

DEPARTMENT OF
WRITING STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Graduate Student Handbook
2020-2021

MA & PhD
Rhetoric and Scientific & Technical Communication

Updated August 2020

The information in this handbook and other University catalogs, publications, or announcements is subject to change without notice. University offices can provide current information about possible changes.

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator: Department of Writing Studies, 214 Nolte Center, 315 Pillsbury Drive SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455, (612) 624-3445, writgpc@umn.edu.

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its program, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

The University of Minnesota, founded in the belief that all people are enriched by understanding, is dedicated to the advancement of learning and the search for truth; to the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and the application of this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation, and the world.

The University's threefold mission of research and discovery, teaching and learning, and outreach and public service is carried out on multiple campuses and throughout the state.

Prefatory Note on Curricular, Policy, and Procedural Changes to this Handbook

Per University policy, curricular changes will not be made during an academic year, and the curriculum on which a student enters their degree program will be honored. However, a student may, in consultation with their advisor, elect to adopt (“opt in” to) a new curriculum by communicating their preference in writing to the RSTC Office and working with the Graduate Programs Coordinator (GPC) on curricular petitions as necessary.

While the RSTC Office strives to maintain a static handbook each year and avoid mid-year changes, some changes to procedure are unavoidable. Nothing in the handbook can supersede the rules and regulations of the Graduate School or other University of Minnesota governing bodies, and non-curricular policies and procedures set by the College and Graduate School are continually being developed and implemented throughout the academic year.

For all students regardless of curriculum, the current handbook is typically the best resource for current policies and procedures (some of which apply to all students regardless of the year they entered their program), improved explanations of established procedure and policy, and access to current resources. In the event that a student finds a discrepancy in departmental policy between their entering handbook and this version of the handbook, the RSTC Office will work with that student to identify appropriate accommodations.

The RSTC Office will notify students, in writing, of significant changes made during the academic year. Updates will be attached to the handbook as external documentation accessed via footnotes linking to an annual [Appendix](#). Handbook updates made prior to the start of a new academic year are documented in an annual [Graduate Student Handbook \(RSTC\) Changes Log](#).

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Welcome!

This handbook is tailored to students entering the RSTC MA and PhD programs in Rhetoric and Scientific & Technical Communication (RSTC) in the 2020-21 academic year. It is also a resource for all RSTC students seeking the most current information on departmental practices and procedures, and on available resources.

The handbook is RSTC students' and their advisors' primary resource on departmental policies, practices, and procedures, and it serves as the gateway to College and Graduate School policies and procedures. Prospective students seeking information on admissions are invited to consult the [Office of Graduate Admissions' website](#) and the Department of Writing Studies' website for [program-specific application instructions](#).

The RSTC program prides itself on offering graduate students close, individualized attention from advisors, committee members, other members of the faculty, and program directors/staff. Our community's research and teaching interests are broad and varied. Our scholarship is grounded in rhetorical theories and history. To this foundation, we add emphases in scientific and technical communication, writing theories and pedagogies, digital and multimedia communication, and how all of these connect with broader cultural conversations and contexts. I encourage you to take full advantage of our community's collective expertise and commitment to a constructive and supportive graduate student experience.

On behalf of the entire Department of Writing Studies, I welcome you to the program and/or to a new academic year.

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Director of Graduate Studies for the MA & PhD Programs

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Common Acronyms and Abbreviations

You are likely to encounter the following acronyms and abbreviations in this handbook and/or your time in graduate study at the University of Minnesota. A complete list can be found [online](#):

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Full Name	Description
ABD	All But Dissertation	Designation indicating that preliminary exams have been successfully completed. Includes students who still need to complete thesis credits (WRIT 8888).
ADS	Advanced Doctoral Status	The status added to a student record after 24 thesis credits (WRIT 8888) have been completed. Students with ADS typically register for WRIT 8444, a one-credit full-time equivalency registration status.
CEI	Center for Educational Innovation	Offers some of the training you will receive as a Graduate Instructor for First Year Writing (FYW).
CLA	College of Liberal Arts	The Department of Writing Studies is in CLA. CLA is one of several colleges at the UMN.
COGS	Council of Graduate Students	The governing body for graduate students at the U of M. COGS represents, advocates for, informs, facilitates communications among, and supports Twin Cities graduate students seeking a research degree (MA and PhD). If you pay Student Services Fee with your registration, you are a member of the COGS General Assembly.
DGS	Director of Graduate Studies	Serves as the coordinator of graduate studies within a program. Together with the graduate program faculty and department and collegiate leadership, the DGS shares responsibility for guiding and improving graduate education within the program(s) under the DGS's jurisdiction.
DRC	Disability Resources Center	Works in partnership with students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University to eliminate or minimize barriers and facilitate inclusion on campus. The DRC collaborates with all members of the University community to improve access for people with disabilities by determining and implementing reasonable accommodations, providing education on access and inclusion, and partnering with University offices to ensure meaningful physical and technological access.

FYW	First Year Writing	All undergraduates must take WRIT 1301, WRIT 1401, or an equivalent. Most graduate students teach these courses during their academic career.
GDP	Graduate Degree Plan	The form students complete, in consultation with advisor(s), to plan which courses will be taken and when. This form will be retired and replaced by the GPAS process this year.
GPC	Graduate Programs Coordinator	Provides administrative support for the DGS and graduate students. The primary point of contact for graduate students' questions about Program, College, and University policies and procedures, access to University resources, etc.
GPAS	Graduate Planning and Audit System	An online interface that will replace the GDP form this year. Students will receive guidance on whether to use a GDP or GPAS to document their degree plan.
GSSP	Graduate Student Services and Progress	The division of One Stop Student Services for graduate students. See <u>Graduate Student Online Resources</u> below for details.
OIT	Office of Information Technology	The University's central information technology unit.
ORGP	Office of Research and Graduate Programs	CLA's Graduate Programs Office works with students, staff, and faculty to provide access to academic, financial, and service resources.
OTR	Office of the Registrar	Handles registration-related services for University students. It manages all aspects of current and historical student academic records.
PSG	Professional Student Government	The University's governing body for professional students. Formerly titled Graduate and Professional Student Association (GAPSA), the PSG is the highest level of student governance for professional students. All currently registered professional students at the University of Minnesota are members.

Graduate Faculty in RSTC

The following table lists all graduate faculty in the Department of Writing Studies. When planning your committee, please consult the Graduate Education [Faculty Role List database](#) to see members and their roles, and GSSP's [Examination Committee](#) documentation to review policies.

Writing Studies Department Faculty	Affiliations:
Lee-Ann Kastman Breuch	Design: Human Factors and Ergonomics Literacy & Rhetorical Studies
Patrick Bruch	Literacy & Rhetorical Studies
Daniel Card	
Ann Hill Duin	
Richard Graff	Classical and Near Eastern Studies Communication Studies Literacy & Rhetorical Studies
Laura Gurak	Communication Studies English Literacy & Rhetorical Studies Mass Communications Studies of Science and Technology
Kirsten Jamsen	English Literacy & Rhetorical Studies
Molly Kessler	
Anne Lazaraton	Literacy & Rhetorical Studies
Amy Lee	Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies
John Logie	Communication Studies Liberal Studies Literacy & Rhetorical Studies
Rachel Presley	Communication Studies
Tom Reynolds	Literacy & Rhetorical Studies
Donald Ross, Jr.	English Literacy & Rhetorical Studies

Affiliate Faculty

The following faculty housed in other departments hold affiliate appointments in our RSTC programs. Their eligibility to serve on RSTC students' exam committees is documented in the [Faculty Role List](#).

Affiliate Faculty	Home Department	Appointments also held in:
Ronald Greene	Communication Studies	American Studies Comparative Studies in Discourse and Society Literacy & Rhetorical Studies Moving Images Studies
Atilla Hallsby	Communication Studies	
Joseph Konstan	Computer Science	
Cynthia Lewis	Curriculum & Instruction	Education, Curriculum, & Instruction Literary & Rhetorical Studies Teaching Sociocultural Studies in English
Daniel Philippon (SM, S&TC)	English	American Studies Communication Studies Conservation Biology Development Studies and Social Change English Literacy and Rhetorical Studies Risk Analysis for Introduced Species and Genotypes Studies of Science and Technology

Graduate Student Online Resources

Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP)

The Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) office maintains a portal within [One Stop Student Services](#) dedicated to graduate students' needs. It is the most important resource for graduate degree information, degree completion steps, and electronic access to the various forms you need to file. It is your primary contact point for:

- Inquiries regarding graduate policy and graduate degree progress.
- Understanding your graduate degree completion deadlines and requirements.
- Graduate examination committee policy, submission, and approval inquiries.
- Doctoral preliminary and final examination scheduling procedures and requirements.
- Thesis and dissertation submission procedures.
- Submitting degree progress and completion forms for graduate degrees.

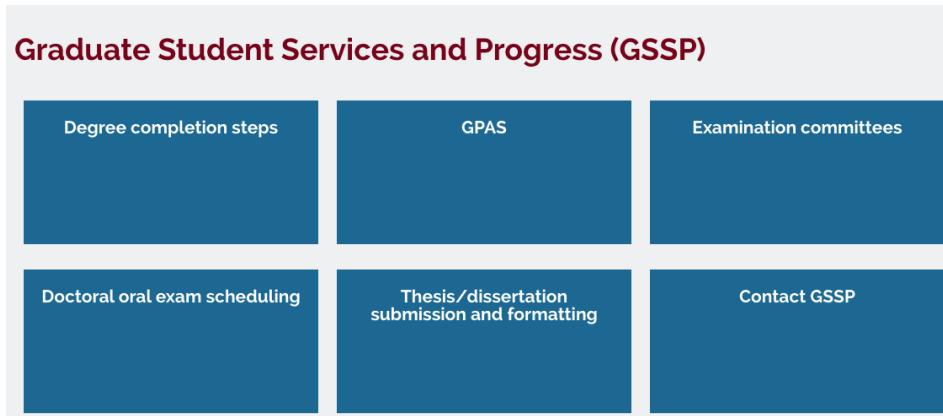
Contact Information for GSSP

Website: <https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/graduate-student-services-and-progress-gssp>

Email: gssp@umn.edu

Phone: 612-625-3490

Office: 333 Robert H. Bruininks Hall



Writing Studies Intranet

The Department of Writing Studies maintains an [Intranet site](#) where you can access department-specific information and resources that benefit you as both a student and employee of the department:

- Departmental news, events, and announcements
- Department Calendar
- HR & Payroll contact information
- Governance documents (including meeting notes and agendas for the RSTC Advisory Committee)
- Travel, Funding, and Reimbursement Information
- Teaching Resources for First Year Writing and Advanced Writing instructors
- Mental health resources

RSTC Graduate Student Resources Hub

Maintained within the Writing Studies Intranet by the RSTC Office, the [RSTC Graduate Student Resources Hub](#) is a curated selection of resources, departmental forms, and tools to help you identify University and external resources to help you navigate your degree and enhance your graduate education experience.

The hub includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- [RSTC Graduate Student Calendar](#) (listing professional development events, funding opportunities and deadlines, and more). You may also access it via your UMN Google Calendar.
- Current and recent RSTC Graduate Student Handbooks
- Preliminary and Final Exam Resources
- Access to forms, including departmental forms
- Funding resources to help you identify and apply for fellowships, grants, and assistantships
- Professional and pedagogical development and support links
- Job Search tools
- Research support services
- Personal, health, family, and financial support resources

Students can request enhancements to this hub at any time using an embedded form.

Graduate School Current Student Toolkit

The [Current Student Toolkit](#) connects you to resources on career planning, advising, interdisciplinary study, workshops, and funding opportunities. You will also find helpful links to important forms handled by the Graduate School and resources for international students.

CLA Neighborhood: Research and Graduate Programs

The [College of Liberal Office of Research and Graduate Programs \(CLA ORGP\)](#) maintains documentation on policies and procedures specific to CLA and serves as a reference and hub for resources offered by the college. See especially the [Graduate Career Services](#) and [Graduate Student Resources](#) sections.

Graduate Education Resources for the First Year (GEAR1)

[GEAR1](#) is an online orientation for new graduate students maintained as a Canvas site. Modules include introductions to the University, life in Minnesota, funding and tuition options, being a graduate student, and health and wellness.

Graduate Education Resources Beyond the First Year (GEAR+)

[GEAR+](#) is an online resource that connects students with academic and professional development resources. It includes both University and external online resources to help students explore strategies for thesis/dissertation development, leadership, personal and career development, and career path exploration.

The MA & PhD in Rhetoric & Scientific and Technical Communication (RSTC) Programs

Program Overview

The University of Minnesota's MA and PhD programs in Rhetoric and Scientific & Technical Communication were founded in 1993, and have prepared generations of graduate students for interdisciplinary careers. The RSTC programs train graduate students to become researchers, writers, and teachers, offering a particular emphasis in three core areas: rhetoric, technical communication, and writing studies. RSTC students work in collaboration with faculty mentors and peers to develop the expertise required to make substantive contributions to the scholarship in such areas as: rhetorical theory; composition; writing studies and pedagogy; technology and culture; rhetorics of health and medicine; and digital literacies.

The RSTC Program's curriculum, professional development training, and funding are structured to support students in making early and regular contributions to published scholarship in their preferred fields. This work is complemented by focused training in teaching first-year writing, technical communication, and advanced courses at the college level. The instructional foundation of the program is intensive graduate seminars, bolstered by supporting courses in methods and pedagogies. Additionally, the program is structured to encourage students to take full advantage of the University's strengths, with considerable space for courses in other departments and programs. While most graduates of the program pursue careers in higher education, the program also has a long history of graduates with successful careers in industry or non-governmental organizations.

Each program requires an initial two years of coursework, followed by a capstone writing project. MA students write a "Plan B" paper and present the paper at or near the end of their studies. Doctoral students take "preliminary" examinations and then write a dissertation after their coursework is complete.

The Advising System

This section is intended to outline the key elements of the advisor-advisee relationship; specify responsibilities for each; and set the stage for constructive working relationships. Your advisor(s), in partnership with the Graduate Programs Coordinator (GPC) and Director of Graduate Study (DGS), work to provide guidance, help advisees navigate policies, and support advisees in timely progress toward their degrees.

During the admissions process, the faculty members and the DGS identify an Initial Advisor or Initial Co-Advisors for each incoming student. This decision takes into consideration students' stated interests, balanced with faculty expertise and availability.

Initial advisors will:

- welcome advisees to the program;
- help the student identify scholarly and professional goals;
- orient advisees to points of connection and resources within the program and university;
- assist with choosing courses and planning a coherent program of study;
- discuss pedagogy and appropriate service roles;
- assist with program forms;
- provide guidance directed at maintaining adequate academic progress;
- help identify resources that encourage the student to maintain a healthy work-life balance;
- field questions and concerns;
- advocate for the student; and

- help identify an appropriate Degree Advisor.

Initial Advisor assignments are intended to last through the first year of the program. At the start of a student's second year in the program, we ask advisees to formally identify their Degree Advisor (or Degree Co-Advisors), who, under normal circumstances, will be the primary advisor(s) for the student for the remainder of their time in the program. Degree Advisors will:

- help advisees meet program milestones;
- discuss pedagogy and appropriate service roles;
- visit advisee's classrooms to offer feedback on their classroom teaching;
- work with the student to develop a workplan for the dissertation;
- serve as initial reviewer for dissertation drafts;
- help identify appropriate professional development steps for the advisee;
- encourage appropriate participation in conferences and scholarly events;
- review and constructively critique drafts of fellowship and grant applications;
- help review and refine advisees' scholarly and professional goals, in view of their work in the RSTC program;
- assist with program forms;
- provide guidance directed at maintaining adequate academic progress;
- help identify resources that encourage the student to maintain a healthy work-life balance;
- field questions and concerns; and
- advocate for the student.

While some advisees will elect to continue on with their Initial Advisor(s), we expect some will also identify a more appropriate advising arrangement after spending time in the program. To help advisees navigate moving from their Initial Advisors to different Degree Advisors, the Graduate Programs Coordinator will circulate a form in mid-September of each student's second year. This form will ask advisees to meet with and secure the approval of their chosen Degree Advisor(s). The RSTC Program will require receipt of this form and written confirmation from advisors by the first Friday in October, in order to help us maintain equitable workloads for faculty advisors.

Outside of this October deadline at the beginning of a student's second year, there may be circumstances — at any point in the program — where a student determines that it would be appropriate to move to a new advisor. Any member of the RSTC faculty who is tenured or in a tenure-track position can serve as a Degree Advisor, if willing and available. Additionally, RSTC affiliate faculty members can serve as RSTC Degree Advisors in cases where their specialties align with student interests. To change advisors at other points in the degree process, advisees must secure the approval of the new advisor, inform the former advisor(s), and notify the GPC by completing the [Change of Advisor form](#) (also available on the Writing Studies Intranet). Advisees are not allowed to pursue a degree in the RSTC program without an advisor, and advising assignments are understood to remain in force until the forms or letter establishing the new advisor is reviewed and endorsed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

In rare circumstances, an advisor may decline to continue in that role. In the event that an advisor wishes to end working with a particular student, the advisor must notify both the student and the Director of Graduate Studies of this decision in writing. The DGS will meet with the student to discuss securing a new advisor as soon as possible. A new advisor must be identified no later than 10 weeks after receiving notice from the advisor. In the event that no advisor is secured by the student after 10 weeks, the DGS will contact the student to discuss whether it is the student's intention to continue in the program. Failure to secure and maintain an advisor is potential grounds for dismissal from the RSTC program.

Successful advising relationships typically are grounded in regular contact between advisors and advisees. While advisees' needs and advisor styles or preferences may vary, we encourage advisees and advisors to establish in-person meeting schedules that help maintain and build their working relationships. Because 21st century academic work involves a significant amount of electronic communication, we encourage advisors and advisees to have direct conversations about reasonable expectations regarding response times for communications, so that both parties can have a good sense of when and whether to intervene if an expected response starts to feel overdue or missing. The RSTC Program is committed to the study of effective communication across a range of disciplines, and we recognize the advisor-advisee relationship as a particularly important space to put theory into practice.

Advising Resources and Policies

Administrative statements and resources concerning advising are available for students' review. See especially:

- [Mutual Roles and Responsibilities for Faculty and Graduate Students.](#)
- [The Dignity Project: Responsible Conduct in Graduate and Professional Education](#), from the Student Conflict Resolution Center.
- University policy: [Managing Nepotism and Personal Relationships](#).
- There are many issues that can be discussed in confidence with an advisor. University employees must, however, report sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and relationship violence to the University's Title IX Office. Please review the [administrative policy statement](#) for details.

Program Components for the MA and PhD

Our curriculum is anchored by **methods and pedagogies requirements**, **core areas**, each individual student's **specialty area**, and **outside coursework** (as a **supporting program or minor**).

Methods and Pedagogies Requirements

The **methods requirement** course, WRIT 8011: Research Methods in Writing Studies and Technical Communication, should be taken as early as possible in a student's program. This course hones students' skills in close reading, annotation, and systematic analysis through study of recent, cutting-edge, and award-winning research in rhetoric, writing, and scientific and technical communication. Students also learn and practice principles of problem formulation; research design; ethical inquiry; data collection; and modes of analysis. These skills and principles allow students to take what they have learned to their seminars and develop their ideas into longer-term research projects.

WRIT 8011 is offered every other fall term. RSTC students are *strongly encouraged* to continue methods training with a second methods course, typically taken in another department, and in alignment with their research and scholarship.

The **pedagogies requirement** consists of two courses, WRIT 5531: Introduction to Writing Theories and Pedagogies, and WRIT 5532: Practicum in Writing Pedagogies. Participation in a teacher practicum is exemplary and expected professional development for teachers of writing, and is considered by the RSTC programs to be foundational intellectual work. The two course sequence, to be completed during all MA and PhD students' first year in their program, is required for teaching in the First Year Writing Program and strengthens the professional development of graduate instructors for teaching careers as well as for scholarly work in writing pedagogy.

Core Areas

All students take courses from each of the three core areas:

- 1) Rhetoric
- 2) Writing Studies
- 3) Technical Communication

Students who are competent in their Core Areas:

- Have mastered foundational works in their chosen areas, can justifiably represent the ideas of other scholars, and are able to synthesize and analyze concepts across works.
- Know how to critically read and critique research articles and monographs in a range of topics that are involved in writing studies (for example, to read *Written Communication*, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, *Rhetoric Review*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, or *College Composition and Communication* on a regular basis).
- Are familiar with the important theoretical and applied aspects of our discipline(s) as they have developed over time and can recognize important changes in the future.

Knowledge of the **Core Areas** is demonstrated by course grades and, for PhD students, preliminary exams in two of the three core areas.

Specialty Area

The student's specialty area consists of Writing Studies courses selected in consultation with the advisor and other members of the student's committee. The specialty area is typically the basis for the student's selection of sustained (Plan B paper or dissertation) research that fills a gap in the area's knowledge or understanding. Areas of faculty expertise that students draw on to build a specialty area include:

- Rhetorical theory
- Professional and technical communication
- Theories of writing
- Writing pedagogies
- Rhetorics of science, health, medicine, or law
- Digital literacies
- Internet studies

To be recognized as an expert in a specialty area a student should:

- Know how to conduct excellent research in the area.
- Understand the theoretical and empirical foundations of the area.
- Demonstrate an ability to conduct independent, original, ethical research, including:
 - Formulating researchable (and research worthy) questions.
 - Executing and justifying methods appropriate to those questions.
 - Conducting systematic analyses.
 - Articulating conclusions specific to the analyses and/or implications for the advancement of theory.

Outside Coursework (Supporting Program or Minor)

All graduate students in the College of Liberal Arts are required to supplement their major field coursework with courses outside the major. Outside courses should be selected in consultation with the advisor and other members of the student's committee.

Taking outside coursework should compliment major coursework in one or more of the following ways:

- Complementing and extending students' understanding of their specialty area.
- Providing additional perspectives on courses in Writing studies.
- Enhancing a student's areas of expertise through pursuit of a **formal minor** (master's or doctoral).
- Building an individualized **supporting program** from coursework in one or more departments that forms a coherent area of study.

A **supporting program** does not need to meet the formal requirements of another department, whereas a **minor** is a formal suite of courses offered by another department or program. A minor should be identified as early as possible to ensure all requirements can be met. A minor can only be completed at the master's or PhD level, not both. Students planning to continue for the PhD and obtain the PhD-level minor should therefore begin working on the minor coursework while in the MA program but wait to declare the minor as a PhD student.

A full list of graduate minors is maintained as part of the [Graduate Education Catalogs](#). All minors require consultation with the minor field DGS, some have additional application requirements maintained by the department housing the minor. Please note that free-standing and degree-dependent minors are listed separately in the online Catalogs.

Second Language

There is no formal second language requirement. However, if you plan to study Classical rhetoric, you should be proficient in Latin or Greek (or both). If you plan to study rhetoric or technical communication in an international setting, you should be proficient in the relevant language(s).

Transferring Credits from Another Institution to the MA or PhD

Up to 6 graduate credits may be transferred from another institution with advisor and DGS approval. Transfer credits may be applied to the following degree requirements, as appropriate to align course content with degree requirements:

- Specialty Area
- Outside Courses (supporting program or minor)

A course can only be used to fulfill a requirement in the major (Specialty Area) or outside the major; it cannot be applied to more than one category.

To have credits from another institution applied to the MA or PhD, students must provide the advisor with a syllabus for the transfer courses, and a transcript if it is not already on file with the Graduate Admissions Office. Transfer credits will only be applied if the grade earned was a B or better and if the advisor/DGS is able to determine that each course in question is comparable to a course, appropriate to the specialty area, or relevant to the construction of a coherent supporting program. Application of transfer credits to a minor requires approval from the minor field DGS.

Transfer credits count towards curricular requirements and the total credit count for the major, but do not count towards the required minimum 3.0 GPA.

Transfer credits from a quarter system (instead of semester), must be calculated to semester credits ($x 2.333$).

For example, a 3-credit quarter class = 2 semester credits, a 4-credit quarter class = 2.67 and a 5-credit quarter class = 3.33.

Satisfactory Degree Progress and Annual Review

Expectations: Regular Progress, Forms, and Graduation

All students are responsible for completing and filing departmental, CLA, and GSSP forms, which are required for progress and graduation (GPAS/GDP, Final Exam Report form, Application for Degree, etc.). A student will not be cleared for graduation unless all requirements are properly fulfilled. Please contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator (GPC) for assistance with departmental signatures on paper forms. You are expected to follow deadlines and rules; if you have questions, ask your advisor, the DGS, or the GPC.

Annual Reports of Progress

The University requires departments to annually assess all master's and PhD students' progress in terms of grades, number of incompletes, and progress in completing milestones (e.g., core coursework, written/oral examinations, research design, data collection/analysis, communication of research findings in the Plan B paper or dissertation). Personal, professional, pedagogical, and career development are also considered to be important components of graduate students' progress through their program.

Starting in their first year in the program, all RSTC MA and PhD students complete an annual report of progress using GSSP's online system. Students will receive an email notification from the GPC in early March followed by an automated message with a link to enter the progress reporting system. In the system, you will upload your CV, describe your activities for the academic year, and identify academic, career, and professional development goals for the next academic year. After you submit your report, it goes to your advisor(s), the GPC, and the DGS for comment and review.

Plan to meet with your advisor(s) to discuss your report and your experience in the program as part of the annual review process.

Please see the [Progress Reporting FAQ for RSTC Students](#) for details.

Satisfactory Progress Defined

The sections of this handbook specific to the MA and the PhD provide a timeline for completing the degree. Please use those degree-specific timelines to ensure you are making timely progress towards your degree.

Satisfactory progress for MA and PhD students is also assessed by a combination of the following criteria:

- Timely progress in completing coursework: typically 9 credits per semester, and any incompletes are resolved by the deadlines established in the [Incomplete Grade Contract](#).
- Grades of B or better are in all courses.
- Meeting goals established in a prior progress report.
- Completing degree milestones (exams, degree paperwork, online workflows) on time.
- Participation in professional, academic, and career development activities.
- Timely progress in completing the Plan B Paper (MA) or dissertation (PhD).

For PhD students, the following additional criteria are considered:

- Timely completion of preliminary exams, the written prospectus, and the prospectus meeting.
- Concrete evidence of progress on dissertation research and writing each semester after the prospectus meeting.

Addressing Extenuating Circumstances

Students having exceptional difficulties maintaining progress are encouraged to be proactive in addressing the challenges they are experiencing. If extenuating circumstances are likely to impact your time to degree, please

reach out to your advisor(s), the DGS, and/or the GPC as soon as possible for assistance; *do not wait until annual progress reporting has been initiated.*

Faculty and program staff are committed to working with you to address challenges and difficulties you may be facing. Discussions will address whether a letter from the DGS explaining the need for an exception to the progress rules is in order, or whether a leave of absence or other measure is appropriate. You will also receive support in identifying appropriate University and external resources. If necessary, a faculty committee will determine whether to grant exceptions to degree timelines and related policies.

Consequences of Unsatisfactory Progress

In the rare circumstance that a student does not address difficulties with progress prior to the Annual Report of Progress, a determination of “unsatisfactory progress” will be entered in the annual report. If this occurs, the DGS will provide written notice that the student is no longer in good standing with their program. The letter will address whether a registration hold has been placed on the student’s account and address implications for Graduate Instructor support. (Students with a registration hold in place are not able to take courses or hold graduate assistantships until the hold has been lifted).

A copy of the written notice will go to the advisor, the GPC, the Department Administrator, and the Director of First Year Writing. The advisor may opt to write a letter to the DGS that explains the situation and how the problem might be resolved.

The DGS will discuss options with students on a case-by-case basis. Examples of issues that could arise include the following:

- Students with two or more incompletes (and must get down to one or zero).
- MA students who did not complete their Plan B paper in spring of their second year.
- PhD students who have not taken (and passed) exams and are one year (2 semesters) after completing their program’s coursework.
- PhD students who did not complete their dissertation prospectus one year (2 semesters) after passing prelims.
- PhD students who have not made significant progress on their dissertation during the year (see [PhD Degree Progress and Timeline](#) for details).

Reestablishing Good Standing in the Program

To reestablish good standing in the program and have a registration hold released, the student must work with their advisor(s) and/or the DGS to address the concerns raised by the progress report. Students may be asked to develop a performance plan in collaboration with the advisor(s) and meet several of the established deadlines before the registration hold is lifted.

University-Wide Policy on Academic Progress for Master’s and PhD Students

- Doctoral Degree: Performance Standards and Academic Progress: [Policy](#) and [FAQ](#)
- Master’s Degree: Performance Standards and Academic Progress: [Policy](#) and [FAQ](#)
- [Annual Graduate Student Reviews: Guidelines](#)

Specific to the MA

MA Program Coursework and Credit Requirements

Students entering the MA program in Fall 2020 must earn 34 credits (usually 12 courses and seminars). 28 credits must be in Writing Studies. This includes WRIT 8794: Directed Research, conducted in conjunction with **the Plan B paper**. The remaining 6 credits must be taken outside the major.

Course		Semester	Year	Credits			
Methods and Pedagogies (7 required credits)							
WRIT 8011	Research Methods in Writing Studies and Technical Communication	Fall		3			
WRIT 5531	Introduction to Writing Theories and Pedagogies	Fall	First	3			
WRIT 5532	Practicum in Writing Pedagogies	Spring	First	1			
	Total Methods and Pedagogy			7			
Core Areas (12 credits)							
Rhetoric (choose at least one)							
WRIT 5775	Rhetorical Tradition: Classical Era			3			
WRIT 5776	Rhetorical Tradition: Modern Era			3			
	Total Rhetoric			3+			
Writing Studies (choose at least one)							
WRIT 8540	Seminar in Writing Studies Pedagogies			3			
WRIT 8560	Seminar in Writing Studies			3			
	Total Writing Studies			3+			
Technical Communication (choose at least one)							
WRIT 8520	Seminar in Scientific and Technical Communication			3			
WRIT 8550	Seminar in Technology, Culture, and Communication			3			
	Total Technical Communication			3+			
	Total Core Area credits			12			
	Methods and Core Area Total			19			
Specialty Area (Writing Studies Courses)							
WRIT				3			
WRIT				3			
	Total Specialty Area			6			
Outside Courses (may include supporting field or minor coursework)							
_____				3			
_____				3			
	Total Electives			6			
Plan B Master's Capstone							
WRIT 8794	Independent Study			3			
	Total Program Credits			34			

A version of this table is available as a [worksheet](#) for planning purposes. Starting in Spring 2021, students will be able to plan their coursework in the Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS).

Degree Requirements

In addition to completing the coursework listed above, MA students must also meet the following requirements:

- Courses must be taken on an A/F grading basis unless only offered S/N.
- A grade of B or better is required for a course to count towards the degree.
- Students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or better.
- A Plan B Paper must be written, and the student must complete an Oral Examination and submit the Final Report form.

Degree Progress and Timeline

A general overview of [degree completion steps](#) is available from GSSP for Plan B Master's students. Additional details and department-specific requirements are as follows:

Every Semester (Years 1 & 2)

Enroll in coursework selected in consultation with your advisor and the requirements documented in this handbook. Students are expected to take 9 credits per semester to maintain time to degree, but may reduce their enrollment to 6 credits for a semester with DGS approval.

Some coursework is term-specific:

- WRIT 5531 in fall of the first year.
- WRIT 5532 in spring of the first year for 10 credits total this semester.
- WRIT 8794 in spring of the second year.

First Year - Spring

Complete the **Graduate Student Progress Report** by completing the online workflow (students will receive a link to the form in March) and meeting with your advisor(s) to discuss the report and goals for the next academic year. See [Satisfactory Progress](#), above, for more information and to prepare.

Second Year - Fall

In consultation with your advisor(s), plan your remaining coursework for the degree and enter it in the **GPAS Planner in MyU: Academics**. Students whose plans may deviate from the documented curriculum should work with their advisor(s), the DGS, and the GPC to get exceptions approved, processed, and applied to their **GPAS Audit**. [Step-by-step instructions](#) for using the Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS) are available from GSSP.

Assemble your **Examination Committee**. Committee members review the Plan B paper. Your committee must consist of at least three faculty members with Graduate Faculty status, including your advisor(s). At least one member must represent a field outside your major. If you have declared a minor, the outside member must be from the minor field. To identify eligible faculty members for your committee, see the [Faculty Role List database](#). The full requirements for MA committees are [maintained by GSSP](#). Once you have identified the members of your Examination Committee, [declare your committee in the online system](#).

Work with your advisor(s) and the DGS to determine whether to **apply to continue to the PhD**. The application process, discussed below under [From the MA to the PhD](#), is typically completed during the fall semester.

Second Year - Spring

Take WRIT 8794 with your advisor(s) to **write your Plan B paper**.

Complete your **oral examination** following the guidance provided in this handbook (see [The MA Plan B Paper and Oral Examination](#), below). **Note:** You cannot take the oral examination until your GPAS Planner has been completed and any incompletes have been finished and grades entered on your transcript.

Students who have been admitted to the RSTC PhD program complete a **progress report** in March of their second year.

Students who have been admitted to the RSTC PhD program should wait until August to initiate **Graduation Steps** to ensure continuity in funding between the MA and PhD. Students not continuing to the PhD should [Apply to Graduate](#) in May.

Planning Your Degree Coursework

Students entering the MA program starting in Fall 2020 should use the Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS) to identify the courses they plan to take (using the GPAS planner) and track their progress towards completing degree requirements (using the GPAS audit). Access to the GPAS system and documentation on how to use it is maintained by GSSP: <https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/gpas>.

This system is expected to become available to students in Spring 2021. A GPAS Planner should be completed no later than fall of your second year in your program. The GPC will provide you with additional guidance once the system is live.

The MA Plan B Paper and Oral Examination

Requirements for the Plan B Paper

In your final semester in the program, you will write a “Plan B” paper. “Plan B” is the term used by the Graduate School for a capstone project involving a single example of scholarly writing. The RSTC program does not offer the “Plan A” option, which involves a formal thesis.

The topic for the paper typically evolves from work in one or more of your seminars. The paper should be in the form of a **final draft of an article** suitable for publication in a specific scholarly journal. It should:

- Demonstrate your ability to identify a scholarly topic of interest to the readership of the journal.
- Justify the importance of the topic.
- Prove or argue a thesis.
- Make a contribution to scholarly knowledge or understanding of your topic, so you should place your work in the scholarly “conversation.” A review of the literature, by contrast, would generally not be approved.

The paper should conform to guidelines and practices of the journal, including formatting and the use of citations and notes. You should carefully read a dozen or so recent articles on a topic similar to yours from that journal and notice how articles are laid out and paced from the Abstract and Introduction to the Conclusion. Journal articles are typically 6,500-7,500 words (or 25+ typescript pages long), including notes and bibliography or works cited.

In addition to the paper, write a **preface** of 3 to 5 pages. This should explain how you became interested in the topic, why you think it is important, and briefly summarize your argument. You should also review two or three

other journals as you did with your target journal and explain why you chose the one you did. Include the **URL or printout** of an article of a typical paper from the target journal.

If you have — as a byproduct of your studies in the RSTC MA program — published a sole-authored article 4,000 words or more, or have one accepted, you can use this as your Plan B paper. You should then write up the preface to accompany your article.

Discuss your topic and possible journals with your advisor before you begin the process and register for WRIT 8794: Directed Research during the semester when you are writing the paper.

Submitting the Plan B Paper for Review

After your advisor approves the paper and preface, distribute both to the other two people on your examining committee. You need to give your committee at least two weeks to read your paper.

Scheduling the Oral Examination

When your advisor(s) agree that you are ready to do so, begin provisionally scheduling your oral examination by working with your committee to identify a time to meet (plan for at least one hour). Tools like [Doodle](#) can help you and your committee members identify a mutually convenient time.

Once you have identified a time for the oral examination, **notify the GPC** (writgpc@umn.edu). The GPC will provide assistance with room reservations, departmental calendaring, and, if necessary, online examination protocols.

Prior to your oral exam, [download the Graduation Packet](#) to obtain your Final Examination Report/Final Report form, which you must bring to your Oral Exam to be signed by the Committee members.

Oral Examination

The examination lasts about one hour. In the first part you present your topic formally to the committee, then they discuss your paper with you. Your advisor then asks you to leave the room and the committee members vote “pass” or “fail.” The decision is based on a majority vote. If that vote is “fail,” then you can retake the examination only with unanimous consent of the committee.

Bring the Final Examination Report from the Graduate School to the examination for signatures. After the oral exam, provide the GPC a copy of the signed Final Exam Form and a PDF copy of your paper for your file.

File your Final Examination Report form with GSSP

The Final Examination Report form is released when you download your [Graduation Packet](#). After your exam, submit the signed form to GSSP. You may either email it to gssp@umn.edu or drop it off at 333 Robert H. Bruininks Hall. It must be submitted by the last business day of your anticipated month of graduation (see [Graduation](#), below, for the remaining steps to complete your degree).

Registration: Maintaining Active Status in the MA Program

Students must enroll in courses every fall and spring semester to remain active in their program. Students must take at minimum 6 credits per semester to be eligible for a Graduate Assistantship. The standard credit load for RSTC MA students is 9 credits per semester (10 credits in spring semester of the first year in the program).

If you find that you need to withdraw from a course after the semester has started, and especially if that course is listed on your Degree Plan (GDP or GPAS), contact your advisor(s), the DGS, and the GPC in advance. Your advisor will help you determine if there is a better solution (such as an incomplete) and the GPC will assist you

with updating your Degree Plan and explain impacts of the dropped course on meeting coursework requirements and maintaining degree progress. DGS approval is required for some types of changes to the Degree Plan.

Failure to enroll by fall and spring semester registration deadlines will result in a system-generated, automatic discontinuation from the degree program. However, there may be circumstances where enrolling in courses is not appropriate. In that event, students should work with their advisor(s), the DGS, and the GPC to identify which of the following special registration statuses is best-suited to their situation:

WRIT 8333 – Master Advanced Standing – [form required](#)

Master's students who have completed all course requirements and are working as graduate instructors may qualify for WRIT 8333 Master's Advanced Standing. This is a one-credit, full-time-equivalency registration status that reduces costs for both the student and the department employing the student. Use of this registration status by RSTC students is rare. For more information, please [review the requirements](#) and contact the GPC before you file the form.

GRAD 999 – Maintain Active Status

In special circumstances, if necessary to maintain active status in the program without taking a course, you must register for GRAD 999 with your advisor's approval. Grad 999 is a zero-tuition, zero-credit registration that satisfies the Graduate School's registration requirement. It does not satisfy registration requirements for graduate student employment at the University or international student agencies, and it does not satisfy most loan deferment requirements or qualify students for financial aid. Be sure to read all of the information about this [registration option](#) on the Graduate School's web site before registering. **The Department of Writing Studies limits registration in GRAD 999 to two semesters only.**

Leave of Absence (LOA)

The University recognizes that there are times when students may determine that it is in their best interest to interrupt their enrollment. Students who experience extenuating circumstances that prevent them from maintaining an active status in their degree program for more than one semester may request a leave of up to two years. While on leave, University services and facilities are not available and loan deferment requirements will not be met.

Administrative Policy: [Leave of Absence and Reinstatement from a Leave: Graduate Students](#)

FAQ: [Leave of Absence Reinstatement](#)

CLA Process: [Leave of Absence \(LOA\) and Reinstatement From Leave](#)

Withdrawal from the Program

In rare circumstances, a student may determine that continuation of the degree program is not in their best interests. Students who are considering leaving the program are strongly encouraged to reach out to their advisor(s) and/or the DGS for guidance and support. In the event that withdrawing from the degree is determined to be the best course of action, the student should submit a written statement to that effect (email is acceptable) to the GPC for assistance with processing the withdrawal.

From the MA to the PhD

Students who are making satisfactory progress in the MA program will be contacted by the DGS in the fall of their second year and invited to apply to the PhD program. The application process has two components: an internal, Departmental Review by the membership of the RSTC Graduate Faculty, and a new online application submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Step 1: Departmental Review

Write a one- or two-page memo to the DGS describing what you have accomplished in the MA program to date and why you wish to continue your studies. The DGS will present this memo to the RTSC Graduate Faculty, typically at the November faculty meeting, and your advisor(s) will speak to your progress. The graduate faculty will decide whether you can proceed to the PhD and you will receive their decision by the end of November.

Step 2: Graduate School Application

Students who have been cleared to proceed to the PhD by the RSTC Graduate Faculty must complete a new online application to be formally admitted to the PhD program by the Office of Graduate Admissions. Please reuse your MA application materials to meet the documentation requirements set in the online admission system; the PhD application is for administrative purposes only, so you do not need to update your materials except to provide your unofficial MA transcript.

Once the application has been submitted, MA students voted by the graduate faculty for admission to the PhD program will receive a departmental nomination letter explaining the terms of the admission offer including advisor assignment(s) and funding details. Barring any unusual and unforeseen circumstances, the Graduate School will formally admit the student.

All offers of admission to a graduate program with a funding offer attached have a decision deadline of April 15th, which is National Signing Day. Please complete the form in the Graduate Admissions system to accept or decline your offer of admission as soon as you are ready, but no later than April 15.

Step 3: Complete your MA Degree Requirements

Continuation to the PhD is contingent on completion of all MA requirements including the Plan B Paper and formally graduating from the MA program. Students continuing from the MA to the PhD should plan to graduate from the MA in September of their first year in the PhD program. This ensures that students remain in an active status during the summer between the MA and PhD.

Coursework and Funding Information

Most, if not all, MA coursework can be automatically applied to the PhD degree plan. Students should see the MA courses in their PhD GPAS audit and should work with their advisor(s), DGS, and GPC during the summer between the MA and PhD to plan their remaining coursework. In the event that a curricular change has occurred, the DGS and GPC will work with the student to make appropriate plans and process exceptions, if necessary, to minimize any potential disruptions to the student's plans.

MA-to-PhD students are eligible for up to four more years of support, as long as students continue to make satisfactory progress in their program and are teaching in an acceptable manner.

Specific to the PhD

PhD Program Coursework and Credit Requirements

Course		Semester	Year	Credits			
Methods and Pedagogies (7 required credits)							
WRIT 8011	Research Methods in Writing Studies and Technical Communication			3			
WRIT 5531	Introduction to Writing Theories and Pedagogies	Fall	First	3			
WRIT 5532	Practicum in Writing Pedagogies	Spring	First	1			
	Total Methods and Pedagogy			7			
Core Areas (15 credits)							
Rhetoric (choose at least two)							
WRIT 5775	Rhetorical Tradition: Classical Era			3			
WRIT 5776	Rhetorical Tradition: Modern Era			3			
WRIT 8510	Seminar in Rhetoric			3			
Writing Studies (choose at least one)							
WRIT 8540	Seminar in Writing Studies Pedagogies			3			
WRIT 8560	Seminar in Writing Studies			3			
Technical Communication (choose at least one)							
WRIT 8520	Seminar in Scientific & Technical Communication			3			
WRIT 8550	Seminar in Technology, Culture, and Communication			3			
	Total Core Area credits			15			
	Methods and Core Area Total			22			
Specialty Area (Writing Studies Courses)							
WRIT ____				3			
WRIT ____				3			
WRIT ____				3			
	Total Specialty Area			9			
Outside Classes (may include supporting field or minor coursework)							
____				3			
____				3			
____				3			
____				3			
	Total Electives			12			
	Total Coursework Credits			43			
WRIT 8888	Thesis Credits			24			
	Total Program Credits			67			

A version of this table is available as a [worksheet](#) for planning purposes. Starting in Spring 2021, students can plan coursework in the Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS).

Students who joined the PhD program in a prior academic year should refer to the coursework requirements in place the term they began their program, as documented in their entering-year handbook (see the [RSTC](#)

[Graduate Student Resources Hub](#) on the Writing Studies Intranet for digital access). The RSTC Office will assist students who wish to pursue more recent curricular requirements or support students in meeting the coursework requirements of their entering curriculum.

Students entering the PhD program in Fall 2020 must earn 43 coursework credits (usually 15 courses and seminars). 31 credits are required in the major and 12 credits must be taken outside the major. In addition, you must take 24 credits of WRIT 8888: Thesis Credits, Doctoral, for a total of at least 67 credits for the degree.

Students who enter the program with an MA from another institution may transfer 6 credits of coursework to the PhD. Determination of which requirements transfer courses fulfill is determined in consultation with advisor(s) and the DGS and are subject to CLA and Graduate School approvals (see [Transferring Credits from Another Institution](#), above).

Core Area Course Guidance

PhD students must take two courses in Rhetoric, one course in Writing Studies, and one course in Technical Communication plus one additional course from any of the three core areas to bring the total credits to 15. 8000-level seminars are offered on different topics and a course number may be repeated provided the topics are different. The requirement to take courses in all three areas reflects the structure of preliminary exams for RSTC students: You must take preliminary written examinations in Rhetoric and in either Writing Studies or Technical Communication. These choices should complement your exam specialty area (see [PhD Preliminary Examinations](#), below).

Provided the core requirements have been met, students may apply additional credits of coursework in core area courses to their Specialty Area, provided the selections are in alignment with the focus of the specialty area.

Use of Independent Study/Directed Research Courses for the Specialty Area

With approval of your advisor and the DGS, you may include one or two courses of WRIT 8792: Independent Study, Reading, and Research (use if you will be focusing on secondary literatures and reading texts under the guidance of a faculty mentor) or WRIT 8794: Directed Research (for completion of an original research paper or project) as part of your coursework in the Specialty Area.

WRIT 8792 and WRIT 8794 both require completion of a [student/faculty contract using the online workflow](#). Students should work with a faculty mentor in advance to develop a plan for the coursework and establish expectations. The GPC will provide assistance with course setup and permission numbers for enrollment in independent/directed study coursework.

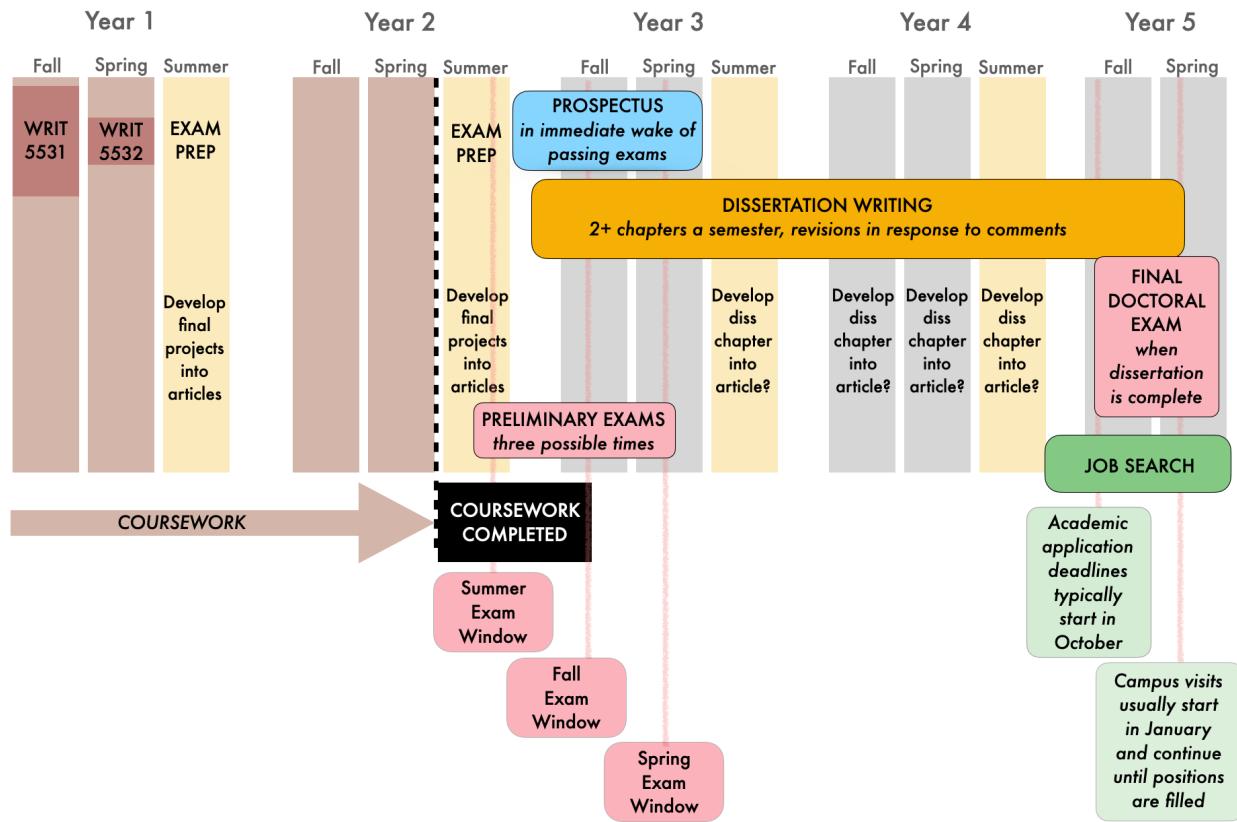
Degree Progress and Timeline

A general overview of [degree completion steps](#) is available from GSSP for PhD students. Additional details and department-specific requirements are as follows:

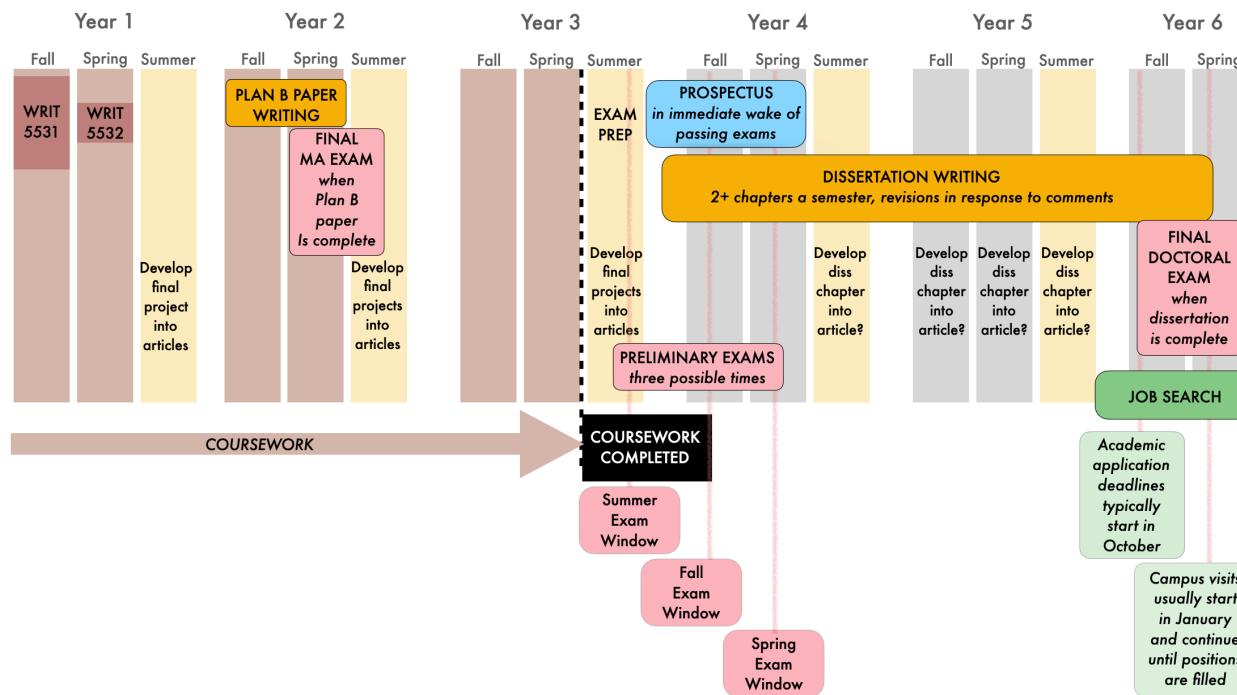
Time to Degree

The following graphics provide an overview of the standard cadence of the PhD as a five-year program (six for MA-to-PhD students). Adhering to these timelines ensures you complete your degree within your funded years in the program (five for PhD students, six for MA-to-PhD students). The Department of Writing Studies is committed to supporting your efforts at maintaining satisfactory progress during your time in the program.

THE RSTC PhD – A FIVE YEAR PLAN



THE RSTC MA-PhD – A SIX YEAR PLAN



Getting Started (Year One and Beyond)

Start Thinking About Preliminary Exams and the the Dissertation Topic Early

Students must begin to think about the dissertation soon after they arrive, not at the end of their coursework, and structure their coursework toward learning what they need to know to complete the dissertation. For PhD students it means that they must summon the courage to take their exams, not when they feel they know everything, but as soon as their coursework, their readings from exam lists, and their conversations with committee members suggest that a passing grade is within reach.

Publishing Early and Often

In addition to the timeline described in this section of the handbook, you are also encouraged to publish articles during your studies. This can help you professionally and can make you more competitive on the job market. As with everything in the RSTC PhD program, work with your advisor and other faculty in shaping and placing your research in relevant academic journals.

First Year of Coursework (direct to PhD only)

Coursework

PhD students entering with an MA from another institution should take three courses in fall (including three credits of WRIT 5531) and four courses (including one credit of WRIT 5532) in spring. Students entering the program in Fall 2020 and after should always “top off” their enrollment with thesis credits (WRIT 8888). See instructions, below, under [Enrollment Policies](#) for details about when you should take thesis credits.

Degree Milestones

PhD students are encouraged to start planning coursework for subsequent semesters and may use the **GPAS Planner** to begin identifying when to take courses to meet degree requirements (the GPAS Planner must be completed in fall of the student’s second year).

Departmental Deliverables

In spring, complete your annual progress report (see [Satisfactory Degree Progress and Annual Review](#), above).

Second/Final Year of Coursework

(Year 2 for PhD, Year 3 for students completing both the RSTC MA and the RSTC PhD)

Coursework

PhD students entering with an MA from another institution should take three courses each semester to complete their coursework in spring term and continue topping off their enrollment with thesis credits (WRIT 8888).

MA-to-PhD students should finish their coursework this year. Some MA-to-PhD students are able to complete their coursework requirements in the fall term, but students have the option to continue coursework in the spring if necessary to meet such goals as a PhD minor. Those who finish coursework in fall term take their first semester of thesis credits (12 credits of WRIT 8888) in spring semester. See instructions, below, under [Enrollment Policies](#) for details about when to take thesis credits.

Degree Milestones

The following degree milestones are required for students **entering the PhD with a master's from another institution**:

- In fall, submit your **GPAS Planner** (see [Planning Your Degree Coursework](#), below).
- In spring, assemble your **Preliminary Examination Committee** with assistance from your advisor(s) and **declare your committee** in the online system.
- In summer, if you and your advisor(s) determine that you are ready, **take your preliminary exams** during the first window.

The following degree milestones are required for **MA-to-PhD students**:

- In fall, complete your **Graduate Degree Plan (GDP)**. A Graduate Student Petition must accompany the GDP if there are any variances between your coursework plans and what is listed above in the PhD curriculum. (This is the last semester the GDP will be in use.)
- In fall, assemble your **Preliminary Examination Committee** with assistance from your advisor(s) and **declare your committee** in the online system.
- In spring, take your **preliminary examinations** (see [PhD Preliminary Examinations](#), below).

Departmental Deliverables

- In fall, declare your **Degree Advisor** using the form provided by the GPC (see [The Advising System](#), above, for details).
- In spring, complete your annual progress report.

First Year After Coursework

(Year 3 for PhD, Year 4 for MA-to-PhD)

All RSTC PhD students should complete their 24 thesis credits (WRIT 8888) this year. Every subsequent semester, enroll in WRIT 8444 (full-time equivalency status).

Degree Milestones

- Students who have not yet taken their **preliminary examinations** should do so in fall semester (spring at the very latest).
- Complete and present the **Dissertation Prospectus** to your committee the semester after taking preliminary exams.
- Submit the **Dissertation Prospectus Form** to the GPC. Completion of the Prospectus Meeting is a formal degree milestone that will be recorded in GPAS.

Departmental Deliverables

- Each term you take WRIT 8444, complete the [required form](#).
- In spring, complete your annual progress report.
- Work with your advisor(s) to determine when to submit dissertation chapter drafts and related work each semester after completing your prospectus meeting.

Dissertating Years

(Years 4 & 5 for PhD, Years 5 & 6 for MA-to-PhD)

Standard enrollment while dissertating (after completion of your 24 thesis credits) is WRIT 8444.

Degree Milestones

- Please see **The Dissertation and Final Oral Examination (“Defense”)** below for details about dissertation milestones. These include:
 - declaring your **Final Examination committee** (the semester before you will defend).
 - Releasing the **Reviewer’s Report Form** to your committee members.
 - **Scheduling** your final oral examination with GSSP.
 - Submitting your **Final Report Form** and **depositing the dissertation**.
 - **Applying to Graduate**.

Departmental Deliverables

- Each term you take WRIT 8444, complete the [required form](#).
- In spring, complete your annual progress report. You do not need to complete a progress report the year you graduate.
- Submit chapter drafts and other deliverables to your advisor(s) each semester.
- Work with the GPC to schedule your public defense the semester you will take your **final oral examination**.

Planning Your Degree Coursework

Students entering the PhD program starting in Fall 2020 should use the Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS) to identify the courses they plan to take (using the GPAS planner) and track their progress towards completing degree requirements (using the GPAS audit). Access to the GPAS system and documentation on how to use it is maintained by GSSP: <https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/gpas>.

This system will become available to students starting in Spring 2021. A GPAS Planner should be completed no later than fall of your second year in your program. The GPC will provide you with additional guidance once the system is live.

PhD students who started the PhD program in a prior semester and who have not yet filed a [Graduate Degree Plan \(GDP\)](#) should do so in Fall 2020. Please consult the GPC for assistance in meeting this requirement.

Enrollment Policies: Coursework, Thesis Credits, and Special Registration Statuses

Enrollment Guidance for Students Who Enter with an MA from Another Institution

During Semesters with Coursework: The RSTC PhD program recognizes that students begin thinking about and discussing their dissertation projects as they pursue coursework. To recognize this work and aid you in making timely progress towards completion of your credit requirements, please follow these guidelines:

1. Register for at least 9 credits of coursework each semester, unless you receive DGS approval to reduce your enrollment to 6 credits of coursework for a semester.
2. Top off your coursework enrollment with credits of WRIT 8888 (thesis credits) to bring your total credits each semester to 14 (the flat-rate, full-time graduate tuition cost covers 6-14 credits).

Topping off your enrollment with credits of WRIT 8888 is not intended to supersede your pursuit of your academic plans. The RSTC program supports you in enrolling in more than 9 credits of coursework per semester if it is necessary for goals such as pursuing a minor.

After Completing Coursework: The semester after you complete your coursework, complete the required 24 thesis credits by enrolling in at least 6 credits of WRIT 8888 to maintain a full-time student status. Example: A PhD student who completed 20 thesis credits during their two years of coursework would still enroll in 6 additional credits in their fifth semester to meet the required 24 credits while maintaining a full-time student status.

Enrollment Guidance for RSTC MA-to-PhD Students

MA-to-PhD students are sometimes able to complete their coursework requirements in the fall term. Enroll in at least 9 credits of coursework to complete your requirements in fall semester. For each of the next two semesters (spring and fall), enroll in 12 credits of WRIT 8888 to complete your 24 thesis credits.

MA-to-PhD students who elect to continue coursework in the spring, such as to complete a PhD minor, should “top off” their enrollment for both fall and spring semesters of their first year in the program with thesis credits. To top off your enrollment, register for enough credits of WRIT 8888 to bring your total credits each semester to 14 (the flat-rate, full-time graduate tuition cost covers 6-14 credits). The subsequent fall, complete your thesis credits (a total of 24 are required) by enrolling in the balance of thesis credits (at least 6 to maintain a full time student status, but no more than 14).

Registration, Active Status and Graduate Instructorship

You must be registered for at least six credits a semester in order to be eligible to teach or work as a Graduate Instructor, Teaching Assistant, or Research Assistant at the University.

WRIT 8888 – Doctoral Thesis Credit

All doctoral candidates are required to complete 24 credits of 8888. By following the enrollment guidance provided above, all RSTC students starting their program in Fall 2020 and after should be able to complete their thesis credits the semester after finishing coursework.

WRIT 8444 – Doctoral Full Time Equivalent Status (FTE) with One Credit Registration

After RSTC students complete 24 credits of WRIT 8888 (thesis credits) they become eligible for Advanced Doctoral Status (ADS), and can enroll in WRIT 8444. WRIT 8444 is a one-credit registration option for eligible doctoral students who must certify full-time status to be in compliance with the requirements of the University and/or external agencies (e.g., employment as a graduate assistant; loan deferment).

Students enrolled in WRIT 8444 are employed in one of the low-tuition/low-fringe job classes. ***This is a significant benefit for both the program and the student in that it reduces costs for all concerned.***

Documentation on [tuition](#) and [fees](#) is available on One Stop.

Register for 8444 every semester after completing the 24 thesis credits and while you hold a teaching assistantship or fellowship by following these steps:

1. Complete and sign the form [Application for Advanced Doctoral Status](#) (ADS) each semester you are eligible for WRIT 8444.
2. Send the signed form to writgpc@umn.edu for assistance with advisor and DGS signatures.
3. Enroll in one credit of WRIT 8444 after you have received a copy of your signed form authorizing your registration.

Note: *By completing the Application for Advanced Doctoral Status, you are certifying that you will be engaged in full-time dissertation research and writing. The expectation is that you will continue to make timely degree progress as established in this handbook. If extenuating circumstances will prevent you from pursuing your studies for one or more semesters, please work with your advisor(s) and the DGS to identify the appropriate enrollment option for your situation.*

GRAD 999

In special circumstances, if necessary to maintain active status in the program without taking a course, you must register for GRAD 999 with your advisor’s approval. GRAD 999 is a zero-tuition, zero-credit registration that satisfies the Graduate School’s registration requirement. It does not satisfy registration requirements for graduate student employment at the University or international student agencies, and it does not satisfy most

loan deferment requirements or qualify students for financial aid. Be sure to read all of the information about this [registration option](#) on the One Stop website before registering. **The Department of Writing Studies limits registration in GRAD 999 to two semesters.**

See [Special Registration Categories for Graduate and Professional Students](#) for more information on 8888, 8444, and GRAD 999.

Leave of Absence (LOA)

The University recognizes that there are times when students may determine that it is in their best interest to interrupt their enrollment. Students who experience extenuating circumstances that prevent them from maintaining an active status in their degree program for more than one semester may request a leave of up to two years. While on leave, University services and facilities are not available and loan deferment requirements will not be met.

Administrative Policy: [Leave of Absence and Reinstatement from a Leave: Graduate Students](#)

FAQ: [Leave of Absence Reinstatement](#)

CLA Process: [Leave of Absence \(LOA\) and Reinstatement From Leave](#)

In rare circumstances, a student may determine that continuation of the degree program is not in their best interests. Students who are considering leaving the program are strongly encouraged to reach out to their advisor and/or the DGS for guidance and support. In the event that withdrawing from the degree is determined to be the best course of action, the student should submit a written statement to that effect to the DGS and GPC for assistance with processing the withdrawal.

PhD Preliminary Examinations

RSTC PhD students begin preparing for exams in their first year in the program by working with their advisor(s) and other faculty to develop their reading lists and study the texts. The preliminary exam consists of a written and an oral component, both of which are ideally completed in the term after the student completes their coursework. Students must pass their exams within the first three exam windows following their completion of coursework.

Use the [Degree Progress and Timeline](#) guidance, above, to identify when you should declare your committee. You need to select a committee to set and review your preliminary written examinations and conduct the oral examination.

Preliminary Written and Oral Exam Windows

Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021
Writtens: Fri. Oct. 2 through Mon. Oct. 19 Oral: Within one month after the advisor receives the last report on the last exam	Writtens: Fri. Feb. 5 through Mon. Feb. 22 Oral: Within one month after the advisor receives the last report on the last exam	Writtens: Fri. Jul. 16 through Mon., Aug. 2 Oral: During the first two weeks of Fall semester classes
Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022
Writtens: Fri. Oct. 1 through Mon. Oct. 18 Oral: Within one month after the advisor receives the last report on the last exam	Writtens: Fri. Feb. 4 through Mon. Feb. 21 Oral: Within one month after the advisor receives the last report on the last exam	Writtens: Fri. Jul. 15 through Mon., Aug. 1 Oral: During the first two weeks of Fall semester classes
Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
Writtens: Fri. Sept. 30 through Mon. Oct. 17 Oral: Within one month after the advisor receives the last report on the last exam	Writtens: Fri. Feb. 3 through Mon. Feb. 20 Oral: Within one month after the advisor receives the last report on the last exam	Writtens: Fri. Jul. 14 through Mon., Jul. 31 Oral: During the first two weeks of Fall semester classes

Preliminary Exam Reading Lists - adopted 2018

Rhetoric Theory and History Reading List

1. Gorgias, "Encomium of Helen" (Kennedy translation recommended, can be found in *The Rhetorical Tradition*)
2. Isocrates, *Against the Sophists and Antidosis* (either George Norlin or Mirhady & Too translations)
3. Plato, *Gorgias*
4. Plato, *Phaedrus*
5. Aristotle, *On Rhetoric* (Kennedy translation, **second** edition)
6. Cicero, *De Oratore* (May & Wisse, trans., Cicero: On the Ideal Orator)
7. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*. Selections from books 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, and 12.
8. Burke, Kenneth. Selections from among:
 - *Counter-Statement*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1968 [1931].
 - *A Rhetoric of Motives*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1969 [1950].
 - *On Symbols and Society*, ed. Joseph R. Gusfield. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1989.
9. Perelman, Chaim, and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. Selections from:
 - *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*. Trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver. Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1969.
 - Perelman, "The New Rhetoric: A Theory of Practical Reasoning." In *The Rhetorical Tradition*, ed. P. Bizzell and B. Herzberg. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000.
10. **The "Rhetorical Situation" Debates:** (all but Consigny can be found in *Contemporary Rhetorical Theory, 2nd edition*)
 - Bitzer, Lloyd. "The Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 1-14.
 - Vatz, Richard E. "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6 (1973): 154-161.
 - Consigny, Scott. "Rhetoric and Its Situations". *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 7 (1974): 175-186.
 - Edbauer (Rice), Jenny. "Unframing models of public distribution: From rhetorical situation to rhetorical ecologies". *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35 (2005): 5-24.
11. Lunsford, Andrea, ed. *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1995.
 - 3 or more essays from this collection, selected in consultation with faculty examiner and/or advisor.
12. Ratcliffe, Krista. *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2005.
13. Baca, Damian, & Victor Villanueva, eds. *Rhetorics of the Americas: 3114 BCE to 2012 CE*.
 - 3 or more essays from this collection, selected in consultation with faculty examiner and/or advisor.
14. Porrovecchio and Condit, *Contemporary Rhetorical Theory*, 2nd ed. New York: Guilford P, 2016.

Section I. What Can a "Rhetoric" Be?

(selections to be chosen in consultation with examiner)

- Poulakos, John. "Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric."
- Hariman, Robert. "Status, Marginality, and Rhetorical Theory."

- Leff, Michael. "The Habitation of Rhetoric."
 - McGee, Michael Calvin. "Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture."
 - Farrell, Thomas. "Practicing the Arts of Rhetoric: Tradition and Invention."
 - Foss, Sonja K. & Cindy L. Griffin. "Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric."
 - Zappen, James P. "Digital Rhetoric: Toward an Integrated Theory."
15. Porrovecchio and Condit, *Contemporary Rhetorical Theory*, 2nd ed. New York: Guilford P, 2016.

Section VIII. Alternatives to the Rhetorical Tradition

(selections to be chosen in consultation with examiner)

- Aune, James Arnt. "Cultures of Discourse: Marxism and Rhetorical Theory"
- Blair, Carole, Julie R. Brown, & Leslie A. Baxter, "Disciplining the Feminine"
- Shome, Raka. "Postcolonial Interventions in the Rhetorical Canon: An "Other" View."
- Gunn, Joshua. "Refiguring Fantasy: Imagination and Its Decline in U.S. Rhetorical Studies."
- Lee, Lin-Lee. "Pure Persuasion: A Case Study of Nüshu or "Women's Script" Discourses."

16 through 25 to be determined through negotiation by the advisor, committee, and the student

Technical Communication and Culture Reading List

Books (7)

- Agboka, G. Y., & Matveeva, N. (Eds.). (2018). *Citizenship and Advocacy in Technical Communication: Scholarly and Pedagogical Perspectives*. Routledge.
- McKee, H. A., & Porter, J. E. (2017). Professional Communication and Network Interaction: A Rhetorical and Ethical Approach. Routledge.
- Meloncon, L.K., & Scott, J.B. (2018). [Methodologies for the rhetoric of health and medicine](#). New York, NY; Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge 2018
- St. Amant, K. & Sapienza, F. (Eds.) (2011). Culture, communication, and cyberspace: *Rethinking technical communication for international online environments*. Amityville, N.Y. : Baywood Pub. Co.
- Selber, S. & Johnson-Eilola, J. (Eds.) (2013). *Solving problems in technical communication*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Spilka, R. (Ed.) (2009). *Digital Literacy for Technical Communication: 21st Century Theory and Practice*. Routledge.
- (At least three selections to be negotiated with advisor)
- Spinuzzi, C. (2015). *All edge: Inside the new workplace networks*. University of Chicago Press.

Articles (8)

- Andersen, R. (2014). Rhetorical work in the age of content management. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 28(2): 115-157
- Blythe, S., Lauer, C., & Curran, P.G. (2014). Professional and technical communication in a web 2.0 world. *Technical Communication Quarterly* 23(4).
- Haas, A. M. (2012). Race, rhetoric, and technology: A case study of decolonial technical communication theory, methodology, and pedagogy. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 26(3), 277-310.
- Hunsinger, R. P. (2006). Culture and cultural identity in intercultural technical communication. *Technical Communication Quarterly* 15(1): 31-48.
- Jones, N. N., Moore, K. R., & Walton, R. (2016). Disrupting the past to disrupt the future: An antenarrative of technical communication. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 25(4), 211-229.
- Miller, C. R. (1979). A humanistic rationale for technical writing. *College English*, 40(6), 610-617.
- Rude, C. (2009). Mapping the Research Questions in Technical Communication, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 23(2): 174-201.
- Sun, H. (2006). The triumph of users: Achieving cultural usability goals with user localization. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 15(4): 457-481.

16 through 25 to be determined through negotiation by the advisor, committee and the student

Writing Studies and Pedagogy Reading List

1. Alexander, Jonathan. (2008) *Literacy, Sexuality, Pedagogy: Theory and Practice for Composition Studies*. Utah State UP.
 2. Bawarshi, A.S. and Reiff, M.J. (2010). *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy, Parlor Press*.—Part 1, chapters 1-6, up to p. 104.
 3. Berlin, James. (1987). *Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900-1985*. Southern Illinois UP.
 4. Boyle, Casey. (2016). “Writing and Rhetoric and/as Posthuman Practice.” *College English*, 78 ,532-54.
 5. Canagarajah, Suresh. (2013). *Translingual practice: Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. Routledge.
 6. Gilyard, Keith. and Adam Banks. (2018). *On African-American Rhetoric*. Routledge.
 7. Hesford, Wendy S., Adela C. Licona, and Christa Teston, Eds. (2018), *Precarious Rhetorics*. Ohio State UP.
 8. Horner, Bruce. (2016). *Rewriting Composition: Terms of Exchange*. Carbondale, IL, Southern Illinois University Press.
 9. Horner, Bruce, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster and John Trimbur. (2011). “Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach.” *College English*, Vol. 73, No. 3, 303-321.
 10. Latour, Bruno. (1999). *Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Cambridge, Harbard UP.
 - Chapter 2 “Circulating Reference: Sampling the Soil in the Amazon Rain Forest”
 - Chapter 8, “A Collective of Humans and Nonhumans.”
 11. Lutkewitte, Claire. (2013). *Multimodal Composition: A Critical Sourcebook*.
 12. Nickoson, Lee and Mary Sheridan. (2012) . *Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies*. Carbondale, IL. Southern Illinois UP.
 - (selections to be chosen in consultation with examiner)
 13. Powell, Malea. (2002). “Rhetorics of Survivance: How American Indians Use Writing.” *CCC* 53:3, 396-434.
 14. Royster, Jacqueline Jones & Gesa Kirsch. (2012). *Feminist Rhetorical Practices: New Horizons for Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies*. Carbondale, IL. Southern Illinois UP
 15. Villanueva, Victor and Kristin Arola. Cross-Talk in Comp Theory. (2011). NCTE. Selected chapters.
- 16 through 25 to be determined through negotiation by the advisor, committee, and the student*

Detailed Steps for PhD Preliminary Written and Oral Exams

You are encouraged to use the [RSTC Preliminary Exams Checklist](#) to help you and your committee members keep track of exams steps and the timeline for their completion. As is the case with all aspects of your graduate education, you are encouraged to work with the [Disability Resources Center](#) if you think it may be appropriate to seek accommodations to exam requirements such as time limits (please note obtaining an accommodation can take several weeks or longer).

1. Establishing Reading Lists and Studying for Your Exams (initiate during summer of Year 1)

- Develop reading lists in consultation with your advisor.
- Send all three reading lists to your advisor for approval.
- Advisor sends approved lists to the GPC and DGS for the student's file.
- Start studying materials on the reading lists as soon as you and your advisor deem appropriate.
- Work with your advisor to start identifying preliminary exam committee members and examiners.

2. Before Scheduling the Written Exams (one semester in advance)

- Make sure your GDP or GPAS has been completed, signed, and approved by GSSP. Ideally this is submitted at least one semester before you plan to take your exams.

Note: If the degree plan is not on file and approved, you will not be able to enter your committee in the online system. If you made changes to your enrollment after submitting your degree plan, work with the GPC to amend your degree plan.

- All incompletes must be resolved before scheduling the exams.

3. Scheduling the Written Exams & Assigning Committee Members (semester when taking exams)

- At least two months before the exam window, notify your advisor, other examiners, and the GPC of your intention to take the exams.
- At least one month before the exam window, assign your prelim oral exam committee with four (4) committee members. The committee must be approved before you can proceed.

Steps for Assigning Your Committee:

1. Consult with your advisor(s) on committee member selection.
 2. Review [GSSP committee policies](#).
 3. Use the [Faculty Role List](#) to verify that prospective committee members meet University requirements to serve on your committee.
 4. Contact the GPC if a committee member leaves the University (retires or moves to another institution) or if they are faculty at another university. (This does not prevent them from serving, there is just an additional administrative step.)
 5. Use the [online system to assign your committee](#). See the [Quick Start Guide](#) for detailed instructions.
- As soon as they are determined, but no less than three weeks prior to the exam window, notify your advisor(s), examiners, and the GPC of planned dates to take the exams. The GPC will assist you by calendaring the exams for you and your committee members.
 - The GPC works with each examiner to obtain the exam questions, shares all exam questions with the advisor, and releases each question to the student by email at the scheduled time.

4. Taking the Written Exams

- *Exam answers should be no more than 20 pages, exclusive of a works cited or bibliography.*

- You have 48 hours to answer an exam question after receiving it. Failure to deliver the responses on time will be factored into the assessment of the exam.

5. Submitting the Written Exams

- At the end of the 48 hour period, email the answer to the GPC and your examiner only. Please **do not send written exams to advisor(s)** - the GPC will share your exams at the appropriate point in the exam process.

6. Notification of Results

- Examiners have two weeks to evaluate the exams.
- Examiners send the advisor a report and comments indicating whether the student has passed or failed.
 - If the student fails all or part of one or two area exams, an examiner, in consultation with the advisor, may require retake exam(s) or determine that a failed exam can be resolved during the oral exam. The advisor might consult with all examiners to reach a decision.
- Advisor(s) decide if the oral exam can take place once the student has passed all three written exams.
- Advisor(s) communicates all results to the student; individual examiners do not communicate directly with students.

7. Scheduling the Oral Exam

- After submitting your last exam, work with your full committee to **set a tentative date** for the oral exam. Identify a two or three week window that begins two weeks after you turn in your final answer.

Note: Remind committee members that scheduled times are contingent on your passing each of the three written exams. You are encouraged to use a scheduling tool like [Doodle](#) to help you and your committee members identify a mutually convenient time for the oral examination.
- Once taking the oral is approved, the GPC sends the reading lists, questions, and essays to all members of the committee, including non-examining members. The advisor(s) may also send the examiner's reports to all members of the committee.
- **Schedule your oral exams** in the [online system](#) at least one week prior to the exam date. GSSP will verify that oral examination requirements have been met before releasing the electronic preliminary oral examination form to the committee chair.

8. Taking the Oral Exam

- Your advisor chairs the oral exam.
- See below for details on what to expect and how to prepare.

Evaluation of the Written Exams

Two grades are possible: pass or fail. You must pass all three exams in order to take the preliminary oral. If you fail one or two exams, you will be given the opportunity to try again to pass them. Your examiner (usually with your advisor) will give you specific instructions about how to prepare for the re-take. If you fail one or both of the exams on the second try, you cannot continue in the program. If your advisor(s) and the examiners agree that you have failed all three exams on the first try, you cannot continue in the program. The scheduling of any retakes will impact the scheduling of the preliminary oral.

Your advisor(s) will notify you and the GPC as soon as possible about the evaluation of the exams. The GPC will report the results to the GSSP Office. Once you receive notification from GSSP that the exam results have been recorded, you can [schedule the Preliminary Oral Exam](#) online.

Additional information about oral examinations is available from GSSP at [Doctoral Oral Exam Scheduling](#).

Preliminary Oral Exam

The Preliminary Oral Exam is based on the written exams and it may include some discussion of your possible dissertation project. Faculty are sometimes willing to discuss the results of your written exams with you prior to the oral exam; talking with them is a good way to prepare for the oral exam. Preliminary Oral Exams should be scheduled during two hours of shared availability for the examinee and all committee members.

Evaluation of the Oral Exam

Three grades are possible: pass, pass with reservations, or fail. If two of four members of the committee vote to fail the exam, the vote is recorded as a failure. If members vote to pass with reservations, it is taken as a passing vote; however, the reservations must be satisfied before you can continue in the program.

If you pass with reservations, you will be told so immediately by your advisor(s). Within one week, your advisor(s) must send a letter to you that clearly stipulates the reservations and the steps required to remove them. A copy of that letter is sent to the Graduate School via the Preliminary Oral Examination Report workflow. When you have satisfied the committee's reservations, a second letter is also required informing you and the Graduate School that the reservations have been removed and that you may proceed toward the degree.

Students who fail the examination may be excluded from candidacy or may be allowed, on unanimous recommendation of the examining committee, to retake the examination, providing the reexamination is conducted by the original committee. In no case may the reexamination take place before 10 weeks have passed. No more than one reexamination is allowed.

Dissertation Prospectus and Prospectus Meeting

Before you can proceed with your dissertation research and writing, you need to form a dissertation committee, then write a formal prospectus outlining the plan for your dissertation, schedule a presentation, and present it to your committee.

The prospectus and prospectus meeting should be completed the semester after you complete your preliminary exams (within a year of passing preliminary examinations is the maximum timeline consistent with degree progress requirements).

About the Prospectus

This is a crucial step in the process because it forces you to think through your whole project, offers you the opportunity to receive suggestions and help from your committee, and ensures that your committee members agree with you and with each other about the scope of the project, the methods you will use, and/or the approaches you will take.

You should work out the format of your prospectus with your advisor, since faculty may have different expectations. Generally, a prospectus should be about 4,500-6,000 words long. It should include:

- A detailed statement of the **problem or exigency** your dissertation will address.
- The **research question or questions** the dissertation will address.
- Brief **chapter outlines**.

In addition, the prospectus often includes a formal **review of the literature** (although this might mean in some cases that the prospectus would exceed the 6,000 word limit), and a **bibliography**. You may also be asked to provide a **sample analysis** of the type you expect to use throughout your dissertation in an appendix.

Prospectus Meeting Steps

1. Work with your advisor(s) to identify when to have your prospectus meeting, then schedule a meeting with your committee.
2. Notify the GPC (writgpc@umn.edu) of when you plan to have the meeting. The GPC will assist with room reservations and/or technology support for virtual meetings, and departmental calendaring.
3. No fewer than two weeks before the presentation, you must give your advisor and other committee members a copy of your prospectus.
4. Complete your portion of the [Dissertation Prospectus Form](#) (also available on the [RSTC Student Resources Hub](#)) and send it to your advisor(s) in advance of the meeting.
5. After your advisor(s) approve the prospectus and sign the Dissertation Prospectus Form, submit the completed form with a copy of the first page of the prospectus, to the GPC (writgpc@umn.edu). The GPC will add the documents to your departmental file and the prospectus milestone to your student record.

The Dissertation and Final Oral Examination (“Defense”)

Expectations for the Dissertation

As described by the Graduate School, a doctoral dissertation is based on original research that makes a significant contribution to knowledge. An effective dissertation demonstrates your ability to conduct an independent, original study on researchable questions using methods and systematic analysis appropriate to those questions, and to articulate conclusions that may have implications for the advancement of theory.

Writing a dissertation is the culmination of the degree. Think of it as a long-form response to an important question (or small group of related questions) that can be answered through research and original analysis. The courses you take, the faculty you decide to work most closely with, and the advisor(s) you ultimately select should be chosen with the dissertation in mind.

A dissertation in the RSTC program needs to be on a topic significant enough to justify a sustained study but defined narrowly enough to allow for command of the relevant literature and for an original contribution. Dissertations are usually about 150-200 pages in length, though good dissertations have been written by students in the program that are shorter and longer. For a list of titles of dissertations written by students in the RSTC program, see the [Dissertations & Placement](#) tab in our web site.

RSTC dissertations often make a contribution to the research methods used in analyzing discourse, as well as contributing to our understanding of a specific problem, communication medium, theorist, or body of writings. Some of the theoretical approaches and methods used by faculty and students in Writing Studies are: rhetorical theory and criticism, technical communication theory and research, ethnography, pedagogy, human factors, information design and display, literary theory, philosophy, and feminist studies. These methods or perspectives make it possible for us better to understand the way knowledge is made, debated, and communicated, and to effectively engage in these activities.

Research and writing for the dissertation takes place over approximately two years. During that time, you will conduct research, produce two or more chapters per semester, and work on revisions. You are encouraged to develop chapters into journal articles and present your in-progress work at conferences along the way. This can help you hone your arguments, address gaps in your research, and develop your CV.

It is important that you and your advisor(s) work closely together throughout the complicated processes of framing, writing, and revising your dissertation. For example, your prospectus can be a starting roadmap for deciding how to conduct your research, the order in which you will draft the chapters, and when those chapters might be ready for review by your advisor and other members of your committee.

You are encouraged to reach out when you run into snags, get stuck, or need to change direction with your project. Help, coaching, and encouragement can come from your advisor(s), others on your committee, your fellow students, and colleagues in your disciplines.

The University offers many useful tools in support of dissertation writing:

- GSSP provides detailed [Thesis Formatting and Submission](#) guidelines and instructions.
- The Center for Writing has resources [Especially for Graduate Writers](#), including on dissertation writing, and offers consultations on dissertation projects.
- The Graduate School's [Community of Scholars Program \(COSP\) Writing Initiative](#): COSP scholars have access to writing space, consultations, writing groups, and workshops. Based in the Graduate School

- Diversity Office, COSP supports the academic and professional success of Native American graduate students and domestic graduate students of color who are underrepresented in academia.
- The UMN Libraries' [Dissertation Calculator](#) can help you break the dissertation into manageable goals, set a research schedule, and establish deadlines for yourself.

Dissertation Committee

Your dissertation is written with the help and guidance of your advisor(s) and committee members. Usually the faculty member(s) who advised you through the preliminary examinations serves as dissertation advisor(s). Likewise, examination committee members typically continue to serve on the dissertation committee. However, you may decide to make adjustments to your committee membership if your project and/or needs change as you progress through the program.

Committee Members and Roles

The dissertation committee must have four members who play distinct roles. You are encouraged to discuss the defense process, roles, and expectations with your committee members early in the process. Requirements for dissertation committees are [maintained by GSSP](#). Faculty eligibility for committee roles is maintained on the [Faculty Role List](#).

Steps for Assigning Your Committee

At least one month before your defense, use the [online system to assign your committee](#). See the [Quick Start Guide](#) for detailed instructions.

1. Consult with your advisor(s) on committee member selection.
2. Review [GSSP committee policies](#).
3. [Verify that prospective committee members meet University requirements](#) to serve on your committee.
4. Contact the GPC immediately if a committee member leaves the University (retires or moves to another institution) or if they are faculty at another university. (This does not prevent them from serving, there is just an additional administrative step.)

The Final Oral Examination/"Defense"

Before the defense can be formally scheduled in the online system, your advisor(s) and your readers must sign the Reviewer's Report form included in your Graduation Packet (see [Degree Completion Steps](#)).

With your advisor(s)'s approval, work with all members of your committee to set a tentative date for the oral exam one to two months in advance. Identify a two or three week time frame that will begin two weeks after the other members of your committee have received the full draft of your dissertation ([Doodle](#) is recommended for coordinating schedules). Remind the committee members that the oral defense will be contingent on having the Reviewer's Report signed. Once the time and date are set, complete the following steps (see [Doctoral Oral Exam Scheduling](#) for details):

1. Schedule your final oral exam in the [online system](#) as soon as the dates are set, but at least one week prior to the defense. The Office of the Registrar will conduct an audit to verify you are cleared to defend.
2. Open the email from GSSP to access the online Final Exam form, complete it at least one day before your exam date.

The committee chair completes the Final Exam form at the final exam following the student's defense. You will receive notification of the committee's final decision.

Prior to the closed-door final oral examination by your committee, you will present the approach and major findings of your dissertation in a public defense. A public presentation is required by the Graduate School and is open to members of the department and other interested parties, including, if you wish, your family and friends.

For this reason, your advisor(s) will ask you to prepare a formal presentation (typically lasting 20-30 minutes) that summarizes your dissertation.

During the public defense, the chair ensures that the discussion between you, the audience, and the committee flows smoothly. Audience members are invited to ask questions for about 15-30 minutes and then are asked to leave.

At the conclusion of the public defense, you and your committee will continue the final oral examination behind closed doors. Members of the committee will ask additional questions about your work, then ask you to leave the room while the committee deliberates.

At the end of the closed examination the candidate is excused from the room. A written, secret ballot is taken before discussion of the examination begins. Following the committee's discussion, a second and final verbal vote is taken on whether the student passed the examination. The chair of the defense asks all members to vote "Pass" or "Fail." If a majority votes pass, the chair will complete the online Final Oral Examination Report workflow. A retake of the examination can only be approved with the unanimous consent of the committee; the reexamination must be conducted by the original committee.

Editing, Formatting, and Depositing the Dissertation Manuscript

Soon after the oral, your advisor will outline any revisions that you must make. These range from tidying up typographical errors to revising or clarifying part of your dissertation, for example your introduction. Once those changes have been made to your advisor's satisfaction, you write a formal cover sheet with an abstract that your advisor must sign.

The Graduate School will only accept dissertations that are formatted according to the specifications outlined on their website [Thesis Formatting and Submissions](#). These guidelines are general. Check with your advisor for referencing style and editing conventions. Generally, APA or MLA are acceptable.

Electronically [submit your dissertation to the Graduate School](#) by the last day of the month you plan to graduate. Your degree will not be conferred until the dissertation is on deposit and you have applied to graduate (continue to **Graduation**, below, for further instruction).

Graduation

Graduation steps specific to the MA and PhD are laid out in the [Degree Completion Steps](#). To graduate, you must Apply to Graduate. **Note:** Registration for Commencement is separate and will not trigger your degree completion in University systems.

Apply to Graduate

1. Review the [Graduation Checklist for Grad Students](#).
2. Verify information for [your diploma](#).
3. Follow the [Apply to Graduate](#) steps for graduate students. Your month of graduation is determined by when you complete this online application. Complete by the first day of the month you intend to graduate, but not more than a month in advance.
4. Submit all required documentation listed in Degree Completion Steps (found in your [Graduation Packet](#)) by the last day of the month you are graduating. PhD students must have their dissertation on deposit with ProQuest (see [Thesis/Dissertation Submission and Formatting](#)).

[Arts, Sciences and Engineering Graduate Commencement \(ASE\)](#)

- If you would like to walk at Commencement, register by the deadline (typically early March). This is a separate step from Applying to Graduate.
- Review eligibility, Cap and Gown Rental, Ceremony Details, FAQs, Family and Friends information provided on the website.
- Ask your advisor(s) or the DGS to hood you at the ceremony, and verify they are registered for the ceremony by the deadline. If you are co-advised, you can either be hooded by both advisors or one.
- Information for **faculty** about registration and regalia is available [here](#).

Assistantships, Fellowships, and Financial Aid

Students must be admitted and in good academic standing to hold the following Graduate Assistant (GA) positions and fellowships, and also must be registered for at least six credits each fall and spring semester (or WRIT 8444 if have ADS status) to maintain eligibility.

Graduate Instructorships (GI) & Teaching Assistantships (TA)

Most RSTC students are supported as Graduate Instructors, who teach their own sections of undergraduate courses. Using guidelines that the department provides, they design their syllabi, including the type and pace of reading and writing assignments. Students teach one course per semester, two for the year. Along with a stipend, students receive a tuition benefit (covering 6-14 credits during semesters of coursework or thesis credits) and health insurance. Summer teaching is also possible but not guaranteed.

Over their years of support as GIs, students teach both First-Year Writing (FYW) and Technical and Professional Communication (ADV writing). Courses are taught in face-to-face (traditional) settings, as well as in online and hybrid formats. Many students also teach sections of other courses for the department's undergraduate major in Technical Writing and Communication. These can include Business and Professional Writing, Writing Arguments, Public Writing, and Rhetoric, Technology, and the Internet.

Students may also pursue teaching assistantships (TA) and research assistantships (RA) in the department or with other departments. Teaching assistants assist a faculty member by evaluating student papers, meeting with students, and other duties. Pre-approval permission from the Director of First Year Writing is required for any time off from teaching and pre-approval permission from the DGS and Chair is required for time off for job interviews.

Graduate Instructorships are typically 9-month, 50% appointments (with the exception of summer teaching). Appointment length for TA and RA positions may vary; some are 25% appointments, for example. Overload appointments (75%) should be rare, pursued only with advisor approval, and if the additional workload will not interfere with degree progress.

First-Year Writing (WRIT 1301)

Graduate Instructors from Writing Studies have opportunities to teach [First-Year Writing \(FYW\)](#) courses as part of a large and diverse teaching community including fellow graduate instructors from English and American Studies. Each instructor of FYW is supported by the FYW Program to independently design and teach a class that fulfills course outcomes while reflecting the instructor's unique strengths and interests. Graduate instructors participate in orientation sessions and pursue coursework (the WRIT 5531 & WRIT 5532 sequence) as part of their training and professional development.

Technical and Professional Communication (WRIT 3562W)

Writ 3562W is a required course for several majors at the University; thus, the student body is academically diverse. This course fulfills two Writing Intensive requirements and is four credits. Writing Studies offers about 20 sections of the course each semester with half of those completely online. For face-to-face sections, the fourth credit hour is fulfilled online. The department maintains a Canvas shell for WRIT 3562W that can be used as-is for an online class or in part for the face-to-face fourth credit. Using the shell is optional, but previous instructors have found it useful. Some instructors have found the class to be a site for their own pedagogical research.

Summer teaching opportunities are also available for WRIT 3562W, with most being offered online.

Fellowships and Grants

Graduate fellowships are available to support MA and PhD student research and progress toward degrees. These fellowships are available on a competitive basis from the Department of Writing Studies, the Graduate School, and external funders. Students are strongly encouraged to pursue fellowships from all three categories.

Departmental Fellowships (Summer Funding)

Endowed RSTC fellowships include the James I. Brown Graduate Award in Rhetoric and the Affiliates 21st Century Summer Research Fellowship in Scientific and Technical Communication. Additional fellowships, funded by Graduate School and Provostal funds, are often available - dependent on annual funding allocations. These fellowships provide substantial financial support for summer research and writing.

Additionally, Writing Studies graduate students may be interested in working with a faculty or academic staff member on an [Interdisciplinary Studies of Writing](#) research grant, which could provide summer RA funding. Graduate students enrolled in the Center's [Literacy and Rhetorical Studies](#) minor are eligible for travel grants and dissertation fellowships associated with that program.

Graduate School Fellowships

The Graduate School offers significant [fellowships](#), such the [Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship](#) (directed at students who are in the final year of their dissertations). The DDF and other Graduate School fellowships are awarded through university-wide competitions, many of which require a departmental nomination.

In addition to these, the Graduate School offers bridging funds, grants to support research, and other awards. For information about fellowships and grants offered through the Graduate School, contact the [Graduate School Fellowship Office](#).

The Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship and other relevant Graduate School fellowships are announced to RSTC students via email and posted on the RSTC Graduate Student Calendar.

External Fellowships

Students interested in pursuing fellowships and grants from external funders should consult the [RSTC Graduate Student Resources Hub](#) on the Writing Studies Intranet for more information and to access databases to search for funding opportunities.

Research Assistantships and Administrative Fellowships

Writing Studies sometimes offers research assistantships, usually funded through grants that faculty secure. In this case, the individual faculty member hires the assistant. Students may apply for graduate assistantships in other University departments if they meet the qualifications. The [Graduate Assistant Employment Services](#) posts openings from all University departments.

Other Funding Mechanisms and Opportunities

Travel, Research, and Professional Development (TRPD) Funding

Funding to support conference travel, dissertation research, and participation in professional development opportunities is available on a pilot program basis for the 2020-21 Academic Year. The RSTC program will issue calls to request TRPD funds (\$1000 in the 2020-21 academic year per student, plus an additional \$200 for international travel) three times over the academic year. TRPD funding in subsequent academic years is subject to RSTC program budgets from CLA, the Graduate School, and the Provost's Office.

Students Outside their Funding Bands

After May of a student's final funded year in the program (5 years for PhD students, 6 years for students who complete both the RSTC MA and PhD), students should plan to seek out fellowships, graduate assistantships, and other funding mechanisms external to the department. Please consult the [RSTC Graduate Student Resources Hub](#) on the Writing Studies Intranet for links to job, fellowship, and grant search tools.

Financial Aid

Students sometimes elect to supplement their funding packages with federal loans. Please contact [One Stop Student Services](#) for all inquiries concerning financial aid availability, eligibility, and application processes.

RSTC Program Governance & Student Representation

RSTC Advisory Committee

The RSTC Advisory Committee is one of four core department committees charged with ensuring the effective administration of specific programs within Writing Studies. The RSTC Advisory Committee is made up of faculty, students, and the core administrators of the RSTC Programs. Its responsibilities include reviewing and updating policies, addressing emergent issues, and responding to the concerns of the RSTC community. The RSTC Advisory Committee is a voting body, with its recommendations moving on to the full faculty for review and consideration in monthly faculty meetings.

MA & PhD Student Representatives

Two graduate students, typically one in the MA program (or a PhD student who completed the MA program) and one in the PhD program, serve on the RSTC Advisory Committee as elected student representatives each academic year. Students may self-nominate or nominate other students. Students who accept a nomination are included on the ballot for voting by all graduate students in the RSTC program.

Representatives participate fully in committee work with the exception of cases where confidentiality of student information is required, such as with fellowship application reviews.

RSTC Advisory Committee Student Address Policy

The RSTC Advisory Committee encourages input from graduate students on all Writing Studies-related topics. You are welcome to share your experiences by speaking with your graduate representatives, or you may address the committee in person or in writing.

If you would like to address the committee in person, the following policy will apply:

1. Notify the DGS, GPC, and the elected RSTC MA and PhD representatives via email about one week prior to the meeting, with your topic (if appropriate) and any materials you wish to present to the committee.
2. Shortly thereafter, the DGS, GPC, and/or graduate representatives will organize your visit to an upcoming committee meeting.
3. You will be allotted time in the meeting to discuss your agenda item, and you are welcome to remain as an observer for the remainder of the meeting (except in limited cases where confidentiality is required, e.g. consideration of fellowship applications).

If you cannot or do not wish to address the committee in person, you are also welcome to send a written statement for the committee's consideration.

Access to Agendas and Meeting Notes

All members of the RSTC community, including graduate students, may review policy statements/documentation, meeting agendas, and meeting notes on the Writing Studies Intranet ([Governance>Committees>RSTC Advisory Committee](#)).

DGS Advisory Committee

Graduate student representatives are responsible for meeting privately with the DGS at least twice a semester for a general review of policies, practices, and other issues of concern to the RSTC community. Representatives

may also be called on to represent MA and PhD students when department stakeholders, such as the Chair, seek advice and also to assist with events such as Visit Day for prospective students.

MA & PhD Student Representatives

Two graduate students (can be in either the MA or PhD program) serve as representatives to the DGS. Representatives are elected at the beginning of each academic year. Students may self-nominate or nominate other students. Students who accept a nomination are included on the ballot for voting by all graduate students in the RSTC program.

Academic Policies for RSTC Students

Standards for Student Conduct and Areas of Student Responsibility

All University of Minnesota students are responsible for following the [Student Conduct Code](#) and all relevant policies maintained by the [Office for Community Standards](#). Students must also comply with the guidelines on [Mutual Roles and Responsibilities for Faculty and Graduate Students](#).

Areas of Responsibility in Graduate Education

The University of Minnesota maintains a set of principles illustrating what students should expect from their programs and what programs should expect from their students. Please see the Guidelines on [Mutual Roles and Responsibilities for Faculty and Graduate Students](#) for details.

Department Chair

Each department has a faculty chair assigned by the college dean to manage the department. The chair is responsible for overseeing the operations of the department and its relationship with the institution, and provides leadership and guidance to department faculty, staff, and students. The chair is responsible for many department-level policy determinations and seeks to balance the needs of the department's many stakeholders.

Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for Professional Programs

Every graduate program has a DGS, appointed by the collegiate dean. The DGS serves as the faculty coordinator for graduate studies within a program and works with graduate program faculty, staff, and collegiate leadership to guide and improve graduate education within the programs under the DGS's jurisdiction. The DGS supervises and coordinates the administration and governance of graduate studies and serves as a point of contact for graduate students in the program. See [Typical Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Graduate Studies](#).

Graduate Programs Coordinator (GPC)

The GPC administratively coordinates all graduate programs in the Department of Writing Studies. GPCs counsel students on a variety of issues they may encounter throughout their program and are typically the primary point of contact for degree progress and policy questions. Areas of responsibility include: direct counseling of students; coordination for graduate programs with the wider University; student data management and analysis; and University, Program, and College policy interpretation and compliance.

Grievances and Conflict Resolution

Resources are available to students wishing to resolve academic complaints on a range of university-based problems and concerns:

- Administrative policy on [Addressing Student Academic Complaints](#)
- [Student Conflict Resolution Center](#): A confidential resource for all students who experience issues concerning grading concerns, academic petitions, advising issues, and more. Ombuds work collaboratively with students to identify appropriate courses of action tailored to students' specific concerns.

Understanding Your Graduate Program File

The Department of Writing Studies maintains a file for each student in the MA and PhD programs. This file contains copies of:

- Your application and program nomination letter.
- Degree progress forms (GDP, Final Report, etc.) with departmental signatures.
- Annual reports of progress.
- Applications for independent study courses, incompletes, leaves of absence.

Your student record is confidential; faculty and staff have access to the file on a need-to-know basis, per [FERPA regulations](#). You have access, per written request to the DGS, to contents in your file, provided that you have not waived viewing rights to the documents you are requesting.

Departmental and CLA Graduate Student Profiles

All RSTC graduate students are listed in two places: the CLA Directory and the Writing Studies Directory. You are encouraged to update each as appropriate to facilitate networking within and beyond departmental and UMN scholarly communities.

CLA Directory Profile

Add a headshot photo, CV, links to projects and professional web pages, specialties, a narrative, publications, and more. Go to [CLA Faculty and Staff Directory](#) to search for and view your profile. Go to https://apps.cla.umn.edu/directory/edit_my_profile to make changes.

Writing Studies Directory Profile

Send a brief list of your teaching and research interests to Shannon Klug at klugx004@umn.edu to add this information to your directory entry.

More information about both profile types is available on the [Department Intranet](#).

The Job Search

Most graduates of the RSTC program (over 70%) go on to work in academia, but many have also chosen to pursue careers in the non-profit and private sectors. RSTC graduates have found positions at Amazon, Boston Scientific, Travelers Insurance, and Sandia National Laboratories. While we have accumulated particular in-house expertise in navigating the academic job market and processes, our overarching goal is to support our students in pursuing outcomes that are in alignment with their personal hopes and goals. We encourage students to engage with their advisors, faculty, staff, and fellow students to develop a clear sense of the academic and non-academic opportunities that might align with their skills and expertise.

Job Search Resources

Note: Pre-approval permission from the DGS and Chair is required for time off from teaching responsibilities to attend job interviews.

Advisor(s) are an important resource for job searches. They typically write letters of recommendation to support your applications and many provide other forms of career preparation mentorship as part of their advising practices. You are therefore encouraged to work closely with your advisor(s) as you plan for and pursue your search.

Students pursuing diverse careers, such as in industry, may find the following resources especially helpful:

- [Technical Communications Advisor Board \(TCAB\)](#)
- [CLA Graduate Career Services](#)

The RSTC program also supports students' job searches with the following resources:

- Robust Job search resources maintained on the [RSTC Student Resources Hub](#) of the Writing Studies Intranet.
- Annual sessions on job searches in the RSTC Professional Development Workshop Series.

Dossier Services

[Interfolio](#) is the industry standard for academic dossiers. It is an online credential, dossier and academic portfolio service to request, store, manage and deliver your confidential recommendation letters, transcripts, or any other documents online.

Graduate Student Travel Policy & Procedures

Conference Participation

Conference participation is an important form of professional development for MA and PhD students. The department offers substantial financial support to students who travel to a conference to give a paper or appear on a panel, but not if they merely attend. Only students who are within their years of funding are eligible for this travel support. Pre-approval permission from Director of First Year Writing is required for any time off from teaching. Please note that for local conferences, the department is only able to cover registration.

Travel Funding

Funding for conference and research travel is being offered in the 2020-21 Academic Year through the Travel, Research, and Professional Development (TRPD) pilot program. Please see the [TRPD FAQ for Graduate Students](#) for details about this funding, eligibility, timelines, and how to apply.

Additional opportunities for travel funding can be found on the [RSTC Student Resources Hub](#).

Travel Policies and Procedures

Please see the [Writing Studies Intranet's Travel page](#) for current policies and procedures for traveling on University business. Bill Fricke is the department's Financial Preparer (frick169@umn.edu).

Please note: College policy requires that all requests for travel reimbursements must be submitted *within 60 days of the expense date or trip return date* or you will not be reimbursed. In order to allow time for processing, submit your request to the department within 30 days of return from travel.

After Graduation: Resources for Alumni

Resources for current students are now maintained on the [RSTC Graduate Student Resources Hub](#) of the [Writing Studies Intranet](#). Please look there for links to forms, online workflows, and policy documents; resources and support related to funding, job search, and professional development; and much more. Students may also access the RSTC Graduate Student Calendar on the Hub to see upcoming opportunities, events, and deadlines.

Follow Writing Studies on Social Media

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[YouTube](#)

Library Access After Graduation

[Alumni access](#) to the library

[ELM - Electronic Library for Minnesota](#): helpful for graduates staying in Minnesota

[Friends of the Libraries](#): an option for borrowing items

Email Access After Graduation

Graduated students may retain lifetime access to their Google Apps accounts. However, the account must be accessed at least once every 90 days through the Web Interface to remain active. See [Account End of Life Policies](#).

Alumni Relations

[UMN Alumni Association](#)

[Department of Writing Studies Alumni & Friends](#)