist](#). Once the dissertation director and the student have agreed, in consultation with the committee, that the dissertation is ready for defense, the student should complete a [Department of English Room Request Form](#) to schedule a room and a time. Except under exceptional circumstances, the student should provide copies of the complete dissertation to all committee members at least three weeks before the defense. Defenses will last about an hour and a half. After they confer, the committee will convey the results.

Upon successful completion of the defense, the student will submit the Committee Approval Form. The student is responsible for downloading this form from the [Graduation Checklist](#) and for printing and bringing it to the defense for signature. After committee approval of the dissertation, the candidate should scan, upload, and submit the form along with their electronic dissertation.

Electronic submission: Creative dissertations are protected from public electronic publishing. Creative Writing students' dissertations will automatically be uploaded to the UC Repository. If students encounter any problems during the graduation application process, they should reach out to the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Manager for assistance. Please note that as part of the electronic submission process, students will be asked to upload an abstract of the dissertation.