

# 2016-2017 RCTE Handbook

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## 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 and Composition;
- 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 specialization (needed for comps and the diss);
- assesses students on their developing abilities to perform advanced level scholarship and function collegially in an academic setting.

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

**Total Number of Required hours to graduate with PhD: 66**

**Minimum Diss. Hours: 18**

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

In addition to the Common Curriculum outlined below, students are required to take a pedagogy course, generally a course in the teaching of writing. This requirement may be met by previous coursework or by a course from another field that focuses on teaching.

- **Common Curriculum: 15 hours (including a pedagogy course of choice)**
  - Fall Semester | Year 1
    - Trends & Methods in Rhetorical Studies (3)
    - Preceptorship
    - Colloquium
  - Spring Semester | Year 1
    - Inquiry & Innovation Seminar (3)
    - Trends & Methods in Composition Studies (3)
    - Preceptorship
  - Fall Semester | Year 2
    - Student's choice of second course (3)
    - Controversies in Rhetoric & Composition (3)
- **Specialization Curriculum: 18 hours (6 courses)**
  - The Program will define known areas of expertise among the faculty, which will become part of our identity, but students will determine their own specialization areas as they go, with key mentoring moments built into the Program to help with their discernment (e.g., Inquiry & Innovation Seminar, Trends courses, faculty and peer mentoring). For example, consider these **hypothetical** Program and

student focal areas and specializations:

- Program Focus: Writing Program Administration
  - Student 1 Specialization: Assessment
  - Student 2 Specialization: English as Second/Other Language Issues
  - Student 3 Specialization: The Politics of Organizational Structure
- Program Focus: Cultural and Media Studies
  - Student 1 Specialization: Radical Politics and New Media Art
  - Student 2 Specialization: Colonialism and Comedy
  - Student 3 Specialization: Revisionist Rhetorical Histories
- Program Focus: Critical Community Literacies
  - Student 1 Specialization: Racism and Public Educational Policy
  - Student 2 Specialization: Power and Queer Youth Literacy
  - Student 3 Specialization: Central and South American Non-alphabetic Literacies
- Courses need not be offered in students' specialization area *per se*; rather, faculty will automatically offer courses in the Program's focal areas (that's just the nature of the work we do), and students will build up their specialization by taking coursework that's interesting to them and that they feel they can build their specializations around.
- Specialization courses will be tracked in your specialization statement. That is, the courses used for your specialization requirement do not have to be connected in an obvious way. You must make the argument why any particular course fits into your specialization.
- At least four of the Specialization courses (12 hours) must be in RCTE. The other two courses (6 hours) may be taken elsewhere on campus, or transferred in from another institution. Only two transfer courses can count towards your specialization requirement.
- **Electives Curriculum: 12 hours (4 courses)**
  - open to any subject area offered at the graduate level anywhere on campus;
  - may be applied to the Comparative Cultural Requirement (see the CCR Proposal for details);
  - may be applied to a minor (9 hours minimum required by Graduate College).
  - Preceptorship may count as one elective
- **Dissertation: 18 Units**



## TRANSFER CREDITS

Students are allowed a maximum of 15 transfer credits according to the following distribution:

- 9 hours (max) in the Electives Curriculum (NB: these may not be accepted by minor programs--check with the minor department)
- 6 hours (max) in the Specialization Curriculum
- 0 hours (max) in the Common Curriculum



## QUALIFYING PORTFOLIO

The Graduate College allows for considerable latitude in how individual programs conduct the Qualifying Exam, from formal timed exams to relatively informal assessment processes. 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 the Inquiry & Innovation seminar, 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 statement of specialization that will inform their selection of courses in subsequent years (their "Specialization Curriculum").
3. By an agreed upon date determined by the faculty (approximately Week 10), all Inquiry & Innovation Seminar students will have a complete draft of their Specialization Statement, which will have been vetted by the course instructor. These statements will be no more than 500 words long. The Specialization Statement will include:
  - a. the name of the 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 statement of personal location, that is, the student describes her or his own subjectivity in the world and comments briefly on how this necessarily impacts the ways in which she or he approaches research and teaching.
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 Specialization Statement. Students will also be encouraged (but not required) to contact 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 the proposed area of specialization. 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 of the specialization for the discipline;
  - c. impact of the specialization in the world;
  - d. marketability of the specialization when conducting a job search.
6. Once the Faculty Mentor has offered feedback on the Specialization Statement (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 specialization statement is in good shape, she or he will sign off on it.
8. The revised and approved Specialization Statement, plus the grades in all four of the student's required first and second-year courses, will be holistically evaluated by all available faculty at the second faculty meeting of the year (i.e., by the end of February in a cohort's fourth semester in the Program).
9. Please be sure your portfolio contains the following materials:
  - Specialization Statement (drafted in the Inquiry & Innovations seminar and signed off on by your faculty mentor)
  - Vita
  - Reflective essay that includes an assessment of the your perceived strengths and weaknesses as an academic writer and researcher
  - Sample of academic writing that demonstrates strong research, writing, and critical thinking skills (graded, with comments from a faculty member);
  - Proposal for fulfilling the comparative cultural requirement
10. Possible result of the faculty evaluation of Qualifying Exams are:
  - a. Pass
  - b. Pass with Minor Revisions (student is asked to make small changes to the Specialization Statement);
  - c. Pass with Major Revisions (student is asked to make small or large changes to the Specialization Statement and/or (re)take a course.

**NB:** While the Specialization Statement is not a binding document, it is a directive one. It is to be understood by students and faculty to be orienting all of a student's future coursework, teaching, and service commitments (possibly excepting minor and CCR-related coursework). Consequently, any significant variation away from the research direction outlined in the revised and approved Specialization Statement must be explained in the Preliminary Exam Portfolio (i.e., a newly revised Specialization Statement becomes a mandatory Context Document in the PEP).



## COMPARATIVE CULTURAL REQUIREMENT

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

Specifically, the Comparative Cultural Requirement (CCR) 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 Inquiry & Innovation Course, 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 Preliminary Exam Portfolio.

The CCR 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 Inquiry & Innovation Seminar in the spring semester of their first year, students will propose how they will fulfill the CCR for their Preliminary Exam Portfolio. This brief proposal (750 words max.) will include:
  - a. what coursework (e.g., in a foreign language or craft course), external class (e.g., capoeira), or other type of immersion experience (e.g., three months in Nepal) the student will build her or his CCR 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 CCR 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 CCR 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 CCR Proposal will be reviewed and--once all necessary revisions have been made to the document--approved by the I&I Seminar instructor.
4. The student will then be free to pursue the CCR as written.
5. Significant variances from the approved CCR must be approved by the Program Director.

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

- document the number of hours worked on the CCR;
- provide a rigorous ethnographic-style self-reflection essay that includes:
  - a literature review related to the CCR 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 CCR met each of the Program's general Learning Outcomes.

This part of the Preliminary 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 CCR.

**NB:** Students who complete the CCR particularly well will be invited to become CCR Peer Mentors, helping future cohorts to imagine and develop excellent CCR experiences



### **PRELIMINARY EXAM PORTFOLIO (PEP)**

The Preliminary Exam is tightly interwoven with every other element of the doctoral curriculum: coursework, qualifying exam, and dissertation, as well as more administrative and developmental elements such as time-to-degree considerations, mentoring, cohort building, and professional development. As a result, rather than the conventional reading list and timed exam approach, 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 Preliminary Exam Portfolio (PEP), 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 Preliminary Exam Portfolio Workshop will hold an orientation meeting in the fall semester to help students prepare to submit their PEP. In the spring, students will enroll in the Workshop, which will meet at least six times before the written exam is taken in the tenth week of the semester. The Workshop will meet in the week after the exam to help students prepare for the oral portion of the exam in the twelfth week of the semester. In addition to these formal requirements, students should prepare to submit their PEP by working informally in peer mentoring groups and with their mentors in the months leading up to the exam.

The PEP will include:

1. **A reflective essay** (1250 words max.) that offers an overview of your intellectual and professional growth thus far in the Program, and comments specifically on your development within the areas of research, teaching, and service;
2. **Revised Specialization Statement** The revised Specialization Statement is based on the document of the same name developed during the Year 1 Inquiry & Innovation Seminar. This brief document (approximately 750 words max.) describes your specialization pursued through coursework, 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 15 sources designed to help you prepare to write your dissertation and position yourself within a particular sub-field for the next decade.
3. **The Comparative Cultural Requirement Report** – a rigorously ethnographic narrative that reflects your rich experiences during your field work completing the CCR. Be sure to reflect upon the literature/research that connects to your field work, reflect upon the context of being a graduate student and the institutional privilege it brings, and also, reflect on 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** representing your best thinking and writing to date. One of these must be within your declared specialization and revised based on feedback from at least one faculty member;
5. **Answers to a Common Readings Exam** (see below).

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

The PEP will be developed gradually throughout the first two or three years in the Program, and finally assembled and discussed as part of a Preliminary Exam Portfolio Workshop. This workshop, taught by once faculty every spring semester, will be designed to help students assemble high quality PEPs and establish good study practices for the Common Readings Exam.

#### The Preliminary Exam Portfolio Workshop

The PEP Workshop will

- help students assemble faculty members' course-based questions as well as develop



new guiding questions that have emerged independently through coursework and during the Qualifying Exam process.<sup>1</sup> These questions, gathered together from all the students in each year's PEP cohort, will become the foundation of the Common Readings Exam (see below);

- All students who are preparing for their comps will sign up for this course and 3 dissertation units (thereby fulfilling the minimum of 6 enrolled hours requirement attached to GTAships).
- have the facilitator meeting with students approximately 6 times throughout the semester. During the early part of the workshop, the faculty member will work closely with the students to help them assemble all their materials and establish a good study cohort. 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 Preliminary Exam Portfolio.

### The Common Readings Exam (CRE)

The Common Readings Exam is designed to ensure that students are familiar with topics and methods that the Program's faculty have determined are particularly and currently important to scholars in the conjoined and varied disciplines that comprise "rhetoric and composition studies." The readings on the list are grouped into three topical areas. Students select two of the three for their examinations. Drawing upon their individual research interests, students will add several articles and at least one book to each of the three topical areas they select. The CRE will be offered twice a year in approximately the fifth week of the semester.

The exams will be read by a four-person faculty review panel. All four of the members of the faculty review panel will serve on all committees, and they will generally be comprised of tenured faculty members in the RCTE program. Each student can change a committee member of their choice and choose their own fourth faculty member in consultation with the RCTE Director. This fourth member would reflect the student's specialization and/or minor. Each member of the panel will cast a vote either to Pass or Fail each CRE under review; a simple majority rules. Once a decision has been reached, the results will be added to the appropriate CEPs when they are submitted by the students.

To prepare for the CRE, students will:

- receive the Common Readings List in May of the year prior to the CRE;
  - This list will contain 10-15 books and 10-15 articles/chapters/excerpts, many of which students will have read in their courses;
- select two of the three topical areas to be examined upon;
- submit a combination of 5 books/articles to add to the common reading list for their exam. This list would be submitted as a one-page document during the PEP workshop, along with a list of three specialization questions. In the exam, they can choose one of these questions to answer;
- form study groups that will meet at least once a week to discuss the readings on the List;
- meet at least once with their mentor to discuss their reading list and dissertation idea;
- discuss their reading list with the RCTE Director in their annual reviews in the year when they will take the exam;
- attend a fall workshop and meet individually with the PEP workshop instructors in the

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<sup>1</sup> A regular feature of all RCTE seminars is a short list of questions included in the syllabus or elsewhere that the course will address. These questions (i.e., the sum of all the questions posed in all the RCTE courses taken by the CEP cohort) will comprise, in part, the draft list of questions from which the CRE will draw.

- semester before taking the exam;
- participate in at least one practice exam exercise in the PEP workshop; and
- schedule a day and time for an oral exam with the PEP Review Committee (see below).

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. On the day the written exam begins, the students will be given a partial list of the questions. (Questions are selected by the committee.)

- 5 questions from List 1,
- 5 from list 2,
- and 5 from list 3.

Students **choose two** out of 15 questions (from different sections) given by the committee.

**The third question** will come from the Student Generated list of sources and questions that reflect her/his specialization. These will be submitted to the Exam Committee in **week 5** of the Workshop. The Committee will review and revise the questions, and the students will receive these revised questions upon the day of the exam.

Students will be asked to answer any one of the questions from each list and will have one week to compose their answers. Answers will be limited to 2500 words each. Special needs can be accommodated.

In Week 10 of the semester, the PEP Review Committee receives the student materials.

The Preliminary 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 PEP 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, and reassuring to the Dean of the Graduate College and the Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs who are together responsible for ensuring the quality of all graduate programs within the University of Arizona.

## ORAL EXAM

The RCTE faculty will make every effort to schedule all Oral Exams between Weeks 12 and 14 of the Spring semester. There will be three possible outcomes for the portfolio and Oral exam:

- Pass;
- Fail: Student is advised to leave the Program.

Timeline for the Oral Exam:

- Student statement to the committee: 10 minutes
- Discussion of the reflection: 20 minutes
- Questioning on the Common Reading Exam responses: 1 hour
- Discussion of essay in the portfolio: 30 minutes

- Discussion of CCR/Specialization Statement and Dissertation Idea: 45 minutes  
Additional time/break: 15 minutes



## **ANNUAL REVIEW**

All students in RCTE except (1) those in the incoming class, and (2) those completing their Quals, must complete an Annual Review, which is to be submitted not later than the first day of classes in the fall semester.

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

Write (or revise) their Vita.

Locate their position in the program.

Write a reflective essay on their professional growth in the previous year.

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**

- define a research question
- address a research problem with appropriate methodologies
- identify and critique the research methods of other scholars

### **Theoretical Perspectives**

- develop an interpretive vocabulary informed by related scholarship
- synthesize established theories into a coherent interpretive framework
- apply theory to the objects of study

### **Historical Background**

- work closely with historical texts and contexts
- map broader socio-ideological trends
- develop a well-informed historiography

### **Pedagogy**

- articulate a teaching philosophy
- draw on research and theories of teaching and education
- draw on relevant scholarship to characterize one's teaching style and values
- understand assessment in classroom and program levels

### **Teaching**

- develop curriculum that incorporates a scholarly way of knowing about teaching
- adapt to differing learning styles and cultural backgrounds
- engage the world by bringing it into the classroom and the classroom to it
- able to work with reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies

### **Writing**

- draft and revise a professional quality article that is capable of entering appropriate scholarly conversations
- engage with existing scholarship and make original contribution to related scholarship
- master conventions of academic writing and formats
- submit scholarly writing and projects for publication

### **Presenting**

- prepare and deliver professional 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)

### **Civic Engagement**

- apply rhetorical principles to local, national, and transnational contexts
- serve in a leadership role in the institution or community
- exercise effective co-leadership in collaborative teaching, research, and administrative projects

### **Multidisciplinary**

- demonstrate academic skills (research, teaching, service, administration) requiring facility with multiple co-existing and symbiotic disciplines

## **DISSERTATION**

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.

The faculty do not expect you to undertake such a project without considerable preparation and guidance. Indeed, you have until the eleventh week of the semester after you've passed your Comprehensive Exams Portfolio to submit your dissertation proposal. Given that a part of your PEP already includes a brief dissertation idea, this should give you plenty of time to craft that idea into a well-developed research project, 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--usually in a meeting with them in the 13th week of the semester--you will be considered "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, though increasingly there are efforts to encourage the Graduate College to accept 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.

At the front end of the dissertation is the dissertation proposal. This 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.

One significant factor in the successful completion of both the dissertation proposal and the dissertation is careful stewardship of your time. It is imperative that once you have passed your Comprehensive Exam Portfolio that you identify and consult with your Dissertation Director as soon as possible (within two weeks at the outside), preferably with your CEP Dissertation Idea and a sense of the dissertation's basic argument in hand. The Director will work with you on early drafts of the Proposal. (See the Program Assistant for Dissertation Proposal models.)

Dissertation Proposals tend to be 5-15 pages long (single-spaced, 1" margins, 12 point typeface, MLA format) depending on the number of chapters anticipated for the completed manuscript. 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 detail 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*.





**Expertise Grid for Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English (University of Arizona)**

<p><b>Beginner-1</b> Pre-RCTE</p>	<p>Intrigued about how language—broadly speaking—works as an expressive, communicative, and/or persuasive tool; expressed interest in learning how to use and better understand language; no understanding of methods and theories yet.</p>
<p><b>Beginner-2</b> Pre-RCTE</p>	<p>Has a passion and aptitude for rhetorical analysis and argumentation; skills are basic but discernible. Knows how to make an argument and is beginning to understand the role of theory and method in making defensible claims.</p>
<p><b>Emergent-1</b> Year 1</p>	<p>Has basic understanding of fundamental rhetorical principles and their origins. Has begun to learn the basic components of pedagogy, rhetorical and composition studies methods, theories, and research processes (i.e., skills, history, general idea making). Can employ basic skills to express a clear idea that argues toward stated objectives. Begins to reflect on and critique own work and assess the work of others based on stated objectives.</p>
<p><b>Emergent-2</b> Year 2</p>	<p>Continues to improve facility with the components of rhetorical history, theory, and analysis as applied to both assigned and self-selected texts and artifacts. Demonstrates expanded facility with idea generation and expression. Demonstrates an emerging awareness of self as a researcher, teacher, and researcher/teacher, and begins to identify possible professional focal areas (rhetorico-cultural analysis, comp studies, WPA). Clearly understands basics of rhetorical analysis and research design. Explaining and assessing one's own and others' work remains conscious and effortful.</p>
<p><b>Novice</b> Year 3</p>	<p>Commits to an area of professional focus as defined by the theories and methods of the discipline(s) it draws from. Begins to explore creative pathways that express unique responses and viewpoints to professional scholarship and collaborative interaction. Initiates new research and teaching prospects, while also continuing to deepen and broaden extant research and teaching skills--including those necessitating the development of self-assessment skills and professionalism.</p>
<p><b>Intermediate</b> Year 3</p>	<p>Recognizes multiple processes of rhetoric and composition studies. Initiates and co-develops a collaborative academic project (e.g., symposium, special journal issue). Able to extend academic applications to community settings and integrate self-assessments.</p>
<p><b>Practitioner-1</b> Year 4</p>	<p>Possesses an understanding of many major and minor elements of rhetoric and composition research; successfully engages and completes a complex academic project from proposal through publication or release; demonstrated ability to provide effective leadership of a diverse group of people. Can assess own work for effective improvement.</p>

<p><b>Practitioner-2</b> Year 5-7</p>	<p>Has gained confidence and proficiency in research, teaching, and service, and has begun to integrate them as part of a scholarly identity. Demonstrates consistency in scholarly productivity across multiple, simultaneous projects. Meets (or appropriately adapts) institutional and collegial expectations within resource parameters and local practices. Consistently and accurately assesses work for effective improvement.</p>
<p><b>Expert</b></p>	<p>Significant experience in the profession shows evolved theories and methods that are customized, unique, and recognizable. Emerging confidence to experiment and self-activate a personal and professional aesthetic and vision. Sustained consistency in productivity that sometimes yields transformative experiences for collaborators and audiences.</p>
<p><b>Virtuoso</b></p>	<p>Leader and innovator in the field with an original, unique voice and vision that consistently inspires collaborators and colleagues to go beyond current cultural and societal expectations of the discipline. The virtuoso has vision; research, theory, and method are instinctive. Consistently produces a transformative experience for both collaborators and audiences.</p>

This grid is modeled on one used by Carnegie Mellon's Eberly Center. See <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assessprogram/masterygrid.html> for additional information about this tool.

## **RHETORIC & COMPOSITION TIME TO DEGREE OVERVIEWS (CURRICULUM TIMELINES)**

Based on all the requirements for the Ph.D., here are several versions of how students might complete their doctoral requirements. [Nota Bene: this is not a comprehensive list of time-to-degree variations; consult with the Program Director to determine your exact completion timeline.]

### **Scenario 1: Student with No MA**

Assumption 1: Student receives no transfer credits and thus must complete every step of the Program as outlined.

Assumption 2: Student does not take any additional courses beyond the required 48.

#### **YEAR 1: 15 units**

- Fall Semester (semester one)
  - Trends and Methods in Rhetoric (3)
  - Colloquium
  - Preceptorship
- Spring Semester (semester two)
  - Inquiry and Innovation Seminar (3)
  - Trends and Methods in Composition (3)
  - Preceptorship

#### **YEAR 2: 12 units**

- Fall Semester (semester three)
  - Controversies (3)
  - Specialization Course 1 (3)
  - Pedagogy (3)
- Spring Semester (semester four)
  - Elective 2 (3)
  - Specialization Course 2 (3)

#### **YEAR 3: 12 units**

- Fall Semester (semester five)
  - Elective 3 (3)
  - Specialization Course 3 (3)
- Spring Semester (semester six)
  - Elective 4 (3)
  - Specialization Course 4 (3)

#### **YEAR 4: 12 units**

- Fall Semester (semester seven)
  - Specialization Course 5 (3)
  - Pedagogy

- Spring Semester (semester eight)
  - Elective or specialization (3)
  - Specialization Course 6 (3)
  - *Doctoral Coursework Completed*

**YEAR 5:** 12 units

- Fall Semester (semester nine)
  - Dissertation units (6) (THE FACULTY DECIDED ON MAY 13, 2015 THAT STUDENTS HAVE TO TAKE COURSES UP TO THEIR Prelims semester...)
- Spring Semester (semester ten)
  - Dissertation units (3)
  - Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Workshop (3 units)
  - *Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Completed*

**YEAR 6:** 12 units

- Fall Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - *Dissertation Proposal Defended*
- Spring Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - Dissertation Writing

**YEAR 7:** 12 units

- Fall Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - Dissertation Writing
  - Job Market (w/ three chapters complete)
- Spring Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - Dissertation Writing
  - *Dissertation Defended*
  - *Graduation*

## **Scenario 2: Student with an MA in Rhetoric & Composition**

Assumption 1: Student receives all 15 transfer credits, applying 6 to the Specialization and 9 to the Electives.

Student transfers in:

- i. Elective 1, 2 (6 units)
- ii. Specialization 1, 2 (6 units)
- iii. Pedagogy Course (3 units)

Assumption 2: Student does not take any additional courses beyond the required 48.

### **YEAR 1: 15 units**

- Fall Semester (semester one)
  - Trends and Methods in Rhetoric (3)
  - Elective 3 (3)
  - Colloquium
  - Preceptorship (3)
- Spring Semester (semester two)
  - Trends and Methods in Composition (3)
  - Inquiry and Innovation Seminar (3)
  - Preceptorship

### **YEAR 2: 12 units**

- Fall Semester (semester three)
  - Controversies (3)
  - Specialization Course 3 (3)
- Spring Semester (semester four)
  - Specialization Course 4 (3)
  - Specialization Course 5 (3)

### **YEAR 3: 12 units**

- Fall Semester (semester five)
  - Elective 4 (3)
  - Specialization Course 6 (3)
  - *Doctoral Coursework Completed*
- Spring Semester (semester six)
  - Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Workshop A (3 units)
  - Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Workshop B (3 units)
  - *Comprehensive Exam Portfolio Completed*

### **YEAR 4: 12 dissertation units**

- Fall Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - *Dissertation Proposal Defended*

- Spring Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - Dissertation Writing

**YEAR 5:** 12 dissertation units

- Fall Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - Dissertation Writing
  - Job Market (w/ three chapters complete)
- Spring Semester
  - Diss Hours (6 diss units)
  - Dissertation Writing
  - *Dissertation Defended*
  - *Graduation*

## RCTE MINOR

### RCTE Students

The Graduate College requires graduate students to have a minor. 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, the Graduate College requires you to:

- take a minimum of nine units in the minor field,
- have someone from the 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:

- **In the Department of English**
  - Literature (for students who want to teach in 2- or 4-year colleges where they will likely be in English departments where all faculty teach literature and composition courses)
  - English Language and Linguistics (for students interested in ESL teaching and research)
  - Creative Writing (for students who hope to teach creative writing as well as work in rhetoric and composition. Please note that non-MFA students must write their way into graduate classes in Creative Writing by submitting writing samples in advance of the class and get the instructor's approval.)
- **Outside English**
  - 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)
  - Communications (for those who are interested in jobs that involve speech communications)
  - 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 English Language and Linguistics (EL/L), 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, distributed as follows:

History .....	3 units
Theory .....	3 units
Research .....	3 units
Pedagogy .....	3 units
Elective (outside the student’s major) .....	3 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 member regarding administering the RCTE portion of the comprehensive examinations. Typically the RCTE faculty member will be the fourth or fifth committee member.



## **Rhetoric & Composition MA** **Approved 05/27/2014**

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, 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
    - Trends & Methods in Rhetorical Studies (3)
    - Preceptorship (3)
    - Colloquium (0)
  - Spring Semester | Year 1
    - Trends & Methods in Composition Studies (3)
    - Inquiry & Innovation Seminar (3)
    - Preceptorship (3)
- **Year 2: Theory and Application--15 hours (5 courses)**
  - Fall Semester | Year 2
    - 1 theory-heavy course (3)
    - 1 practicum or applications-heavy course (3)
    - Controversies in Rhetoric & Composition (3)
  - Spring Semester | Year 2
    - 1 theory-heavy course (3)
    - 1 applied research practicum (3)<sup>2</sup>

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

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<sup>2</sup> This could be the Community Literacy Practicum, or it could be an Independent Study in which the student works closely with a faculty member on one of the faculty member's ongoing projects.

courses (i.e., all of the Year 1 courses **must** be taken).

### **MA Exam**

In their final semester, MA students will complete their degree by taking a two-hour MA Oral Examination. This exam 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 real-world contexts;
- 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 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 her or his work in order to recognize strengths and weaknesses as a scholar, teacher, and public intellectual?