Twin Cities Campus

Rhetoric, Scientific and Technical Communication Ph.D.

Writing Studies Department

College of Liberal Arts

Link to a list of faculty for this program.

Contact Information:
Department of Writing Studies, 215 Nolte Center, 315 Pillsbury Drive, SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 (612-624-3445; fax: 612-624-3617)
Email: WRIT@umn.edu
Website: http://cla.umn.edu/writing-studies

- Program Type: Doctorate
- Requirements for this program are current for Fall 2018
- Length of program in credits: 66
- This program does not require summer semesters for timely completion.
- Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Along with the program-specific requirements listed below, please read the General Information section of the catalog website for requirements that apply to all major fields.

The primary purpose of the PhD program is to prepare graduate students to do research in areas related to writing, broadly construed, and to publish the results of that research.

Working in collaboration with faculty mentors, other students, and material resources, such as the library and the internet, graduate students will become expert in a specialized field of knowledge, developing the scholarly and research skills needed to make a new and original contribution to research in rhetoric, composition, writing studies, literacy, or technical/scientific communication. Graduate students build their expertise and skills in the core areas of rhetoric, theory and history, writing studies and pedagogy, and technical communication and technology and culture. They also develop and refine knowledge and skills through departmental seminars and a supporting program of courses outside the department. The dissertation--an original, systematic, and significant program of research--will allow graduate students to join scholarly conversations and contribute to knowledge and theory within the field. This project, and the mentoring students receive as they complete the project, will stand students in good stead to continue to make important research contributions in their academic careers as they unfold.

Preparing graduate students to teach first-year writing, scientific and technical communication, and other courses related to their expertise is an important part of the program because the expectation is that graduates will teach at the college level. While most of graduate students have entered college teaching, a few have preferred to work in industry in scientific and technical communication.

Program Delivery

This program is available:

- via classroom (the majority of instruction is face-to-face)

Prerequisites for Admission

Masters in a related discipline, e.g., rhetoric, technical and professional communication, English, communication studies.

Other requirements to be completed before admission:
Applicants for the PhD must have completed a master's degree, or have plans to complete the master's before the start of the PhD program. Applicants will be asked to discuss their interests, explain their master's program and how the PhD will build upon it.

Special Application Requirements:
Scores from the General Test of the GRE that are less than five years old are required of students with baccalaureate degrees from U.S. institutions. International students are encouraged to take the General Test of the GRE and to have those results forwarded to the University. Nonnative speakers of English are required to take an appropriate test with satisfactory scores. All applicants must submit three letters of recommendation, two writing samples, and a professional objective statement. All M.A. and Ph.D. applicants begin in the fall semester and should apply by the January 5th application deadline.

International applicants must submit score(s) from one of the following tests:

- TOEFL
  - Internet Based - Total Score: 79
  - Internet Based - Writing Score: 21
  - Internet Based - Reading Score: 19
  - Paper Based - Total Score: 550

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- IELTS
  - Total Score: 6.5
- MELAB
  - Final score: 80

Key to test abbreviations(TOEFL, IELTS, MELAB).

For an online application or for more information about graduate education admissions, see the General Information section of the catalog website.

Program Requirements

30 credits are required in the major.
12 credits are required outside the major.
24 thesis credits are required.

This program may be completed with a minor.

Use of 4xxx courses toward program requirements is permitted under certain conditions with adviser approval.

Research Core

Take the following 6 credits of research core coursework:
WRIT 8011 - Research Methods in Writing Studies and Technical Communication (3.0 cr)
WRIT 8012 - Applied Research Methods in Writing Studies and Technical Communication (3.0 cr)

Required Core Areas

Take at least 3 credits from each of the following core areas, and an additional 6 credits from any of these categories, for a total of 15 credits.

Take 15 or more credit(s) from the following:

Rhetoric Theory and History

Take at least 3 credits from the following:
- WRIT 8510 - Seminar in Rhetoric (3.0 cr)

or WRIT 5775 - Rhetorical Traditions: Classical Period (3.0 cr)
or WRIT 5776 - The Rhetorical Traditions: Modern Era (3.0 cr)

- **Writing Studies and Pedagogy**

Take at least 3 credits from the following:
- WRIT 8540 - Seminar in Technical Communication and Composition Pedagogies (3.0 cr)

or WRIT 8560 - Seminar in Writing Studies (3.0 cr)
or WRIT 5531 - Introduction to Writing Theory and Pedagogies (3.0 cr)

- **Technical Communication and Composition Pedagogies**

Take at least 3 credits from the following:
- WRIT 8520 - Seminar in Scientific and Technical Communication (3.0 cr)

or WRIT 8550 - Seminar in Technology, Culture, and Communication (3.0 cr)

Writing Studies Specialty Area/Concentration

Specialties include areas such as digital literacies, internet studies, professional and technical communication, theories of writing, writing pedagogies, rhetorics of science, medicine, or law, and rhetorical theory.

Writing Studies Courses

Take 6 or more credit(s) from the following:
- WRIT 5xxx
- **Non-Writing Studies Course**

  Take at least 3 credits.
  Coursework is chosen in consultation with the advisor, and must be outside the writing studies department but within the specialty area/concentration theme.

Outside Coursework

Take 12 credits of coursework outside the major.

Thesis Credits

Take 24 or more credit(s) from the following:
- WRIT 8888 - Thesis Credit: Doctoral (1.0 - 24.0 cr)

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Information current as of March 29, 2024