

HANDBOOK
RHETORIC, COMPOSITION, AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH
ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English (RCTE) program is housed in the English Department as one of four graduate programs. It has a Ph.D. track and an M.A. track.

The RCTE program prepares graduate students to conduct research in rhetoric and composition, to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in the field, and to develop writing programs in school settings and on the job. The MA Program is designed for students intending to teach in the public schools and community colleges. This is ordinarily a two-year course of study. Students who are working full-time as teachers in local schools may take longer, up to a Graduate College limit of six years. The PhD program is designed for students intending to teach in four-year colleges or writing programs. The RCTE program has a very high placement record for students seeking jobs in higher education, with most of those in tenure-track positions.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Director

Dr. Cristina Ramírez

ML 434, 520-621-0779

cristinaramirez@email.arizona.edu

<https://english.arizona.edu/users/cristina-d-ramirez>

Program Assistant

Sharonne Meyerson

ML 445, 520-621-7216

sharonne@email.arizona.edu

Advising, mentorship, and expectations from the student.

Students are assigned a faculty mentor and a student mentor upon entry into the program. Because we realize research interests change over time the mentor assigned to you does not have to be the one you stay with. A student can ask any faculty with whom they share research interests to serve as their mentor. Students should meet with their faculty mentors twice during the fall semester of their first year and at least once during the spring semester of their first year. Faculty mentors will give feedback on the components of the Qualifying Portfolio

during the first spring semester (see [“Qualifying Portfolio”](#) section later in this handbook) and could also consult on possible classes to take.

After these required meetings during the first year, there are no set guidelines as to how many times students and mentors meet. In other words, this mentor is not necessarily your permanent mentor throughout your graduate career. The program leaves that up to the individuals. The Program Director is there to advise students as to issues of mentorship.

Courses

Graduate Teaching Assistants must take 6 units per semester in order to maintain their GTAship. Satisfactory academic progress as well as the curriculum is based on a 6-unit semester, but students are welcome to take more than the minimum. A student has a year (in agreement with their instructor) to complete an incomplete grade (“I”). Please see Program Assistant if you are taking an Incomplete.

Registration for courses is done by the program assistant. Around mid-semester course descriptions are emailed. Students are asked to choose their classes and report to the Program Assistant. If you are not sure what courses you need to take or where you are in the curriculum please begin by consulting the Program Director or the Program Assistant.

Filing an Appeal or a Grievance

If a student believes that they have been subject to a violation of any of the rules and procedures delineated in this handbook or if they want to appeal a negative grade/decision and to present any evidence which might serve to rebut it, they have a right to file a grievance.

The steps for filing an appeal or grievance are as follows:

1. Write a summary of the action being grieved (or grade being appealed), with specific information as to time, date, individuals involved and the nature of the offense, as well as the specific remedy sought.
2. Email the grievance to the [Program Director](#)*.
3. If the grievance is denied, the student may present it to the Head of the Department, whose decision is final.

*A student should first file the grievance with the Program Director. If the grievance is about the Program Director, or if the student feels otherwise uncomfortable speaking directly with the Program Director, or if the student feels the issue has not been resolved, the student then takes the issue to the Department Head.

An individual who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should contact the Office of the Dean of Students immediately. You can find more

information on the Graduate College website here: <https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies/summary-grievance-types-and-responsible-parties> and here: <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy> . Please speak with the Program Assistant for more information.

Financial Assistance for Travel

The English Graduate Union (EGU) has limited funds available for travel. Please see: <https://english.arizona.edu/gta-travel-fund> for more details.

The Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) also has limited funds available for travel (as well as other great opportunities on grants and awards for graduate students!) Please see: <http://gpsc.arizona.edu/> for more details.

Funding

All incoming RCTE students, whether domestic or international, are fully funded. The funding package includes full tuition remission, student health insurance, and a small stipend for teaching composition courses. In some cases the program is also able to cover a non-teaching student's tuition, however this is budget-dependent and covers tuition only, not health insurance or the stipend. All University student fees must be paid by the student.

English Graduate Union

From the [EGU webpage](#): The English Graduate Union (EGU) is an organization that represents all English graduate students at the University of Arizona. Founded in 1991, EGU monitors graduate student workload, advocates for graduate student concerns and issues on many departmental and administrative levels, and mobilizes graduate students across the campus around important issues like health care, tuition remission, workload reduction, and childcare.

Membership in EGU is open to all students enrolled in English department graduate programs. Meetings are held every other Friday at 4pm in the Department of English Instructor Offices room 3b (the Pink Hotel located at 1515 E First Street).

For more information, or if you have questions, please contact them at egucochairs@gmail.com.

GTAship Extensions

Extension requests for Ph.D. students are approved pending funding availability and eligibility.

Priority will be given, to the extent that the budget allows, to those requesting a first extension. Extension requests are generally not approved more than twice. Please check with the Program Assistant for deadlines and details on how to apply.

Listservs

You will automatically be subscribed to the program listserv for general announcements, award announcements, and various other general RCTE business. The subscribers to the rcte@list.arizona.edu are all the RCTE PhD students, MA students, Post-doctoral Fellows, RCTE minors, RCTE faculty, and other affiliated faculty and people. All RCTE PhD and MA students, as well as minors, are enrolled to the RCTE Student List: rcte_students@list.arizona.edu. This list is for topics specifically relevant to our students. We also have an Alumni list. If you are not sure which list to send to, please contact the program assistant.

Another list you will be subscribed to is the English Graduate Student List. You cannot post to that list directly.

Professional Conduct for Students to Uphold

Please see the [Code of Academic Integrity](#). All graduate students must sign a responsible conduct of research statement in GradPath, the Graduate College's academic progress and degree audit site. <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/gradpath>. This form is an acknowledgement and acceptance of the University's Academic Code of Integrity. For more step by step information on this form:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OROLVBHAcZQ&feature=youtu.be>.

Right-Sizing (RSW)

PhD students in their first year, during comprehensive exams, and in their last year qualify to apply for a course release in teaching (aka Right-Sizing). Students are automatically given an RSW during their first year as GTAs, and then must apply for the other two.

All RSWs are dependent on budget and are not guaranteed. The Writing Program will schedule the RSW in a given academic year, in the semester that works for them, while taking your request into consideration. Most course releases are given in the spring semester. Please contact the Writing Program for details.

Role in Program Governance

Graduate students are invited to attend the open part of any program meeting they wish, however, when hiring, admissions, or anything confidential is discussed, the meeting will be closed, and graduate students will have to exit the room. Please let the Program Assistant know that you plan to attend a meeting so you can be informed if there is a last-minute change in scheduling. For AY 18-19 RCTE Program meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month, 10:00 AM, in ML 453.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Academic Progress is measured by three things: GPA, Graduate mileposts, and time-to-degree.

GPA: Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 Grade Point Average.

Graduate Mileposts and Time to Degree:

- Milestone: Qualifying Portfolio: Day one of Semester 4.
- Milestone: Comprehensive Exams: First available semester after last course taken (typically semester 6 for those entering the program with an MA and semester 8 or 10 for those entering the program with a BA).
- Milestone: Dissertation Proposal: Sometime during the semester directly following the semester in which student has taken their Comprehensive Exams.
- Milestone: Dissertation Defense: Usually the third semester after the semester that you defend your Dissertation Proposal (typically at the end of semester 10 for those entering the program with an MA and at the end of semester 14 for those entering the program with a BA).

Students not making satisfactory progress will be notified of the steps they must take to remediate; they are not eligible for the financial aid that the program is able to award.

Students who do not maintain a 3.0 GPA will be placed under [academic probation](#).

You must make sure to fill out all corresponding GradPath forms in a timely manner. You can find your GradPath forms in your student UAccess page, in the top left-hand corner there is a drop-down menu. Choose GradPath and click the double arrows. If you need to file a petition with the Graduate College it is in GradPath as well.

Transfer Credits

Students are allowed a maximum of 15 transfer credits toward their elective requirement. As per Graduate College policies, graduate credit earned at other approved institutions may be

counted toward the requirements of a doctoral degree, but will not be included in the calculation of the University of Arizona GPA. The Graduate College has the ultimate say whether a course is transferable.

Transfer courses are entered also through GradPath but **first please discuss with the Program Assistant which courses you want to transfer**. Once those courses are approved by the Program Director you can enter them in GradPath to be approved and transferred by the Graduate College.

Important links

Department website: <http://english.arizona.edu/>

RCTE website: <https://english.arizona.edu/rcte-program-overview-0>

Forms for RCTE students: <https://english.arizona.edu/rcte-forms>

Graduate College (from here students may access Graduate College policies, contacts, information about resources, deadlines, and other useful information):

<http://grad.arizona.edu/>.

Resources for parents, for professional development, for health and wellness, etc:

<http://grad.arizona.edu/new-and-current-students>

General catalog <http://catalog.arizona.edu/> (link is external)

Academic integrity: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity> (link is external)

Responsible Conduct of Research: <http://www.orcr.arizona.edu/> (link is external)

Graduate Students are expected to follow the policies and procedures for the UA Graduate College, the Department English RCTE Program, and the University of Arizona as a whole.

Policies are updated frequently and it is the student's responsibility to comply with current policies. Graduate College policies can be viewed on-line at <http://grad.arizona.edu/new-and-currentstudents>; university policies can be found at <http://catalog.arizona.edu/>

RCTE FACULTY

Matthew Abraham

Areas of specialization: Rhetorical Theory; Postcolonial Theory; Activist Rhetorics.

Damián Baca

Areas of specialization: Rhetoric and Composition Studies; Indigenous and Latinx Writing Practices; Non-Alphabetic Writing Systems.

Amy Kimme Hea

Areas of specialization: Computers and Composition; Professional and Technical Writing; Writing Program Administration.

Aimee C. Mapes

Areas of specialization: Composition and Literacy Studies; Writing Program Administration; Qualitative Methodology.

Tom P. Miller

Areas of specialization: Literacy and literacy studies; Social movements; Leadership; Histories of rhetoric and English studies; The future of the profession

Susan Miller-Cochran

Areas of specialization: Writing Program Administration; Second Language Writing; Instructional Technology and Distance Learning.

Cristina D. Ramírez, Program Director

Areas of specialization: Rhetorical Theory; Feminist Rhetoric; Archival Research; Feminist Historiography; Border Rhetorics; Mexican 19th-20th century feminist rhetorical history; Translation Theory.

Shelley Rodrigo

Areas of specialization: Online Learning and Instructional Design; Digital Rhetoric; Writing Program Administration.

Ann Shivers-McNair

Areas of specialization: Communication; Digital Humanities; Discourse Analysis; Genre Theory; Research Methods; Rhetoric and Composition; Rhetorical Theory; Writing Pedagogy; Cultural Rhetorics; Material Rhetorics; Computers and Composition; Professional and Technical Communication.

Stephanie Troutman

Areas of specialization: Social Justice Literacies; Feminist Pedagogy; Film Studies; Cultural Theory; Education and Schooling; Community Engagement & Outreach; Activism & Leadership; Popular Culture; Gender & Sexuality.

PH.D IN RHETORIC, COMPOSITION, AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

DOCTORAL COURSEWORK

The coursework in the doctoral degree serves several functions:

- orients students to major issues, concepts, theories, and practices in areas of inquiry deemed by our faculty to be important for 21st Century scholars of Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English;
- helps to solidify both graduate school and intellectual cohorts, which contribute to the short term and long term success of our students;
- familiarizes students with the accepted and emerging professional practices related to academia;
- facilitates student exploration of a variety of research areas, which thus helps students discern an area of focus for their own research;
- assesses students on their developing abilities to perform advanced level scholarship and function effectively in an academic setting.

Given these objectives, coursework focuses on both orienting students to major trends, concepts, and traditions in Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English and enabling students to pursue their avenues of specialization.

Total Number of Required credits to graduate with PhD: 66; Minimum Dissertation credits: 18.

Total Number of Required Coursework credits to graduate with RCTE PhD: 48

- **Common Curriculum: 15 credits**
 - Fall Semester | Year 1 *
 - ENGL 597R: Research Methods in Rhetoric and Composition (3)
 - ENGL 591: Preceptorship** (3) *Note: Preceptorship supports GTAs who are teaching in the Writing Program for the first time*
 - Colloquium (0) *Note: meets one hour per week*
 - Spring Semester | Year 1
 - ENGL 595A: Qualifying Portfolio Workshop (3) *Note: meets only one hour per week, but carries three hours of credit to cover both fall Colloquium and this*

class

- Either ENGL 696T: Rhetorical Theories (3) or ENGL 510: Theory and Practice of Composition (3). Courses are offered in alternating years with one course taken in Year 1 and one course taken in Year 2.
- ENGL 591: Preceptorship** (1)
- **Additional Course Requirements: 9 credits**
 - Specialized Methods: student's choice of one additional methods course, offered either in RCTE or in another program (3)
 - Histories: student's choice of one class focused on histories, offered by RCTE faculty (3)
 - ENGL 696E: Comprehensive Exam Workshop (taken in the spring semester of comprehensive exam. (3)
 - Other electives (24):
 - 9 credits must be taken in RCTE
 - remaining 15 credits may be taken in any subject area offered at the graduate level anywhere on campus or transferred in;
 - may be applied to the Immersive Cultural Requirement (see the ICR Proposal for details);
 - may be applied to a minor. All PhD students must declare a minor and indicate the courses used to fulfill that minor in GradPath. It is permitted to minor in a different track within the same field. You can declare RCTE as your minor as well.
- **Dissertation: 18 credits**

* During the first year of coursework, students can choose to either take only the required courses (which constitute a full-time load), or they can choose to take an additional graduate seminar each semester.

**If a student does not have a GTA position in the Writing Program and does not take Preceptorship, the student can select an alternative course to fulfill this requirement in consultation with the RCTE Program Director that aligns with the student's outcomes and professional goals.

QUALIFYING PORTFOLIO

The Qualifying Portfolio is a key mentoring opportunity for doctoral students. It is due the first day of classes of the student's fourth semester.

Three objectives drive the Qualifying Portfolio in RCTE:

1. Retain the important mentoring component that occurs for students who have completed their first year in the Program;
2. Establish the Qualifying Portfolio as a bridge between the important formative work done in the first year with the more advanced scholarly and professional identity-building work done in subsequent years;
3. Encourage students' development of wider faculty connections within the Program.

Process

1. In the spring semester of their first year, all students take ENGL 595A, the Qualifying Portfolio workshop, an advanced form of the Colloquium.
2. One objective of this course will be for students to explore the disciplines in which they are interested professionally, and to craft a preliminary statement of specialization that will inform their selection of courses in subsequent years.
3. By an agreed upon date determined by the faculty (approximately Week 10), all Qualifying Portfolio workshop students will have a complete draft of their Preliminary Specialization Statement, which will have been vetted by the course instructor. These statements will be no more than 750 words long. The Preliminary Specialization Statement will include:
 - a. a description of the student's possible area(s) of specialization;
 - b. an explanation of why it's an important avenue of inquiry;
 - c. a list of 3-5 representative questions that indicate the sorts of research directions the student hopes to pursue;
 - d. a reflection on personal location in which the student considers their own subjectivity in the world and comments briefly on how this might impact the ways in which she or he approaches research and teaching;
 - e. a projected list of courses the student plans to take to fulfill the requirements of the program and to develop their area of specialization.
4. Each student will consult with their Faculty Mentor (assigned by the Graduate Director

at the beginning of the first year) to receive feedback on the Preliminary Specialization Statement, Reflection, and the ICR proposal. When appropriate, students are encouraged (but not required) to reach out to a scholar outside the Program to make an inquiry about some aspect of the specialization.

5. The Faculty Mentor's feedback should include both written comments (modest) and at least a 30-minute meeting with the student to discuss draft documents for the Qualifying Portfolio. This discussion should address issues such as (but not limited to):
 - a. feasibility of pursuing the specialization within the Program (i.e., with whom will the student work?);
 - b. importance and impact of the specialization for the discipline;
 - c. marketability of the specialization when conducting a job search;
 - d. clarity and coherence of the Reflection;
 - e. appropriateness of the ICR proposal for the requirement and feasibility of completion.
6. Once the Faculty Mentor has offered feedback on the draft documents for the Qualifying Portfolio (comments and meeting), she or he may ask the student to revise the statement to reflect important elements of their discussion.
7. When the Faculty Mentor feels the draft documents are ready to be included in the Qualifying Portfolio, she or he will sign off on them.
8. A complete Qualifying Portfolio must contain the following materials:
 - Curriculum Vitae
 - Preliminary Specialization Statement
 - Reflective essay that includes an assessment of your perceived strengths and weaknesses as an academic writer and researcher, and a description of your plans for further development;
 - Sample of academic writing that demonstrates strong research, writing, and critical thinking skills (graded, with comments from a faculty member), including a description of a possible venue for the work (e.g., a conference, a journal, a CFP);
 - Proposal for fulfilling the Immersive Cultural Requirement (ICR).
9. Possible result of the faculty evaluation of Qualifying Portfolio are:
 - a. Pass
 - b. Pass with Minor Revisions;
 - c. Pass with Major Revisions.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The Comprehensive Exam Portfolio (CEP) is tightly interwoven with every other element of the doctoral curriculum and is the centerpiece of the Comprehensive Exam: coursework, qualifying portfolio, and dissertation, as well as more administrative and developmental elements such as time-to-degree considerations, mentoring, cohort building, and professional development. Therefore, this Program requires each student to

- assemble a portfolio of materials collected over the course of her or his first two to three years as a doctoral student,
- take a common readings exam that is included in the Portfolio,
- and then take an *oral exam on the contents of the Portfolio*.

In the year that students plan to submit their Comprehensive Exam Portfolio (CEP), the following meetings or discussions will take place:

- They will discuss their plans in their annual review and then follow up to share drafts of their materials in at least one meeting with their mentor in the fall. The mentor is chosen by the graduate student in consultation with the Director of the RCTE program.
- The instructor of the Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Workshop and/or the RCTE Director will hold an orientation meeting in the spring and fall semesters prior to submitting the CEP to share the reading list, help students understand the requirements for submitting their CEP, and discuss strategies for preparation.
- In the spring semester that students complete the Comprehensive Exam Portfolio, they will enroll in the CEP Workshop (ENGL 696E), **which will meet at least six (6) times before the written exam is taken in the tenth (10th) week of the semester**. An additional meeting time may be added for oral exam preparation time.

Students should prepare to submit their CEP by working informally in peer mentoring groups and with their mentors in the months leading up to the exam.

The CEP will include the following (all in MLA format):

1. A Reflective Essay (1250 words)

Offers an overview of your intellectual and professional growth thus far in the RCTE Program, and comments specifically on your development within the areas of research, teaching, and service;

2. **A Revised Specialization Statement (750 words)**

The Revised Specialization Statement is based on the Preliminary Specialization Statement developed during the Year 1 Qualifying Portfolio workshop. This brief document describes your primary research and scholarly focus, explains differences between the initially proposed specialization and its current instantiation, and comments on how this specialization will contribute to the development of your dissertation. **Also included** in the Specialization Statement is a **bibliography of up to 10 sources** meant to help you prepare to write your dissertation proposal and position yourself within a particular sub-field for the next decade.

3. **The Immersive Cultural Requirement Report (1250 words)**

A rigorous narrative that reflects your rich experiences during your field work completing the ICR. Be sure to reflect upon the literature/research that connects to your fieldwork, the context of being a graduate student and the institutional privilege it brings, and how you imagined a plan for reciprocity. Lastly, it should connect to the Program's General Learning Outcomes.

4. **One seminar paper or submitted journal articles/book chapter**

Include a paper that is a representation of your best thinking and writing to date. The included paper must be within your declared specialization and be revised based on feedback from at least one faculty member. You must also identify a venue for sharing your work (e.g., a conference, a journal, a CFP).

5. **Answers to a Common Readings Exam (see below for more detail)**

The Common Readings Exam consists of **3 questions** total with **2500 words max.** allowed per essay. See section on "The Common Readings Exam" for more information.

Each of the five components of the CEP has been selected for particular reasons related to doctoral degree preparation, and together they enable the faculty to assess students' readiness to begin the dissertation process, begin an academic job search, and perform effectively as a skilled researcher, teacher, and community contributor.

The CEP will be developed gradually throughout the first two or three years in the Program, and finally assembled and discussed as a work in progress during the Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Workshop. This workshop, taught by one faculty member (who serves as Director of the CEP) every spring semester, will be designed to help students assemble high quality CEPs, establish good study practices for the Common Readings Exam, and prepare for the Oral Exam.

Immersive Cultural Requirement

It is the faculty's experience and firm belief that immersing oneself in languages, cultures, and/or discourse communities not one's own is profoundly edifying. For this reason, a key component of our doctoral program is the Immersive Cultural Requirement.

Specifically, the Immersive Cultural Requirement (ICR) will:

- Provide doctoral students with the kind of consciousness-changing--perhaps even intellectually disruptive--experiences that meaningful foreign language study often provides;
- Require students to engage in a cultural study experience that is in a non-dominant knowledge domain for them;
- Be partially embedded in the first-year Qualifying Portfolio workshop, which will also help students understand their own subjectivity and begin to define some of the discipline's key terms;
- Rigorously refuse gestures of exoticism, insisting instead on complex understandings of the cultural material under study;
- Be an integral component of the Comprehensive Exam Portfolio.

The ICR will be administered in the following way:

1. In the Fall semester of their first year, students in the Colloquium will be apprised of the requirement and instructed to begin considering how they will fulfill it;
2. In the Qualifying Portfolio workshop in the spring semester of their first year, students will propose how they will fulfill the ICR for their Qualifying Portfolio. This brief proposal (750 words max.) will include:
 - a. what coursework (e.g., in a language or craft course), external class, or other type of immersion experience the student will build her or his ICR out of;
 - b. a justification of the focal area as a non-dominant knowledge domain, that is, showing how it is not an area about which the student already has significant knowledge;
 - c. documentation that the experience will involve regular interactions with a variety of media (e.g., one on one conversation, writing, photography, video,

- aural elements);
 - d. an explanation of how the fulfillment of the ICR will meet each of the general Learning Outcomes identified by the Program;
 - e. where appropriate, a plan for reciprocity (i.e., an explanation of how the people and/or organization(s) facilitating the student's ICR will get something from the student in return);
 - f. a timeline to completion;
 - g. letters of permission, if needed, from any host organization, agency, or instructor.
3. The ICR Proposal will be reviewed and--once all necessary revisions have been made to the document--approved by the Qualifying Portfolio workshop instructor and affirmed during the review of the Qualifying Portfolio.
 4. The student will then be free to pursue the ICR as written.
 5. Significant variances from the approved ICR must be approved by the Program Director.

When the ICR has been completed, the student will write a report (1250 words max.) designed for inclusion in the Comprehensive Exam Portfolio that will:

- document the number of hours worked on the ICR;
- provide a rigorous self-reflective essay that includes:
 - a literature review related to the ICR experience;
 - a statement of outcomes (i.e., what did you learn);
 - a thick description of the experience, including the method that governed its pursuit;
 - documentation that the experience involved regular interactions with a variety of media (e.g., one on one conversation, writing, photography, video, aural elements);
 - situate the writer in the contexts of both graduate student and institutional privilege;
 - where appropriate, how the student fulfilled her or his plan for reciprocity;
 - a statement of how the ICR met each of the Program's general Learning Outcomes.

This part of the Comprehensive Exam Portfolio will be assessed based on:

- the richness, complexity, and honesty (i.e., students needn't feel obligated to say "this was a fantastic endeavor!") of the experience;
- the written and presentational quality of the report;
- the extent to which the experience seems to have met the Program's Learning Outcomes and the overall objectives for the ICR.

The Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Workshop

All students who are preparing for their Comprehensive Exam are required to take this course (ENGL 696E) during the semester of their Comprehensive Exam.

Summary of Important Due Dates for the CEP

Fall semester before the CEP – The program assistant will contact you to schedule the oral exam for the spring semester (you will schedule it on GradPath once your committee has been approved). Also, submit name of potential fourth review panel member to CEP Director for approval. Oral exam cannot be taken until GradPath forms have been submitted and approved.

Week 1 – 6 – Participate in the CEP Workshop. During this time, students must **fill out the GradPath forms (Comp Exam Committee Appointment Form and Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Form)**. These forms *must be filled out* before the CRE is taken.

Week 5 – Student generated list submitted to Director/Committee – *a combination 10-20 books/articles to add to the common reading list for their exam. This list will be submitted as a one-page document during the CEP workshop, consisting of 1) a one paragraph explanation of the specialization; 2) 10-20 books/articles; 3) a list of three (3) specialization questions.*

Week 7 – **Written portion of the CRE will begin** (students have one full week to complete)

Week 10 - **Result of CRE given to students** (Pass, Fail, or request for minor or major revisions)

Week 10 - **Full CEP submitted to review panel/doctoral exam committee**

April – **Oral Exams to be held** (Feedback and notification of Pass/Fail to be given immediately after the exam; exam results will be posted in GradPath and student then advances to candidacy).

The CEP Workshop will meet at least six times during the spring semester to:

- Help students assemble the materials for their CEPs;

- Facilitate students' development of their specialization reading list and questions;
- Review the Common Reading Exam list;
- Discuss study strategies for the Common Reading Exam;
- Provide students with the opportunity to practice for the oral exam;
- Answer questions about the exam process to clarify the requirements for students and help them prepare.

At other times, the facilitator will help students prepare for the CRE by leading discussions, offering practice questions, and providing other forms of feedback, support, and guidance for developing a successful Comprehensive Exam Portfolio.

Common Readings Exam

The Common Readings Exam (CRE) is designed to ensure that students are familiar with topics and methods that the Program's faculty have determined are important to scholars in the conjoined and varied disciplines represented in RCTE. The CRE will be offered once a year in approximately the seventh week of the spring semester.

- The common sections of the Common Readings Exam list are generated each May from the syllabi of the core courses that students took when they entered the program. Readings will be taken from the following courses:
 - ENGL 597R: Research Methods in Rhetoric and Composition
 - ENGL 696T: Rhetorical Theories
 - ENGL 510: Theory and Practice of Composition
- The Common Readings Exam List will be divided into three areas based on the three core courses included, and questions will be written for each of the three areas. Students will select one question from two of the three common areas to respond to for the CRE.
- The Common Readings Exam List will also include 10-20 texts of the student's choosing (specialization list). Students will draft three (3) possible questions for their Specialization List. The faculty may select or revise these questions for the CRE, and the student will select one question from the Specialization List to respond to during the CRE.
- If students in the CEP Workshop come from different cohorts, their Common Readings Exam lists will be different, based on the syllabi from the core classes they took.

Review Panel Instructions and Policy

A four-person faculty review panel will read and score the exams. The four-person review panel will be comprised of:

- 1) A core committee of three RCTE faculty appointed to review all portfolios in a given year.
- 2) A **fourth faculty member** (either within or outside of RCTE) selected by the student to represent their area of focus or minor. Students must let the CEP Workshop Director know who they would like to invite as a fourth member of the review committee **within the first three weeks of the exam semester**. Upon approval, students are then able to reach out to the fourth committee member.

Scoring of the CRE

Each member of the panel will cast a vote either to **Pass** or **Fail** (or pass with minor or major revisions) for each CRE under review; a simple majority rules. Once a decision has been reached, the results will be given to students.

If a Pass w/minor or major revisions is assigned, the student will have **one full week** to complete the revisions and resubmit the exam. The committee will then review the revisions and rescore the exam. **The committee has one week to rescore the revised exam.**

To prepare for the CRE, students will:

- Receive the Common Readings Exam List in May of the year prior to the CRE;
- Schedule a day and time for an oral exam with the CEP Review Committee the fall semester before the exam (see below).
- Submit (**in week 4**) a combination of **10-20 books/articles to add to the common reading list** for their exam. This list would be submitted as a one-page document in MLA formatting during the CEP workshop, consisting of **1)** a one paragraph explanation of the specialization; **2)** 10-20 books/articles; **3)** a list of three (3) specialization questions;
- Fill out **UA Gradpath forms (Responsible Conduct of Research, Plan of Study, Committee Appointment and Date of Oral Exam)** before the CRE is taken;
- Meet at least once with their mentor to discuss their reading list and specialization questions;

- Attend the spring and fall meetings about the CEP in the two semesters before they take the exam;
- Attend the CEP workshop in the semester they take the exam.

Written Portion of the CRE

The written part of the CRE will take place in **approximately week 7 of the Spring semester**. **Results** will be given in **approximately week 10** and **oral exams** will generally be held in **week 12-14** of the Spring semester. The CRE will be the same for all students in the cohort, with the exception of the readings and questions designed for the student's area of specialization.

On the day the written exam begins, the students will be given the questions.

*(*Questions that appear on the exam are selected by the committee.)*

- 3 questions for List 1,
- 3 for List 2,
- 3 for List 3,
- and 3 questions for their specialization list.

Students will choose to respond to one question from two of the first three lists and one question from their specialization list.

Students will have **one week (9 a.m. of the day submitted to students – 4:00 pm the day of submission)** to compose their answers. **Answers will be limited to 2500 words each**. Special needs can be accommodated.

In Week 10 of the semester, the CEP Review Committee receives the full portfolio of student materials.

The Comprehensive Exam Portfolio as outlined helps to ensure that the comprehensive exam builds on interconnectedness of the curriculum to provide students with an opportunity to synthesize and reflect upon their studies in collaboration with faculty who have designated time to support students through the process.

The CEP also clearly and helpfully cements the Program's Learning Outcomes to a major milestone in the arc toward the Ph.D., an advantage that is both informative to faculty of the Program.

Oral Comprehensive Exam

The RCTE faculty will make every effort to schedule all Oral Exams **during the month of April**. There will be two possible outcomes for the CEP and Oral exam:

- Pass;
- Fail: Student is allowed to retake the Oral Exam once. The Exam is to be scheduled at least one month later.

What does the Oral Exam require from the students?

This process of the oral exam *isn't* about complete mastery. It is an allotted time for deep critical engagement with the texts students have surrounded themselves with (they are texts from the Specialization List as well as the Common Readings List), placing them in dialogue with the student's past, current, and projected research, and also placing themselves into relationship with them. This is also a time for faculty to ask students to clarify answers on the exam and for faculty to provide verbal feedback on the CEP.

Timeline for the Oral Exam:

- Student statement to the committee (separate from the specialization statement): 10 minutes
- Discussion of the reflection, specialization statement, and ICR report: 45 minutes
- Discussion of essay in the portfolio: 15 minutes
- Questioning on the Common Reading Exam responses: 1 hour

Additional time for break and committee deliberation: 20 minutes

Total time: 2 ½ hours

DISSERTATION

After you have passed the written and oral parts of the comprehensive exam, the Graduate College will advance you to doctoral candidacy, assuming you have completed the required coursework listed on your approved Plan of Study and have no other obstacles to graduation aside from completion of your dissertation. Your bursar's account will be charged \$35 in candidacy fees. (Fees are subject to change.) The Graduate College will notify you by e-mail when you have been advanced to candidacy and charged the fees.

Planning, researching, and writing your doctoral dissertation is the culmination of your graduate studies. When successfully completed, your dissertation will represent the apogee of your scholarly abilities, demonstrating not only your advanced knowledge of a particular field of research and its related practices, but also your highly-developed research, organizing, and writing skills.

Timeline and Process

The faculty do not expect you to undertake such a project without considerable preparation and guidance.

- You should speak with a faculty member who you would like to work with as your dissertation director before the beginning of the fall semester after having passed your Comprehensive Exam Portfolio.
- After identifying a dissertation director, you should work with that faculty member to invite other committee members.
- Once you have identified a committee, you have until the eleventh week of the semester after you've passed your Comprehensive Exam Portfolio to schedule a meeting with your committee to approve your dissertation proposal.

This should give you plenty of time to craft your ideas into a well-developed research project proposal, especially if you work closely with your dissertation director and consult the *Dissertation Writer's Handbook* that can be downloaded from the Program website.

Once your proposal is approved by your committee, you will be considered a doctoral candidate and "ABD" (All But Dissertation). While not an academic credential in the same way an awarded degree is, many people opt to put the initials "ABD" after their names on business cards and email signature lines to indicate to others their proximity to the Ph.D.

At present, the dissertation is a relatively conventional print document, although the Graduate College accepts dissertations that go beyond print to include film, video, audio, software, archives, and other media forms. If you are interested in pursuing one of these less conventional options, talk with your director and the Program Director to discuss how best to proceed. Once you have discussed it with the director, please contact your GSAS Degree Counselor to make sure everything is in compliance.

The dissertation proposal is a document that advanced students compose in order to clarify for themselves and their advisers why and how they will research, organize, and write their dissertations. It is less like a blueprint—which is, by definition, a fixed and fully formed set of specifications—than an “architectural scheme,” that is, a somewhat detailed sketch that systematically captures the essence of a project and describes an action plan for carrying it out. Such a document can emerge in many ways and the writing and presenting of it serves many functions.

Students typically find that through drafting the dissertation proposal—a process that is equal parts idea generation, sifting, selection, and description—they become keenly aware of when their theoretical frameworks need bolstering, when their research questions are too vague, and when they are being over-ambitious about their objectives. Once identified, such weaknesses can be addressed and corrected.

Moreover, students begin to learn a fundamental skill that they will likely need several times throughout their careers: how to develop a convincing book proposal. While dissertation proposals are a bit different than proposals for trade or academic books, many of the elements are the same. In writing the proposal with the help of your Dissertation Director, and in presenting it to your Dissertation Committee, you will develop skills in professional and rhetorical arts that could have a profound impact on your ability to advance in the academy.

For faculty, dissertation proposals are a chance to help students hone their professional academic skills and avoid some of the research and writing obstacles that can only be identified with experience. It also gives faculty a chance to get oriented to each particular student’s way of thinking about certain kinds of problems, from philosophical paradoxes to time management issues. By discovering such information early on, faculty are in a much better position to offer helpful counsel throughout the actual dissertation writing process.

As you develop your proposal, be mindful of the various strengths and weaknesses of your committee members and assemble a document that will give each of them the most useful picture of your project as you envision it. Say, for example, that you are planning to write a dissertation on diaspora rhetoric under globalization. If you happen to know that one of your committee members is extremely well read in the area of pre-eighteenth-century diasporic rhetorics while another member is really only familiar with the migration rhetorics characteristic of the Galician Diaspora, then you might want to add a sentence or two that will help each of these members to understand your project given their scholarly strengths and limits. Simply put, write your proposal like the rhetor you are.

Dissertation Proposals tend to be 10-30 pages long (double-spaced, 1" margins, 12-point typeface, MLA format) depending on the number of chapters anticipated for the completed manuscript.

The Program Assistant will provide you with an internal form you take to your meeting. Once you submit the signed form and the proposal to the Program Assistant they will sign off and indicate in GradPath that it has been submitted.

Dissertations themselves tend to be 200-300 pages long and are broken into four to six chapters. *Early chapters* tend to:

- outline the general issue under investigation,
- review the relevant literature that impinges upon your topic,
- clarifies the theory and methodology that govern your project, and
- offers one or more case studies, close readings, or other analysis and argument that advances disciplinary knowledge.

Dissertations can take anywhere from one to several years to write depending the complexity of project, though most students in this Program finish their dissertations in one to one-and-a-half years.

For more details on the dissertation proposal, the dissertation writing process, and other information related to planning, writing, and defending your dissertation, see the *Dissertation Writer's Handbook*. The program assistant has sample dissertation proposals on file.

The Graduate College has resources for dissertating students on their website:
<https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses>. It contains details that could be helpful now, as well as links to forms you'll need later on.

M.A. IN RHETORIC, COMPOSITION, AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

The RCTE Program offers an MA degree designed to prepare students for more advanced graduate work in both rhetoric and composition (e.g., PhD), advanced graduate work in disciplines such as Higher Education Administration, Communication, Mexican American Studies, Gender & Women's Studies, and LGBTQ Studies, and/or in professional fields related to rhetoric and writing studies.

Coursework

Thirty (30) units of coursework are required to complete the RCTE MA. This coursework is concentrated in RCTE, but there are opportunities for students to explore other research areas through coursework elsewhere at the UA.

Specifically, here's how students will complete the MA coursework:

- **Year 1: Common Curriculum--15 hours (5 courses)**
 - Fall Semester | Year 1
 - ENGL 597R: Research Methods in Rhetorical and Composition (3)
 - Preceptorship (3)
 - Colloquium (0)
 - Spring Semester | Year 1
 - Either ENGL 696T: Rhetorical Theories (3) or ENGL 510: Theory and Practice of Composition (3). Courses are offered in alternating years with one course taken in Year 1 and one course taken in Year 2. Whichever course is not taken must be taken in Year 2.
 - Preceptorship (0)
 - An additional graduate seminar of the student's choosing (3)
- **Year 2 (5 courses)**
 - Fall Semester | Year 2
 - Specialized Methods: student's choice of one additional methods course, offered either in RCTE or in another program (3)
 - Histories: student's choice of one class focused on histories, offered by

- RCTE faculty (3)
- Elective (3)
- Spring Semester | Year 2
 - Elective (3)
 - Elective (3)

Of the 30 units of coursework, at least 21 units must be taken in RCTE.

Transfer Credits

Per the Graduate College, up to 6 hours of graduate-level transfer credit may be applied to the MA degree, but none of the Year 1 courses may be substituted for transferred courses (i.e., all of the Year 1 courses **must** be taken). There are restrictions on what can be transferred so please consult with your Degree Counselor/GSAS.

MA Exam or Equivalent

In their final semester, MA students will complete their degree with a two-hour Oral Examination or an alternative capstone experience such as a creative project, a comprehensive exam, or some other culminating requirement, such as a final portfolio, a documented contribution to a group project or outcome, or a report of internship for fieldwork experiences. The Oral Exam option will be based on the following materials, submitted to the student's MA Exam Committee 3 weeks before the oral exam:

- one paper or project completed by the student in RCTE coursework that best represents the student's ability to conduct research;
- one paper or project completed by the student in (or immediately peripheral to) RCTE coursework that best represents the student's ability to apply research to contexts in and beyond the classroom;
- a reading list, assembled in collaboration with an MA Advisor selected by the student and drawing heavily on materials covered in the student's coursework.

The student's performance in the MA Oral Exam (ENGL 909) will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Has the student developed a research paper or project that indicates an ability to do advanced graduate level work?

- Has the student demonstrated an advanced ability to apply research and theory to material contexts?
- Has the student demonstrated an ability to step back from their work in order to recognize strengths and weaknesses as a scholar, teacher, and public intellectual?

ANNUAL REVIEW

All students in RCTE except (1) those in the incoming class, and (2) those completing their Qualifying Portfolio, must complete an Annual Review, which is to be submitted not later than the first day of classes in the fall semester. Sign-up for a meeting with the RCTE Program Director (through the Program Assistant) to discuss your Annual Review.

In the three parts of the Review, the student is asked to:

- Write (or revise) their Curriculum Vitae.
- Locate their position in the program.
- Write a reflective essay on their professional growth in the previous year.

If the student is preparing to take the Comprehensive Exam, they submit their CV, the reflective essay, and a list of potential faculty members with whom the student would like to work on the dissertation.

If the student is in the process of writing their dissertation, they submit their CV, a short memo characterizing where they are with the dissertation and when they expect to finish, and the Annual Review cover sheet.

If the student is on the job market, they submit their CV, a draft of a letter of application, and the Annual Review cover sheet.

RCTE PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

By progressing through the curriculum as described in earlier sections of this handbook, developing effective mentoring relationships, and demonstrating satisfactory levels of achievement through the program's review processes, RCTE graduate students will recognize the following program outcomes.

Research Methodology

- identify and critically evaluate the research methods of other scholars
- critique and reflect upon research methodologies in one's own work
- write a focused research question
- address a research problem with appropriate methodologies
- develop projects through a process of highly generative and imaginative inquiry

Theoretical and Historical Perspectives

- develop an interpretive vocabulary informed by related scholarship
- synthesize established theories and histories into a coherent interpretive framework
- demonstrate an ability to iteratively develop theory from practice and practice from theory
- map broader historical and socio-ideological trajectories that inform one's own research
- conduct scholarly work (research, teaching, service, administration) that demonstrates facility with co-existing and emerging disciplines

Pedagogy

- articulate a teaching philosophy that draws on research and theories of teaching and learning
- understand assessment at classroom and program levels
- develop curriculum that incorporates scholarly and reflective teaching

- design pedagogical approaches which assume a diverse student population
- demonstrate proficiency in multiple instructional modalities

Writing & Public Presentation of Work

- draft and revise a professional quality text that is capable of contributing to scholarly, professional, and/or public conversations
- identify appropriate publication venues and submit scholarly, professional, and/or public writing and projects to them
- prepare and deliver quality academic talks at local, regional and national levels
- demonstrate practiced expertise in multiple types of presentation styles (e.g., standard talks, round-tables, poster sessions, demonstrations)

Professional Development

- engage in professional behavior (e.g., being respectfully candid, offering and receiving constructive criticism, practicing self-care)
- attend professional development workshops offered through the program, department, and university
- participate in and contribute to the programmatic, departmental, and broader academic community

Civic & Community Engagement

- conduct collaborative work in, for, or with a community (e.g., NGOs, community organizations, religious institutions, libraries)
- develop an ethics of the reciprocal nature of our work and how it relates to broader contexts

RCTE MINOR

RCTE Students

The Graduate College requires graduate students to have a minor on their doctoral plan of study. You may, however, choose to declare a minor in RCTE and use your electives for fulfillment of this minor.

Rhetoric and composition studies are interdisciplinary in nature, and in RCTE you can take many courses outside of RCTE that will satisfy RCTE's course requirements.

If you declare an official minor outside RCTE, you must

- take the amount of units in the minor field specified by that program,
- have someone from your minor field serve on the Comprehensive Examinations Committee.

Beyond this, different minors have different requirements. Keep in mind you will have to fulfill the requirements of the granting program.

To establish a minor, begin by paying a visit to the Program Director, departmental Graduate Adviser, or department head in the minor field. The person may recommend another member of the department as a mentor, perhaps someone from whom you have already had a class.

Some minor fields that might be of special interest:

- [Language, Reading, and Culture](#) in the [College of Education](#) (for those interested in work in and with the schools)
- [Anthropology](#) (for those who are interested in qualitative cultural research)
- [History](#) (for those interested in a particular historical period or historiography)
- [Communication](#) (for those who are interested in jobs that involve speech communication)
- And many others.

Two of your minor courses may be used toward your electives requirement.

Non-RCTE Students

An RCTE minor can benefit students majoring in interdisciplinary programs like Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT), language/linguistics programs like MAESL [English Applied Linguistics (EAL)], and general language programs like literary studies.

Non-RCTE students who wish to have an official minor in RCTE must take at least fifteen (15) units.

With the approval of the RCTE Director, as many as six (6) units of courses in Rhetoric and Composition may be transferred toward the total. If a student transfers in 3 units or less, they may use one of their preceptorship courses (3 units) to fulfill the pedagogy requirement. If they choose to transfer in 6 units, they may not use the preceptorship units.

A student taking 15 units for their minor will not have to complete an RCTE written comprehensive examination. A student may choose to take only 9 units but will have to complete a 4-hour written exam in addition to their major's comprehensive exam.

RCTE minors will consult with their RCTE faculty regarding administering the RCTE portion of the comprehensive examinations. Typically the RCTE faculty member will be the fourth or fifth committee member.