

**A HANDBOOK  
FOR THE  
DOCTORAL DEGREE  
IN ENGLISH  
AT USF**



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## The USF English Graduate Program

In the Carnegie Foundation categories for higher education, the University of South Florida is classified as Very High Research and Community Engaged. The department of English shares these commitments with a productive graduate faculty engaged in creative and critical publishing, and a dynamic and growing program that features Literature and Critical Theory, Cultural Studies, Digital Humanities, Rhetoric and Composition, and Creative Writing.

Graduate studies in English at the University of South Florida includes five degree programs: [Literature](#) (PhD and MA), [Rhetoric and Composition](#) (PhD and MA) and [Creative Writing](#) (MFA). The department also administers graduate certificates in [Comparative Literature](#), [Creative Writing](#), and [Professional and Technical Communication](#). Additionally, graduate students in English can earn [certificates](#) in related fields such as Women's Studies and area studies including Film, Africana, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, or Library Science.

We have approximately 130 students in our program who work closely with a dynamic [faculty](#) of internationally recognized scholars and award-winning teachers. The program features small seminar-style graduate classes and offers opportunities for directed research and professional development. The department is home to journals for undergraduate and graduate students including the [Norman Mailer Review](#) and the newly established [Aphra Behn Online](#) interactive journal. In addition, we also publish [Saw Palm](#), a literary annual focused on Florida authors and themes produced by members of the Creative Writing program.

Graduate degrees in English are professional degrees in that they prepare students for professional activities in scholarly or creative publications and pedagogy. The Master of Arts degree is a generalist degree that builds upon the literary or writing experiences from the student's Bachelor's program. It involves students in increasingly complex critical inquiry and analysis and introduces them to the methods, standards, and conventions of scholarship in the field. It has broad-based distribution requirements but also the flexibility for students to study cutting-edge theories and newly emerging fields of interest, including cultural and comparative studies, genre studies such as film, rhetoric and technology, and theories of composition. The Literature program concludes with a portfolio. The Rhetoric and Composition program has an option for either a thesis with defense or a portfolio.

The Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing is a graduate-level program offering concentrations in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. The program emphasizes the craft of writing and concentrates on the student's original work. The MFA requires 45 hours of coursework and typically will take three years for the full-time student to complete. Our goal is to help MFA students produce publishable theses and secure teaching or writing-related positions upon graduation.

The PhD is the highest level of training for studies in English, and it prepares students to be scholars and teachers in recognized fields, including emergent fields with high marketability. This degree allows students to develop depth in primary and secondary fields and to become expert scholar-teachers in the sub-discipline of choice. Students work closely with a faculty advisor whose scholarly training and publication record provides a model for the student's development. After coursework, students must produce a portfolio that highlights their scholarly expertise and

pedagogical interests. Upon completion of the portfolio, this degree concludes with the writing of a dissertation, a substantial work of scholarship that solidifies the student's professional identity.

We have placed many MA and PhD graduates in teaching positions throughout the state and country. Our doctorates have recently earned tenure-track positions at institutions such as the University of Kentucky, Appalachian State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Old Dominion University, University of Central Florida, Florida Atlantic University, College of the Bahamas, Albany State University, University of Wisconsin-Stout, Nova Southeastern University, St. Cloud University, and Edge Hill University, England. Because many of our graduates go on to tenure-track jobs at teaching institutions, we emphasize theories of pedagogy and training in instruction through practica in Composition, Literature, and Professional and Technical Writing. Many of our students are offered teaching assistantships for First-year Composition courses, and there are opportunities for advanced graduate students to teach general education courses in literature and writing.

One of our underlining core principles is community and we believe in creating supportive, challenging, and collaborative relationships among graduate students and faculty. The department benefits from the collegial interaction of our three tracks with colloquia and speaker series that bring them together. Our active [English Graduate Student Association](#) (EGSA) sponsors a monthly colloquium in which students from Literature, Rhetoric and Composition, and Creative Writing each read from their work. Additionally, the EGSA annually hosts a national interdisciplinary graduate conference centering on current disciplinary topics.

With help from courses on professional topics such as Scholarly Writing and Research and Publishing Your Journal Article and numerous workshops on preparing for the job market by our placement committee, our graduate students publish their work in a variety of scholarly and literary venues. Our creative writing students have won national awards including the O. Henry Prize for short fiction. The department provides some support for students to present their work at conferences, and additional funds are available from the [Graduate and Professional Student Council](#). Our teaching assistants consistently garner the university's highest distinction, the [Provost's Award for Outstanding Teaching](#), and the department annually honors our top students for their accomplishments in scholarship, writing, and instruction with twelve or more named monetary [awards](#). We also have a vibrant and active graduate internship program to help students prepare for alternative academic careers by matching them with companies such as *Refinery29* and Gasparilla Film Festival. We have over 120 companies that we can match our students with.

For more information on the program and opportunities for graduate students, please visit the department website: <http://english.usf.edu/>.

## Some Helpful Hints

The purpose of this handbook is to help you plan your graduate studies in English and to prepare you for entrance into either an academic or non-academic career. In addition to examining these materials, you may also want to consider the following resources:

### **Become active in the English Graduate Student Association.**

The EGSA sponsors academic and social events that will help you become an active member of the department.

### **Consider submitting your seminar papers for publication.**

Write seminar papers with the mindset of publication. To facilitate this, apply to conferences in order to gain experience presenting your ideas and using feedback for revision of your paper. Work with colleagues, the Writing Studio, and faculty to workshop your papers and submit them for publication. Students in the Literature program are strongly encouraged to submit the articles from their portfolios to appropriate journals.

### **Monitor the Canvas organization for English graduate students.**

As a graduate student, you will automatically be placed in the Canvas organization “English Graduate Students Information.” The organization is accessed through Canvas (<https://usflearn.instructure.com>) under the Courses tab. This site is regularly updated by the Graduate Program Specialist. It includes department forms, exam information, handbooks, degree information, discussion boards, and more.

### **Monitor your USF email account.**

While we may have personal email addresses on file for students, the default means of communicating with students is through USF email. Student email addresses are often used by department staff and administrators, and they are posted on the [current graduate student listing](#) of the department website. Students are responsible for actively monitoring their USF email accounts and ensuring that they do not become full.

### **Get to know faculty, and consult with them on a regular basis.**

Our faculty members are interested in helping you. Feel free to seek advice from them on topics for articles, conference papers, dissertations, or theses. The list of faculty (<http://english.usf.edu/faculty/>) and their specialties will help you to identify those who might be familiar with scholarship in a given area.

### **Attend regional and national conferences.**

Attending conferences is an excellent way to provide you with access to the latest scholarship, an opportunity to meet students and faculty from other institutions, and the opportunity to acquaint yourself with particular areas of specialization. For upcoming conferences, see the [MLA Announcements website](#) and the [University of Pennsylvania CFP website](#).

### **Read the important journals and scholarship in your area of interest.**

Before joining the scholarly “conversation” in your field, know what has been and is being said and by whom. Ask the faculty in your field what the most important journals are. Consider becoming a member of relevant associations.

**Respond to calls for news.**

We will publish news of your accomplishments on our website when you publish an article, present a paper, or receive an honor or award. Please don't be shy about submitting your accomplishments. We want to celebrate you and your work!

**Start preparing for your PhD Portfolio (Literature track) or PhD Exams (Rhetoric and Composition track) in your first year of the program**

For Literature students: In the first semester of the program, you will meet with the Graduate Director, who will help you establish a timeline for completing your portfolio. Start early, thinking about possible dissertation topics, committee members you want to work with, and possible papers you want to pursue for publication.

For Rhetoric Composition students: Early in the program, begin to think of the areas in which you will be tested. Consider the works from your classes that you'll want to see on your exam reading lists so you'll later have working lists to present to your exam committee members. Practice composing one-hour exam essays based on the sample exam questions available on the English Graduate Students Information organization on [Canvas](#). Attend department workshops on preparing for your PhD exams.

**Begin now to prepare for your career.**

As you begin your graduate study, keep in mind that you are already preparing for your career. Collect materials as you go, and don't assume you can always do it later. Work on building an impressive curriculum vita that will distinguish you from other qualified applicants. Join professional organizations, present papers at conferences, submit articles for publication, and apply for scholarships and honors. Because so much depends on the professionalism of the documents in your dossier, spend ample time perfecting them.

**Prepare for an alternative academic career.**

Students who wish to cultivate career prospects outside academia are strongly encouraged to take the internship course. Speak with the Graduate Director in the English Department and with Career Services at USF to plan for your future career.

## Where to Get Advice

The graduate director should be the first stop in your progress through the PhD. The graduate director will help you go through the checklist of PhD requirements, select the areas of concentration for your qualifying exams or portfolio, select a committee and fill out the appropriate form for your exam or portfolio, and form your dissertation committee.

For literature students, the graduate director is also the program advisor. For rhetoric and composition students, the Coordinator of Rhetoric and Composition is the program advisor.

Students are also encouraged to seek advice on an informal basis from individual graduate faculty members until they establish primary mentors who will serve as their dissertation directors. Although dissertation directors will often be the ones helping students prepare for job applications, the department also has a placement committee that offers a variety of services to get students ready for the job market.

We are a community of scholars and teachers who work together to guide students through their academic career here at USF. Please consult the [department website](#) first for questions on the program and the [Graduate Studies website](#) for questions on degree requirements and policies. The graduate director or program advisor should be your next stop for advice and regular status checks. Consult the graduate director about departmental and Graduate Studies regulations. Students are required to meet with the graduate director at least once per semester. Graduate students should consult the Graduate Program Specialist to schedule advising appointments. Students should regularly seek advice on academic coursework, examinations, portfolios, and dissertations. Students are also encouraged to seek advice from faculty members. For assistance in seeking a job, students are encouraged to attend workshops sponsored by the Graduate Placement Committee.

## The PhD in English

### The Aim of the Program

The aim of the PhD program in English is to produce teacher-scholars who possess a sound general background in literature or rhetoric and composition, an intensive specialized background in their field of concentration, and experience in reading and scholarly writing. The program aims to provide pedagogical and practical experience so that each student will be well prepared to excel as a professor in the college classroom at every level. Finally, we give advice and create opportunities for students to build upon their analytical and communitive skills so that they can succeed in careers outside the academy if they so wish.

### PhD Admission Requirements

Admission to the English PhD program is dependent on the applicant's previous academic performance, GRE scores, recommendations of former instructors, demonstrated writing ability, the recommendation of the departmental Graduate Admissions Committee, and the approval of the graduate director. All candidates must apply through the Admissions website at <http://www.usf.edu/admissions/graduate/index.aspx>. **GRE scores and transcripts are sent to the Graduate Admissions Office.**

- ⇒ **Deadline:** Admission to the PhD program occurs in the fall only, and the deadline for application is January 1. Earlier applications are encouraged for eligibility in USF scholarship and fellowship programs.
- ⇒ **Criteria:** A successful applicant will normally be expected to possess the following basic qualifications:
  - a competitive Verbal score and a target 4.5 Analytical Writing score on the GRE General Test;
  - an MA in English from an accredited university;
  - and a graduate GPA of at least 3.7.
- ⇒ **Additional Application Materials**  
A complete application should contain the following materials:
  - a two-to-three page statement describing the student's background, purpose for obtaining the degree, and career goals;
  - a critical paper representing the student's work (unless published, this work should be a paper that the student has written for a university graduate English course);
  - and three letters of recommendation, at least two of which should be from professors who have taught the applicant at the graduate level.
- ⇒ **Where to Submit the Additional Materials**

⇒ All supplementary application materials (i.e., statement, writing sample, and letters) may be submitted electronically through the online application or may be submitted directly to the department at the following address:

Director of Graduate Studies  
Department of English  
University of South Florida  
4202 E Fowler Ave, CPR 107  
Tampa, Florida 33620-5550

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### Internship

As part of our effort to expand professional opportunities for our graduate students, we offer a graduate internship, ENG 6946 Internship for MA, MFA, and PhD students in all tracks. Based on the undergraduate internship in Professional and Technical Writing coordinated by Dr. Michael Shuman (<http://mshuman.com/internships/>), this is a semester-long, elective course. The department has created relationships with an impressive list of sponsors in the Tampa Bay area from industry and technology to the arts, law, and education. Internships create valuable opportunities to enhance your job skills to prepare you for non-academic careers.

ENG 6946 Internship consists of supervised work-and-learning experience in professional and technical communication or other related fields under the direction of the Graduate Director and an employee of a participating firm. Ten to 12 hours per week of student time is expected during a standard 16-week semester; 13 to 16 hours per week is expected during a 10-week Summer C semester; 30 to 36 hours per week is expected for Summer A or Summer B semesters, although internships during these shorter terms normally are not available.

**Students must arrange an internship placement prior to the start of the course and are encouraged to meet with the Director of Graduate Studies at least one semester prior to enrolling in the course.**

Enrollment is contingent upon the availability of suitable internship sponsors based on the student's academic and career goals. Students are placed according to specific academic and experiential qualifications, including GPA, courses taken, previous employment history, and interviews with the Director of Graduate Studies, the Coordinator of Professional and Technical Writing Internship Program, and a representative of the prospective internship sponsor. This internship course may not be repeated. Enrollment is by permit only. This class is Pass/Fail (S/U).

The principal goal of ENG 6946 Internship is to transfer graduate-level skills in research, analysis, text production, course management, as well as oral and written communication into job preparedness and practice by providing students on-the-job experience in non-academic work environments.

### Transferring Hours

- Up to twelve (12) hours of graduate coursework taken by the student at USF as a non-degree-seeking student may be applied toward the degree when the student becomes a degree-seeking student or candidate. More than twelve hours will not be applied.
- A student may transfer as many as nine (9) hours of graduate credit in English from another accredited university with approval from the graduate director.

### English Department "I" Grade Policies

While the Office of Graduate Studies sets a minimum for the university, they also authorize departments to set standards fitting their program. Graduate Studies policies can be found at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/catalog.asp>.

- An Incomplete grade indicates incomplete coursework and may be awarded to graduate

students at the discretion of the instructor, only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade.

- To receive a grade of Incomplete, the student and the professor for the course must complete an **Incomplete Grade Contract** (available on the Forms page of the Graduate Studies website: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/>), a copy of which must be placed in the student's file. The contract describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade earned including a zero for the incomplete portion. The instructor must file a copy of the contract in the department before the date grades are due.
- Graduate students cannot take more than one grade of Incomplete at a time.
- Graduate students cannot carry an "I" for more than one term, including summer. For example,
  - An Incomplete incurred in the fall term must be completed no later than the following spring.
  - An Incomplete incurred in the spring term must be completed no later than the following summer.
  - An Incomplete incurred in the summer term must be completed no later than the following fall.
- Failure to conform to this policy will constitute a failure to maintain satisfactory progress toward degree and thus a failure to maintain **good standing**.
- Students who have Incomplete grades (I [Incomplete], IF [Incomplete Failing], IU [Incomplete Unsatisfactory], or MU [Missing Unsatisfactory]) will not be eligible to take the PhD qualifying examination.
- Students who fail to complete the assigned work within one term will be placed on Academic Probation for the semester following the term in which the grades were earned. Standard policies for completing the incomplete courses will apply. Students will be taken off probation when the Incompletes are satisfied; this status changes at the start of the semester following the completion of the Incompletes. Graduate Assistants who have failed to satisfy the Incomplete grades after one semester will lose their USF funding (assistantship and/or fellowship).

### **"Good Standing" – Graduate Studies Policy**

- To be considered a student in good standing, graduate students must
  - maintain an overall minimum grade point average (GPA of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in all courses taken as a graduate student, and
  - maintain an overall minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in all courses taken in each of the student's degree-seeking programs.
- No grade of C- or below will be accepted toward a graduate degree [see additional department policy below]. Students must meet the requirements to be in good standing to graduate. A student will not be certified to graduate if an "IF" or "MF" is on the transcript, unless the student requests to "accept" the "IF" or "MF" grade and the request is signed

and approved by the student, program, college, and Graduate Studies. “IF” or “MF” grades that are “accepted” will never be changed.

- Any student who is not in good standing at the end of a semester shall be considered on probation as of the following semester. The college or program may also place students on probation for other reasons as designated by the college or program. Notification of probation shall be made to the student in writing by the department, with a copy to the College Dean.
- For further information on Academic Probation, consult the [Graduate Catalog](#).

### **“Good Standing” – English Department Policy**

- All students must meet with the graduate director for a progress check before they can take the PhD exam or defend their portfolio.
- All PhD degree requirements must be completed within seven years from the date of admission. Students who exceed the time limitation must request a time limit extension from Graduate Studies.
- Any course in which a student earns a grade below a B- will be disqualified from counting toward the degree requirements, though it will be calculated in the GPA. There is no grade forgiveness at the graduate level. Students should be aware that in the event that they earn a grade lower than a B-, they will need to take additional coursework to complete their degree requirements.
- While students will usually be notified on a periodic basis (around the first third of each semester) if they are in any of these categories, it is entirely the students’ responsibility to keep track of their own GPA and Incompletes by checking their grades on OASIS.
- English graduate students who are not in good standing may be refused graduate assistantships the following semester.
- Students who are not in good standing, according to either the Graduate Studies definition or that of the English Department may be recommended for dismissal from the program.

## Minimum Enrollment, Leave of Absence, and Inactive Status

- All students must enroll in a minimum of six (6) graduate hours in any twelve-month/three-semester time frame to maintain continuous enrollment, including summers.

### Examples:

Fall	Spring	Summer
6	no enrollment	no enrollment
2	2	2
2	4	no enrollment
3	3	no enrollment
no enrollment	5	1

- Doctoral candidates must enroll in a minimum of two (2) dissertation hours each semester (including summer) until the degree is earned.
- Students requiring time off from the program should request an official Leave of Absence, the form for which is located on the Forms page of the Graduate Studies website (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/>). The completed form is then submitted to the graduate program specialist. Time that is taken away from the program when not on an approved Leave of Absence counts toward the student's time limitation.
- Students who neglect to enroll in three consecutive semesters will become inactive and must reapply for admission to the program, subject to the current admission criteria and degree requirements in place.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PHD IN ENGLISH

### Literature Concentration

The following requirements must be met in order to complete the doctoral degree:

- A student must have completed a minimum of thirty (30) hours of coursework beyond the MA degree, exclusive of the following:
  - credits devoted to the foreign language
  - directed research hours (unless approved by the graduate director)
  - doctoral dissertation hours
- A student must have completed a minimum of ninety (90) hours after the BA degree, which may include the following:
  - credits devoted to the foreign language
  - directed research hours
  - doctoral dissertation hours

- **Course Requirements:** Included in these required hours must be the following courses (if not already taken at the Master's level):

ENG 6005 (3) – Scholarly Research and Writing

ENG 6018 (3) – Criticism & Theory I or ENG 6019 (3) – Criticism & Theory II

1 Theory-rich course\*

\*Theory-rich: A course may be designated as theory-rich if at least one-third of the primary texts on the syllabus are theoretical in nature. This is distinguished from a primarily literature course that includes supplementary theoretical and critical readings. For purposes of consistency, the graduate director will review syllabi of courses that have been designated theory-rich by the instructor. Please note: a student can satisfy this requirement by taking the second theory survey (that is, the student would take both ENG 6018 and ENG 6019, at least one of these during the PhD program).

- **Additional Course Requirements:**

ENG 7939 (3) – Doctoral Seminar (see below)

- **Doctoral Seminar Requirement for Literature track Students Admitted to the Program Prior to Fall 2016 (ENG 7939):**  
PhD students are required to take two 6000-level courses in their chosen field(s) of specialty as doctoral seminars. By the second year of PhD coursework, the student should identify the courses to be applied to the seminar requirement. He or she will register for the

regular three-credit course; additionally the student will register for a one-credit seminar hour (ENG 7939) that will be taken in conjunction with the approved course. The student should take this 6000-level course in his or her dissertation area with one of his or her major professors. The student should meet with the instructor as soon as he or she has identified this course as a seminar course, and the two should agree in writing on the details of the work to be done for the seminar hour. The graduate program specialist will manage registration for seminar hours.

While taking the 6000-level course, the seminar student is expected to do extra work in preparation for writing a dissertation. For example, he or she could be responsible for teaching or leading a portion of a class on a particular work and writing a 25-30 page essay based in research on material from the class, which would substitute for one of the writing assignments in the 6000-level course. Satisfaction of this requirement must be approved by the instructor and the graduate director.

- **Doctoral Seminar Requirement for Literature Track Students Admitted to the Program After Fall 2016 (ENG 7939):**

All PhD Literature-Track graduate students are required to take three one-credit doctoral seminar courses.

First Credit: In their first semester, all doctoral students will take one credit of ENG 6939. Over the course of at least four meetings during the semester, graduate students will be introduced to the portfolio, mentored on forming committees, and mentored on designing and implementing a plan to complete the portfolio in a timely manner.

Second Credit: In the second year, either fall or spring, doctoral students must take ENG 6939 with a member of their portfolio committee to complete one of the aspects of the portfolio. For example, one student may work with a professor to complete the syllabus and teaching section. Another student may work with a professor to revise a paper for publication. Another student may work with a professor to write a field statement. While the graduate student may work with the Chair of the committee, they may work with anyone on the committee.

Third Credit: By the second year of PhD coursework, the student should identify a course to take in conjunction with the seminar requirement. He or she will register for the regular three-credit course; additionally the student will register for a one-credit seminar hour (ENG 7939) that will be taken together with the approved course. The student should take this 6000-level course in his or her dissertation area with one of his or her major professors. The student should meet with the instructor as soon as he or she has identified this course as a seminar course, and the two should agree in writing on the details of the work to be done for the seminar hour. The graduate program specialist will manage registration for seminar hours. While taking the 6000-level course, the seminar student is expected to do extra work in preparation for writing a dissertation. For example, he or she could be responsible for teaching or leading a portion of a class on a particular work and writing a 25-30 page essay based in research on material from the class, which would substitute for one of the writing assignments in the 6000-level course. Satisfaction of this requirement must be approved by the instructor and the graduate director.

- **Foreign Language Requirement:** Before taking the PhD qualifying examination or completing the portfolio (Literature-track), a student must fulfill the foreign language requirement. The student may fulfill this requirement by demonstrating a reading knowledge of a foreign language. English may not be used to fulfill this requirement even for those students for whom English is a second language. Students of early English Literature are strongly encouraged to learn Old English in addition to their one foreign language.

Reading knowledge of a foreign language *must* be demonstrated at the PhD level; work from a previous degree will not satisfy the requirement (although it may enable a student to pass a proficiency examination. You don't want anyone coming to you having failed a proficiency exam and saying, "But the Handbook says I 'should' be able to pass from my previous work!"). Reading knowledge may be demonstrated in one of the following ways:

- Place beyond level IV in a language placement test (administered by the World Languages Department)
  - Earning a "B" or better in the special courses Reading for French, Spanish, or German offered for graduate students
  - Earning a "B" or better in two semester courses of an intermediate foreign language (i.e., Spanish III and Spanish IV)
  - Earning a "B" or better in a fourth semester foreign language course or a second semester Latin course
- In light of the reduction of the foreign language requirement (from two to one), students are **strongly encouraged** to pursue a graduate certificate, particularly in Rhetoric and Composition. Work toward a graduate certificate would not need to be completed before the semester when the student takes the PhD exam.

## TIMELINE FOR THE PHD IN ENGLISH For Students admitted prior to Fall 2016

### Literature Concentration

#### PhD in English/Literature (no summer)

##### Four-Year Timeline:

- Semesters I & II – One Critical Theory course, one course + doctoral seminar credit, four additional courses
- Semesters III & IV – Scholarly Writing and Research, one theory-rich course, one course + doctoral seminar credit, language requirement, two additional courses
- Semester V– Exam preparation/ examination
- Semester VI – Dissertation hours
- Semesters VII & VIII – Defense/graduation

#### PhD in English/Literature (with summer)

##### Four-Year Timeline:

- Semesters I & II – One Critical Theory course, one course + doctoral seminar credit, four additional courses
- Summer – Two courses or directed readings, or language requirement
- Semesters III & IV – One theory-rich course, one course + seminar credit, language requirement, Scholarly Writing and Research, two additional courses
- Summer – Exam preparation
- Semester V– Exam preparation, exam
- Semesters VI & VII – Dissertation hours
- Semester VIII – Defense, graduation

These timelines are idealized and true course scheduling will be affected by the availability of required or desired courses during each semester.

## **TIMELINE FOR THE PHD IN ENGLISH**

### **For Students admitted after Fall 2016**

#### **Literature Concentration**

##### **PhD in English/Literature (no summer)**

###### Four-Year Timeline:

- Semesters I & II – Doctoral seminar credit with Graduate Director (semester I), One Critical Theory course, four additional courses (one of which may have a doctoral seminar credit attached)
- Semesters III & IV – Scholarly Writing and Research, one theory-rich course, one course + doctoral seminar credit (if not taken in semesters I or II), language requirement, doctoral seminar credit with member of portfolio committee, one additional course
- Semester V– Portfolio preparation and defense
- Semester VI – Dissertation hours
- Semesters VII & VIII – Defense/graduation

##### **PhD in English/Literature (with summer)**

###### Four-Year Timeline:

- Semesters I & II – Doctoral seminar credit with Graduate Director (semester I), One Critical Theory course, four additional courses (one of which may have a doctoral seminar credit attached)
- Summer – Two courses or directed readings, or language requirement
- Semesters III & IV – Scholarly Writing and Research, one theory-rich course, one course + doctoral seminar credit (if not taken in semesters I or II), language requirement, doctoral seminar credit with member of portfolio committee, one additional course
- Summer – Portfolio preparation
- Semester V– Portfolio preparation, defense
- Semesters VI & VII – Dissertation hours
- Semester VIII – Defense, graduation

These timelines are idealized and true course scheduling will be affected by the availability of required or desired courses during each semester.

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## PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

### Literature Concentration

Students entering the Literature PhD program in the Fall 2016 semester or after, will complete the following Exam Portfolio:

#### The Comprehensive Exam

Students will identify a Major Area (primary focus; may be historical, generic, or theoretical) and a Special Interest (an area of theory, genre study, or topical focus-the special interest should be the broader topic of the dissertation. That is, the dissertation will most likely develop out of the Special Interest Area, developing some particular aspect of that larger area into a focused study. The Special Interest Area may thus be thought of as a preliminary study leading towards a dissertation or as the broader context for the more focused work of the dissertation). There will be three members of the exam committee: one with primary responsibility for the Major Area and overseeing the portfolio, one with primary responsibility for the Special Interest Area, and a third to help supervise various portfolio components. The student will prepare reading lists for each area (60-80 items for the major area and 20-30 items for the special interest area).

The major component of the exam is a portfolio of materials prepared in advance of an oral examination. Students should anticipate spending at least a year reading for and preparing the materials in the portfolio. The materials in the portfolio should represent the student's readiness to move forward into the final stage of his/her academic development, with evidence of the student's ability to conduct research, write publishable scholarly work, and to teach in his/her selected areas of focus.

The portfolio will be circulated to the committee at least three weeks in advance of the two-hour oral examination. Prior to its circulation, the portfolio must be approved by the student's major professor.

Students should anticipate submitting the portfolio in their third year except in special circumstances by petition to the Graduate Director.

#### Portfolio

The student will prepare a written portfolio to be distributed to the exam committee three weeks prior to the oral defense. The portfolio will include

- A. An Introduction to the Portfolio
- B. The Major Area List (60-80 items)
- C. The Special Area List (20-30 items).
- D. An Essay (7000-8500 words). The Essay may represent work within either (A) the Major Area or (B) the Special Area. It should be an argumentative essay in conversation with current, relevant

scholarship, or a comparable alternative (see below).

- E. A Field Statement (A review of scholarly literature related to but broader than a student's intended topic of dissertation research). The Bibliography /Statement should summarize, contextualize, and provide an overview of the scholarship on the Special Interest list.
- F. One Sample Syllabus for undergraduate courses in the student's area(s). The focus should be on the content of the course (the selection of texts and topics) and the way it is organized.
- G. Questions

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### Description of Sections:

#### A. Introduction

The Introduction to the Portfolio is designed to provide a five- to seven-page overview of the materials that follow, showing the relations among them. Because the Introduction represents the candidate's own sense of the interconnections among the various parts of the Portfolio, it does not require prior approval by the faculty members serving on the candidate's committee, although the candidate is free to seek their advice while drafting the Introduction.

#### B. Major Area list

The Major Area list should include 60-80 items. Most of the items should be primary texts; up to 10 of these items may be significant book-length studies of the area.

The major area may be construed historically, as a period of no less than 100 years, or it may be construed in terms of genre or theory. In selecting a major area, the student should think carefully about job marketability. The student should work closely with members of the exam committee to identify a major area and to construct the area list: the final selections should represent an area that one or more members of the committee feel capable of advising.

#### C. Special Interest List

The Special Interest list should include 20-30 items (scholarly essays, chapters, or books) related to a clearly defined special interest area (an area of theory, a genre study, or a topical focus-the special interest should be the broader topic of the dissertation). Though the list may include a few primary texts, the focus of the special area list should be secondary, scholarly texts.

The Special Interest list will form the content of the Field Statement (E). Normally, the special interest area will intersect with or overlap with the major area. The special area should be developed in consultation with exam committee, who should consider issues of job marketability and faculty resources. While the major area list is meant to be fairly broad in scope, the special area list and field statement should lead the student towards a more narrowly defined area of scholarly work that will include the dissertation.

## D. Essay

For this part of the exam portfolio, the student must prepare an article-length manuscript (7000-8500 words) that aspires towards publication in a scholarly journal. The essay will be accompanied by a detailed plan for submission to a journal. This publication plan must include a list of 1-3 journals the essay is suitable for. For each journal listed, include information about the journal's submission policies and acceptance rates, along with a brief (1-4 sentence) explanation of why the journal has been selected as a possible venue for the publication of this essay. While the aim for the essay is publication, for purposes of the exam, the essay need not be publication-ready: the exam committee will evaluate the essay as evidence of the student's ability to produce argumentative writing in conversation with recent and relevant scholarship.

The essay should be focused on the student's area of specialization: it may reflect the larger "major area" or be more narrowly focused on matters pertaining the prospective dissertation. As this essay should, ideally, move towards publication, it is important that the work represent the student's primary areas of scholarship and teaching. Essays on pedagogy are acceptable, though these must engage with relevant scholarship, theory, and research.

This essay can be a revision of a course paper or conference paper or an extension of the student's project from the Scholarly Writing and Research course. It may (or may not) be intended as part of the student's dissertation, though it must be framed as an independent scholarly text capable of standing on its own. As with any serious scholarly work, the article must make a new and significant contribution to the discipline. It must make use of and advance current scholarly discussions in the relevant areas. The work will be assessed on those grounds.

The essay will be assessed using the rubric below. The essay need not be published—or even submitted for publication—in order to “pass.” Indeed, the oral exam may be construed as an opportunity for the student to gather additional suggestions for revising the essay prior to submission.

The essay represents evidence of the student's

- Ability to conduct advanced research
- Ability to write focused, organized, and effective thesis-driven scholarship
- Understanding of practices and expectations of scholarly publication
- Readiness to work on a dissertation
- Readiness to publish scholarly work

With permission, and where appropriate, the student may substitute alternative forms of professional scholarly work, including some portion of a major digital project (that the student can claim primary responsibility for), a major grant proposal (with the student as PI), or other similar research-based professional writing intended for audiences beyond the department. In this case, every member of the exam committee must agree to substitute another form of scholarship for the essay. For the sake of consistency and fairness, final permission for using alternative forms of scholarship to fulfill this portion of the exam rests with the Graduate

Director. If the student while in the program has already had a research article of 7000 words or more accepted by a peer-reviewed journal, that will count as the research essay with the director's approval.

#### E. Field Statement

The Field Statement is a critical review of the scholarly literature that constitutes a field. It is a review that summarizes and synthesizes recent and import scholarship in an area of research. The Field Statement should identify the area of research and explain the important topics and debates within that area. It should situate significant scholarship within the area and suggest directions for future research. The Field Statement should be based on an extensive yet highly selective bibliography. The critical review combines summary with synthesis, assembling a coherent picture of a field of scholarship.

The Field Statement will be based on the Special Interest reading list. The Field Statement should look ahead to the dissertation. While it is not a prospectus, the Field Statement may form the basis of a pre-prospectus discussion during the exam, with committee members helping to shape the student's ideas and plans for the dissertation that will arise from this preliminary research and synthesis work. The Field Statement *may* become a portion of the dissertation prospectus-the review of current scholarship-but there is no expectation that students will have a fully formed idea for a dissertation at the exam stage. Students (and faculty) should consider the Field Statement as a preliminary review of a defined area of scholarship, a review that may-or may not-have potential for further, future development as a dissertation. Indeed, the exam conversation may include discussion of where and how the student might enter into the scholarly conversation with original scholarly contributions (in the shape of a dissertation, digital work, publication, etc).

#### F. Syllabus

The syllabus should exhibit the student's readiness to teach courses in her or his area(s) of expertise. Boilerplate information about ISBN s, attendance, and other course policies may be omitted. The focus should be on the texts to be studied and the topics to be covered. For purposes of the exam, the student should prepare an *augmented* syllabus to include

- 1) A 2-3 page overview of course objectives, including indications of how the course relates to the larger period(s) or area(s) it represents.
- 2) A weekly reading schedule, with
- 3) A 1-2 paragraph sketch of each week's discussion or writing topics.
- 4) A list of required and recommended readings or electronic resources that constitute the student's bibliography forte course.
- 5) A more comprehensive bibliography cross-referenced to the course outline – readings or resources which may be thought of as the basis of the teacher's lectures in the course.
- 6) Major research and writing assignments *may* be included, *if* those assignments speak to the core content and objectives of the course.

In drafting the syllabus, the student should aim to create a document that is coherent yet condensed: it should present in a relatively compact format, a translation of the student's understanding of his or her field(s) into a course. In the Oral Defense, the student should be prepared to (1) explain and defend the course design/ including its general focus as well as the selection and arrangement of texts and topics, (2) discuss how texts and topics can be most effectively taught, and (3) entertain other possibilities for texts and topics. Each syllabus should be *no more* than 10 pages.

The syllabus is included as primary evidence of the student's

- readiness to teach courses in his/her area of concentration
- intimate and complex knowledge of the primary texts on his/her reading list
- knowledge of the issues and debates within the field (as they inform instruction in the field)
- ability to synthesize and connect various texts and issues in the major area

#### G. Questions

With focus on the Major Area list, the student-in consultation with the faculty members of the exam committee will craft a set of 5-7 exam questions. These questions should be constructed to highlight broad and significant issues in the period and should allow for the student to synthesize multiple works from the list. The exam chair will select one of these questions with which to begin the exam. After that question has been satisfactorily answered by the student, the oral exam will continue, with committee members posing questions about any element in the portfolio. The oral examination is not limited to the set of questions the student has prepared.

#### Oral Defense

After the committee has reviewed the written portfolio, the committee and the student will meet for an oral examination. Ordinarily this will take place within three weeks of submitting the portfolio. A final evaluation will not be determined until after the oral. Therefore, the student will be unaware of the results prior to the oral. The oral exam is not a public event, and only the three examiners and student will be present. The graduate director has the right to attend if invited or agreed upon prior to the event.

At the two-hour Oral Defense, committee members may address *any* element of the Portfolio. The discussion is *not* limited to the questions the student has prepared in advance. Questions may be raised about any of the items on either of the two reading lists (A and B), the field statement, the essay, or the syllabus. Any element of the portfolio is fair game, and the committee is free to pursue questions that assess the student's knowledge of the fields (as defined by the portfolio materials) and readiness to produce scholarship and to teach within those fields.

The student's oral examination will be evaluated as part of the overall performance on the exam, according to the criteria of content, critical thinking and communication as indicated on the rubric. A

detailed grading rubric for the PhD exam is available in Appendix A of this handbook.

Upon conclusion of the oral exam, the committee will confer on the evaluation for the components of the exam (essay, field statement, syllabus, and oral exam). The committee should submit to the graduate director the following: 1. a cumulative evaluation for content, critical thinking and writing for all the components of the portfolio, AND 2. an overall assessment of Deficient, Pass, or Pass with Distinction. Students receiving a “Pass with Distinction” will have this commendation placed in their permanent file.

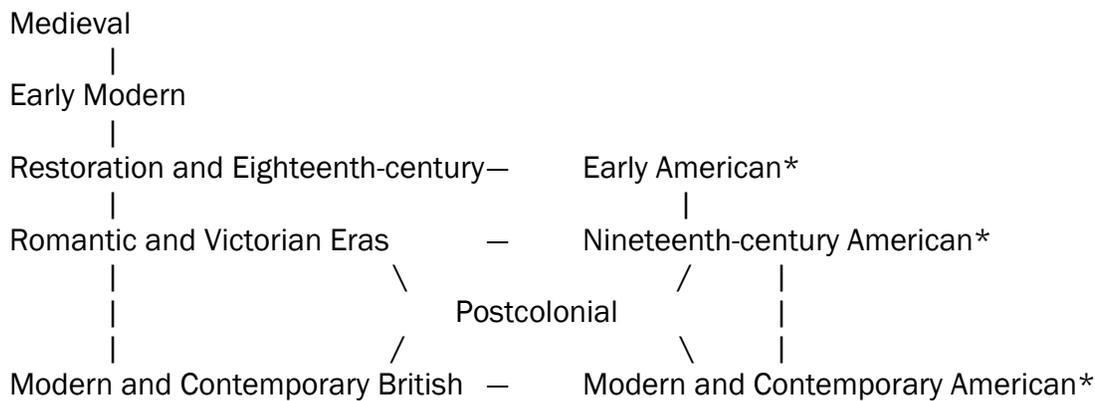
If the committee finds one or more items deficient, the committee must rate the exam Deficient and assign a deadline for revision, usually within the following semester. The student must abide by this requirement or risk academic dismissal. The exam chair determines when the deficient items have been revised sufficiently to Pass. When students have a deficiency that remains beyond the term in which the exam is taken, they will be put on probation 1 for the next term (this includes summer). If a student continues to carry the deficiency beyond the term following the exam, these students will be on probation 2 and a hold will be put on their registration and teaching assistantship. These students **MUST** confer with the graduate director to register and continue as an assistant. Failure to remove deficiencies by the end of the second term following the exam will result in dismissal from the program.

Students on assistantship must pass their PhD exams by the end of the fall semester of their fourth year or they will lose their funding. When students pass their examination (minimum score of Pass), they are ready to submit paperwork to advance into candidacy. Students must have completed all coursework requirements, including the foreign language requirement, prior to being admitted into candidacy

**Students who entered the Literature PhD program in the Fall 2015 semester or before, will complete the following Comprehensive Exam:**

By the end of their first year of coursework, PhD students will identify a major area\* and a minor area. In conference with the graduate director, students will identify three professors who will serve on their examination committee. Students should have readings lists for both areas defined by the end of their second year so that independent reading and exam preparation can be conducted in a timely manner.

\*Major area—this is defined by any two contiguous or contemporaneous historical periods from the following list. Please note: the literary areas are defined by terms rather than dates in recognition that chronological boundaries are often arbitrary and can be determined by the individual needs of the student. Further, the terms designating a literary area are themselves contentious, and it is intended that PhD students consider the implications of nominating their field of choice.



\* American refers to literature of the Americas in its global and hemispheric contexts and cannot be conceived as solely the traditionally defined British-American canons.

A minor area should be determined in consultation with the major professor and with reference to the following list and approval of the graduate director. Choice of a minor field should be made with an eye toward PhD marketability and/or dissertation research:

- Critical Theory (e.g. feminist or queer theory, psychoanalytic, narrative, pedagogical)
- Genre (e.g., poetics, film, drama/theatre, novel)
- Interdisciplinary Study (e.g., linguistics, media studies, religion, women’s studies, popular culture)
- Ethnic Literatures (e.g., African American, Latino/a)
- Rhetoric and Composition
- Any literary field not selected as part of Major

#### **Oral Component:**

After the exam committee has reviewed the written exam, the committee and the student will meet for an oral examination. Ordinarily this will take place within three weeks of completing the written exam. Although the committee will have evaluated the written portion of the exam, the oral is intended to provide an opportunity for the student to amplify, correct or clarify answers from the written exam, and so a final evaluation will not be determined until after the oral. Therefore, the student will be unaware of the results of the written exam prior to the oral.

The oral exam is not a public event, and only the three examiners and student will be present. The graduate director has the right to attend if invited or agreed upon prior to the event. The exam takes one to two hours, and it covers the categories of the written exam, but it is not limited to the questions asked on the written exam. This oral component also gives the student and examiners an opportunity to review material not covered in the written answers.

The students’ oral examinations will be evaluated as part of the overall performance on the exam, according to the criteria of content, critical thinking and communication as indicated on the rubric for the oral exam. A detailed grading rubric for the PhD exam is available in Appendix A of this handbook.

Upon conclusion of the oral exam, the committee will confer on the evaluation for the three components of the exam (days 1, 2, 3). The committee should submit to the graduate director the following:

1. a cumulative evaluation for content, critical thinking and writing with comments for each day of the written exam, AND
2. an overall assessment of fail, pass minus (Pass with Deficiency), pass, and pass plus (Pass with Distinction).

Students receiving a “Pass with Distinction” will have this commendation placed in their permanent file. In the case of deficiencies, the exam committee must assign a deadline for additional work, usually within the following semester, and the student must abide by this requirement or risk academic dismissal. When students have a deficiency that remains beyond the term in which the exam is taken, they will be put on probation 1 for the next term (this includes summer). If a student continues to carry the deficiency beyond the term following the exam, these students will be on probation 2 and a hold will be put on their registration and teaching assistantship. These students MUST confer with the graduate director to register and continue as an assistant. Failure to remove deficiencies by the end of the second term following the exam will result in dismissal from the program.

An exam fails if there are deficiencies in all three areas. Students who fail the exam may retake the exam one time within approved time limits. Students who fail the exam and remain in the program will be on probation for the term following the exam (including summer). If students do not pass the exam in the term following the exam, they will be put on probation 2 and a hold will be put on their registration and teaching assistantship. These students MUST confer with the graduate director to register and continue as an assistant. Failure to pass the exam by the end of the second term following the exam will result in dismissal from the program. Students on assistantship must take their PhD exams by the end of their third year or they will lose their funding.

When students pass their examination (minimum score of Pass), they are ready to submit paperwork to advance into candidacy.

## PREPARING FOR THE PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION IN LITERATURE

Students entering the PhD program should have an idea of what areas they want to develop as an expertise. Students should begin to think of this expertise in terms of the three areas in which they will be examined prior to entering candidacy. Students should select courses for their degree that develop knowledge in the areas chosen for the qualifying examination. Not only does coursework help prepare students for the examination, but it also gives students a chance to develop relationships with the faculty in their chosen areas who may serve on their examination committees. Thus, preparation for the qualifying exam should begin when a student enters the PhD program.

A PhD student must take at least 30 hours of coursework beyond the MA, not including the language requirement. A full course load is considered three courses or nine credits in fall and spring, and two courses or six credits in summer. Without summer coursework, a student should complete coursework by the end of his or her second year in the program. By the start of the student's second year, he or she should have a meeting with the graduate director to finalize the areas for the exam and to determine who will serve on the examination committee. Students will be discouraged from choosing an examination area in which they have had no coursework. Students should meet with the faculty who will serve on their committee to determine an adequate reading list for each area. Students are expected to generate the list in consultation with the faculty, and students will be responsible for reading the works on their own. The lists should be established by the end of the second year of coursework, and students will have the summer months to read.

During the first term of the third year, a student may elect to take directed readings with the members of his or her examination committee. A student is allowed to take pass/fail directed readings in preparation for the exam. These directed readings require a contract, which can be downloaded from the English department website. Although the details of the readings need to be worked out between the individual students and professors, it is recommended that students have their reading lists fully complete prior to the start of the term and that they establish some form of regular communication regarding the progress of readings throughout the semester. For students who require more substantial direction in their preparation, please see suggested guidelines for intensive study for the qualifying exam, available on [Canvas](#).

- If a student elects not to take directed readings with the members of his or her examination committee, it is recommended that the student meet with the faculty member who is the chair of the committee at the beginning of the term of the examination. The student should meet all the members of the examination committee at least once well in advance of the examination date to guarantee that there will be no misunderstanding concerning the specific material for which the student is responsible, or the depth of knowledge that will be expected by the examiners. This is not to suggest that faculty will tell the students what is on the exam, nor is it to put the responsibility for preparation on the faculty member. It is the student's responsibility to be conversant in the field in which he or she is examined, and the parameters of the examination are suggested by the reading list. Some examples of previous examination questions are available on [Canvas](#).

## PREPARING FOR THE PHD QUALIFYING PORTFOLIO IN LITERATURE

Students should begin preparing for their portfolio as soon as they enter the program. In the first semester of their first year, they will take a one credit seminar course with the graduate director (and other first year PhD students) to introduce them to the program, explain the portfolio and its components and begin helping them to think about particular professors to work with during their time at USF.

Students entering the PhD program should have an idea of what areas they want to develop as an expertise. Students should select courses for their degree that develop knowledge in the areas chosen for the portfolio. Not only does coursework help prepare students for the portfolio, but it also gives students a chance to develop relationships with the faculty in their chosen areas who may serve on their portfolio committees.

A PhD student must take at least 30 hours of coursework beyond the MA, not including the language requirement. A full course load is considered three courses or nine credits in fall and spring, and two courses or six credits in summer. Without summer coursework, a student should complete coursework by the end of his or her second year in the program. By the start of the student's second year, he or she should have a meeting with the graduate director to determine who will serve on the portfolio committee. Students should meet with the faculty who will serve on their committee to determine an adequate reading list for each area and to begin to strategize on how best to complete all the tasks of the portfolio (ideally this should be done at the end of the first year). Students are expected to generate the list in consultation with the faculty, and students will be responsible for reading the works on their own. While faculty will guide the student on the different aspects of the portfolio, students should take charge of their own learning process and make sure they are on track.

During the first term of the third year, a student may elect to take directed readings with the members of his or her portfolio committee. A student is allowed to take pass/fail directed readings. These directed readings require a contract, which can be downloaded from the English department website. Although the details of the readings need to be worked out between the individual students and professors, it is recommended that students have their reading lists fully complete prior to the start of the term and that they establish some form of regular communication regarding the progress of readings throughout the semester.

- If a student elects not to take directed readings with the members of his or her examination committee, it is recommended that the student meet with the faculty member who is the chair of the committee at the beginning of the term of the portfolio defense. The student should meet all the members of the portfolio committee well in advance of the defense to guarantee that there will be no misunderstanding concerning the specific material for which the student is responsible, or the depth of knowledge that will be expected by the examiners.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PHD IN ENGLISH

### Rhetoric and Composition Concentration

The following requirements must be met in order to complete the doctoral degree:

- A student must have completed a minimum of thirty (30) hours of course work beyond the MA degree, exclusive of the following:
  - credits devoted to the foreign language
  - directed research hours (unless approved by the graduate director)
  - doctoral dissertation hours
  
- A student must have completed a minimum of ninety (90) hours after the BA degree, which may include the following:
  - credits devoted to the foreign language
  - directed research hours
  - doctoral dissertation hours
  
- **Core Requirements:** Included in these required hours must be the following courses (if not already taken at the Master's level):
  - ENC 6336 (3) – Studies in the History of Rhetoric
  - ENC 6421 (3) – Studies in Rhetoric and Technology
  - ENC 6700 (3) – Studies in Composition Theory
  - ENC 6720 (3) – Studies in Composition Research
  - ENG 6005 (3) – Scholarly Research and Writing
  
- **Additional Course Requirements:**
  - ENG 7939 (2) – Doctoral Seminar (must be taken twice in conjunction with a course)
  
- **Doctoral Seminar Requirement (ENG 7939):**

PhD students are required to take two 6000-level courses in their chosen field(s) of specialty as doctoral seminars. By the second year of PhD coursework, the student should identify the courses to be applied to the seminar requirement. He or she will register for the regular three-credit course; additionally the student will register for a one-credit seminar hour (ENG 7939) that will be taken in conjunction with the approved course. The student should take this 6000-level course in his or her dissertation area with one of his or her major professors. The student should meet with the instructor as soon as he or she has identified this course as a seminar course, and the two should agree in writing on the details of the work to be done for the seminar hour. The graduate program specialist will manage registration for seminar hours.

While taking the 6000-level course, the seminar student is expected to do extra work in preparation for writing a dissertation. For example, he or she could be responsible for teaching or leading a portion of a class on a particular work and writing a 25-30 page essay based in research on material from the class, which would substitute for one of the writing

assignments in the 6000-level course. Satisfaction of this requirement must be approved by the instructor and the graduate director.

- **Foreign Language Requirement:** Before taking the PhD qualifying examination, a student must fulfill the foreign language requirement. The student may fulfill this requirement by demonstrating a reading knowledge of a foreign language. English may not be used to fulfill this requirement even for those students for whom English is a second language. Students of early English Literature are strongly encouraged to learn Old English in addition to their one foreign language.

Reading knowledge of a foreign language *must* be demonstrated at the PhD level; work from a previous degree will not satisfy the requirement (although it may enable a student to pass a proficiency examination You don't want anyone coming to you having failed a proficiency exam and saying, "But the Handbook says I 'should' be able to pass from my previous work!"). Reading knowledge may be demonstrated in one of the following ways:

- Place beyond level IV in a language placement test (administered by the World Languages Department)
- Earning a "B" or better in the special courses Reading for French, Spanish, or German offered for graduate students
- Earning a "B" or better in two semester courses of an intermediate foreign language (i.e., Spanish III and Spanish IV)
- Earning a "B" or better in a fourth semester foreign language course or a second semester Latin course

In light of the reduction of the foreign language requirement (from two to one), students are **strongly encouraged** to pursue a graduate certificate, particularly in Rhetoric and Composition. Work toward a graduate certificate would not need to be completed before the semester when the student takes the PhD exam.

## TIMELINE FOR THE PHD IN ENGLISH

### Rhetoric & Composition Concentration

#### PhD in English/ Rhetoric & Composition (no summer)

##### Four-Year Timeline:

- Semesters I & II – Three required courses, one course + seminar credit, two additional courses
- Semesters III & IV – Scholarly Writing and Research, one course + seminar credit, language requirement, three additional courses
- Semester V– Exam preparation/examination
- Semester VI – Dissertation hours
- Semesters VII – Dissertation hours
- Semester VIII – Defense, graduation.

#### PhD in English/ Rhetoric & Composition (with summer)

##### Four-Year Timeline:

- Semesters I & II – Three required courses, one course + seminar credit, two additional courses
- Summer – Two courses
- Semesters III & IV – Scholarly Writing and Research, one course + seminar credit, language requirement, three additional courses
- Summer – Exam preparation
- Semester V– Exam preparation, exam
- Semesters VI & VII – Dissertation hours
- Semester VIII – Defense, graduation

These timelines are idealized and true course scheduling will be affected by the availability of required or desired courses during each semester.

## PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

### Rhetoric and Composition Concentration

After completing 30 hours of coursework, the language requirement, and all incomplete grades, a student may take the PhD examination. The standardized exam will be offered twice each academic year for all eligible students and consists of the following:

**Part I. A 24-hour take-home exam** divided into four written sections (1500 words a piece), the content of which corresponds to the four core courses: Composition Theory, Research Methods, Rhetoric and Technology, and Historical Rhetorics. Questions will be picked up in the English office at 9:00am on the day of the exam. Questions will be digitally submitted to the exam chair by 9:00am on the following day for SafeAssign submission in Canvas.

#### Evaluating Part I:

All exams will be assessed by a rotating committee of at least three Rhetoric and Composition faculty representing different areas of disciplinary expertise. Every exam question will be graded by each member of the committee, although emphasis will be placed upon readers' areas of specialization when determining the final score for each question. A detailed grading rubric for the PhD exam is available in Appendix A of this handbook.

*Any answer exceeding 1500 words will receive a "fail" evaluation and count as a deficiency on the exam.* Students' names will be removed from both Parts I and II of the exam so that, as much as possible, the faculty evaluating the exams will not know the identity of individual students. Each of the four questions will be evaluated by two faculty with expertise in the area and by the program director. Typically, this means that the faculty member who last taught the core course that corresponds to the exam area, e.g., History of Rhetoric, will evaluate the history question along with another faculty member with specialized expertise in history of rhetoric and the program director. A detailed grading rubric for the PhD exam is available in Appendix A of this handbook.

A student who receives a Pass Minus or Fail grade on two or more of the four questions on Part I of the exam will have to retake the whole exam the following semester when a new exam is provided to the students. *If the student receives a Pass Minus or a Fail on two or more of the four questions a second time, the student will be dropped from the program.* When a student is taking Part I of the exam for the second time, the Graduate Director will be part of the evaluation process.

A student receiving a Pass Minus or a Fail on one of the four questions in Part I of the exam will be required to make up the deficiency according to the recommendations of the committee. The exam committee must assign a deadline for additional work, usually within the following semester, and the student must abide by this requirement or risk academic dismissal. When a student has a deficiency that remains beyond the term in which the exam is taken, the student will be placed on Probation 1 for the next term (this includes summer). If a student continues to carry the deficiency beyond the term following the exam, the student will be placed on Probation 2, and a hold will be put on their registration and graduate assistantship. These students **MUST** confer with the Graduate Director to register and continue as a graduate assistant. *Failure to remove deficiencies by the end of the second term following the exam will result in dismissal from the program.*

**Part II. A manuscript suitable for publication** in a specified scholarly journal (7,000-8,500 words) to be turned in at the same time as the 24-hour exam. The topic of the manuscript should be based on the student's specialization in Rhetoric and Composition. This manuscript can be a revision of a course paper or conference paper or an extension of their project from the Scholarly Writing and Research class. It must contribute to the discipline by advancing scholarly discussions in Rhetoric and Composition studies and offering new knowledge.

Students may waive Part II of the exam if they have already published a research article of 7000 or more words in one of the disciplinary journals included on the list of 29 appropriate journals compiled by the rhetoric and composition faculty or an equivalent scholarly, peer-reviewed journal with a distinguished editorial board. Rhetoric and Composition faculty will work with PhD students to determine appropriate venues for their manuscripts. The publication must be on a topic in rhetoric or composition, and it must be a research article reporting original research rather than a review essay, a commentary, or any other genre.

Journals acceptable for the waiver of the qualifying exam Part II:

The journals listed here are the only journals approved for this waiver.

<i>College Composition and Communication</i>	<i>Kairos</i>
<i>College English</i>	<i>Philosophy and Rhetoric</i>
<i>Composition Studies</i>	<i>PreText</i>
<i>Computers and Composition</i>	<i>Programatic Perspectives</i>
<i>Computers and Composition online</i>	<i>Quarterly Journal of Speech</i>
<i>Community Literacy Journal</i>	<i>Research in the Teaching of English</i>
<i>Enculturation</i>	<i>Rhetoric Review</i>
<i>IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication</i>	<i>Rhetorica</i>
<i>JAC; A Journal of Composition Theory</i>	<i>Rhetoric Society Quarterly</i>
<i>Journal of Basic Writing</i>	<i>Technical Communication</i>
<i>Journal of Business and Technical Communication</i>	<i>Technical Communication Quarterly</i>
<i>Journal of Business Communication</i>	<i>Teaching English in the Two-Year College</i>
<i>Journal of Literacy and Technology</i>	<i>Western States Speech Journal</i>
	<i>Writing Center Journal</i>
	<i>Written Communication</i>

### **Dissertation**

A student may not register for dissertation hours until officially admitted to candidacy. In order to be admitted, the student must have successfully completed the following steps: finished all class work, fulfilled language requirements, passed the qualifying exam, and established a PhD dissertation committee that has been approved by the department, College, and Graduate Studies. This committee should consist of one major professor and three additional members. The graduate student's first obligation once admitted to candidacy will be preparing a prospectus.

## PHD DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

### Admission to Candidacy

As soon as the student has successfully completed the PhD qualifying exam or portfolio, the student is eligible to be admitted to doctoral candidacy. But admission is not granted until the student's dissertation committee (Graduate Student Supervisory Committee) has been established and approved by the graduate director, the Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Graduate Studies by completing the [Dissertation Committee Form](#) (the dissertation committee can also be formed prior to taking the qualifying exam or completing the portfolio). It is the student's responsibility to meet the deadline for admission to doctoral candidacy, which is established by Graduate Studies for each semester. The candidacy processing schedule is printed on the admission to candidacy form, which is available on the [Forms](#) page of the Graduate Studies website. A student cannot enroll in dissertation hours until officially admitted to doctoral candidacy.

### Initiating the Formation of the Dissertation Committee

The student should consult with the graduate director in his or her second year to select and organize the dissertation committee. Before meeting with the graduate director for this purpose, the student must have selected a probable topic for the dissertation.

### The Committee Itself

University policy dictates that a dissertation committee consist of a director and three additional readers. University policy also dictates that the director must be credentialed to direct a dissertation, a status that the graduate director of each department establishes in consultation with the graduate committee or graduate faculty. For this reason it is essential for the student to consult with the graduate director after deciding on a topic and before contacting any professors who might be willing to direct such work—the graduate director or Program Coordinator knows which faculty are credentialed to be on the committee or to be a director, as well as which faculty are best qualified in the student's area of interest. As many as two members of the committee may be from other departments or universities, but if the major professor or director is from another department or university, he or she must be a co-major professor with a USF professor. The dissertation director must be a specialist in the area being discussed in the dissertation.

### How the Committee Functions

The director will have primary responsibility for working with the student. The committee members will be expected to provide further assurance that the standards of competency expected in the particular area are being met. In case a dissertation topic covers two normally discrete areas, then a reader knowledgeable in the secondary area of investigation must be appointed to the committee. The graduate director must approve the selection of any dissertation committee members from outside the department or the university when such a selection is justified by the nature of the topic. The other committee members may be either specialists in the area or generalists whose primary task is to read the dissertation for its general effectiveness, logical coherence, scholarly and critical methodology, and relation of content to style, etc. Again, once the committee has been satisfactorily established, it must be approved by the College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean's office, whereupon the student is officially admitted to candidacy and may begin taking dissertation hours in the next semester.

## THE DISSERTATION PROCEDURE

While many of the guidelines for writing a dissertation are flexible because each dissertation is a unique creation with its own requisites and criteria, there are a number of considerations and procedures that the student must understand:

- Normally, the dissertation will be written in one of the student's areas of specialization—one of the areas of the qualifying examination or portfolio.
- The student will usually begin writing the prospectus for the dissertation after the director and committee are chosen.
- The director should review the prospectus before it is sent to the rest of the committee.
- All members of the Dissertation Committee must review and approve the prospectus of the dissertation, usually within one year of entering candidacy. A prospectus approval form and a sample prospectus are available on [Canvas](#). The approved prospectus will be placed in the student's file.
- In order to be eligible for a fifth year of funding, PhD candidates must have their prospectus approved by the committee by the end of their fourth year.
- The director should review the first chapter before it is sent to the committee. All members must read and approve the first chapter before the student continues with the dissertation. Here, too, the objective is to protect the student against any lack of communication and agreement among the committee members.
- The director should review each draft of the dissertation.
- The rest of the committee might wish to see the last or penultimate chapter before being presented with the final draft, although the entire committee need not approve every draft of every chapter of the dissertation.
- The student should not submit drafts to committee members, but to the dissertation director who will then distribute them to the rest of the committee.
- Members of the dissertation committee should be allowed four weeks to read the final draft of the dissertation. It is the job of the dissertation director to see that the members complete this review in a timely fashion.
- If serious disagreement arises among members of the dissertation committee or between the student and members of the committee concerning the suitability of the student's effort, and if the committee seems incapable of resolving the differences, the dissertation director or the student may request that the graduate director mediate the dispute and provide some reasonable solution to the dilemma.
- In the case of differences, the student and the committee must abide by the advice and decision of the graduate director.
- If only one member finds the student's work unacceptable while the other members find it acceptable, the student may petition the graduate director to replace the dissenting member.
- Again, the final decision will rest with the graduate director. But if the graduate director can

find no alternative solution, he or she will have the authority to dissolve the dissertation committee and appoint a new one.

- After the student has completed an approved draft of the dissertation, the dissertation director should schedule a defense. It is the student's responsibility to obtain signatures on and submit the necessary defense request form by the established deadline, posted each semester at <http://english.usf.edu/graduate/currentstudents/deadlines/>.
- There will normally be no defenses during the summer term.
- The defense will be chaired by an associate professor or higher from outside the department who will serve as examination chair.
- The examination chair will be appointed by the dissertation director in consultation with the graduate director.
- The responsibility of the examination chair is to preside over all functions, including introducing the candidate and describing the questioning procedures.
- The meeting for the dissertation defense must include all members of the committee. Arrangements can be made for a maximum of one member who is not physically able to be present to participate via phone or video.
- Other faculty members and students are also encouraged to attend.
- The examination period should begin with a summary presentation by the candidate of the thesis and methodology of the dissertation.
- Following this presentation, the examination chair should open the floor to questions from the members of the dissertation committee in rotation, including the examination chair.
- Normally, each examiner should attempt to limit questioning on this initial round. If desired, a short break may be taken prior to the next round.
- Finally, questions from other attending faculty and students should be requested. The scope of this questioning will also be monitored by the examination chair.
- Following completion of these proceedings, the student and all spectators will be asked to leave the examination room.
- The examination chair will preside over the deliberations of the committee.
- The dissertation director will record the SACS data for the dissertation and defense using the rubric found in Appendix B of this handbook. Three assessments will be submitted to the graduate director for department records only. The committee will determine an overall assessment of the dissertation as Pass Plus, Pass, or Pass Minus, to be related to the candidate.
- The examination chair has the responsibility of informing the candidate of the final grade.
- The examination chair will then convey the decision of the committee to the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences on the Successful Defense form, which is to be submitted to the graduate program specialist.

## Writing the Dissertation

### The Prospectus

The dissertation prospectus should reflect considerable preliminary investigation of the topic and should be a detailed but not restrictive description that defines, outlines, and justifies the research objectives. To accomplish these objectives, the prospectus should include the following:

- **Definition of Purpose:** a clear, concise discussion of the purpose of the research
- **Review of the Critical Literature:** an evaluative survey of the pertinent, significant critical literature, with a clear statement concerning the contribution of the dissertation to the study of the proposed topic
- **Description of Methodology:** a description of the tentative plan for organizing the dissertation, together with a specification of the methodology to be used
- **Notes and Selected Bibliography:** endnotes (if necessary) referring to the text of the dissertation proposal and a selected list of important primary and secondary sources.

### The Dissertation Itself

- The dissertation should be at least 37,500 words long, exclusive of bibliography.
- The review of relevant criticism included in the prospectus *need not be included in the dissertation* unless it is particularly germane to the subject of the dissertation.
- Incorporating the literature review into the prospectus rather than into the dissertation is designed to facilitate the publication of the dissertation as a scholarly work.
- Students must be proficient in the main language or languages of primary texts central to their dissertations. Standard translations are acceptable for supporting and secondary texts. Exceptions to this rule can only be made by the dissertation director (major professor) in conjunction with the Graduate Director.

### The Dissertation Defense

When the dissertation committee has inspected the final draft of the dissertation and found it suitable for presentation, the committee will complete a form requesting the scheduling and announcement of the oral defense of the dissertation:

- The scheduling of the defense must occur at least seven weeks before the end of the term, or by the deadline established each semester on the [Semester Deadlines](#) page of the department website.
- The date of the defense itself must be at least five weeks before the end of the term.
- It is the student's responsibility to fill out and obtain signatures on the Dissertation Defense Request form, which must be submitted to the graduate program specialist at least three weeks prior to the defense. The form is available on the [Forms](#) page of the department website.

## GRADUATION PROCEDURES

At the start of the graduating term, students must complete the following steps:

- Within the first four weeks of the student's graduating term, the student must complete and submit a Graduate Degree Graduation Application. This form is available on the Registrar's website at <http://www.registrar.usf.edu/> (click on Registrar's Office Forms on the right).
- Also within the first four weeks of the student's graduating term, the student must attend an ETD (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation) workshop with Graduate Studies. The workshop may be attended in person or online. Information on workshops is available on the Graduate Studies' online ETD Resource Center at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD>.
- Students should reference the [Doctoral Dissertation Process Checklist](#) available on the Graduate Studies website.
- Students who plan to attend commencement must register for commencement online at <http://usfweb2.usf.edu/commencement/>. Students who do not submit a graduation application within the first four weeks of the semester are not eligible to participate in commencement ceremonies. Likewise, students who do submit the graduation application but do not defend the dissertation and submit a final manuscript are not eligible to participate in commencement ceremonies.

### Graduation Checklist

- Form dissertation committee
- Submit approved prospectus for filing
- Write dissertation
- Attend ETD workshop semester prior to graduation
- Apply for graduation
- Register for commencement
- Submit final draft to director
- Request oral defense
- Orally defend dissertation
- Submit final dissertation to Graduate Studies

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial Assistance in the form of scholarships, fellowships, and grants is available through Graduate Studies (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/>), the College of Arts and Sciences (<http://www.cas.usf.edu>), the Office of Financial Aid (<http://usfweb2.usf.edu/finaid/>), and external sources. It is wise to check all sources to be fully aware of the programs for which you may qualify.

### Graduate Assistantships

The Department of English annually awards a number of Graduate Assistantships. GAs usually teach between two and four sections (normally of First-Year Composition) per year. GAs must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA in all courses they take throughout their tenure in the program. Students with fewer than 18 credit-hours in English may hold teaching assignments but cannot be the instructors of record. Such students will further be classified as Graduate Teaching Assistants (class code 9550) and be assigned a mentor. Qualified Graduate Assistants will receive a tuition payment in addition to a stipend. To be eligible to teach and receive a tuition payment, which covers tuition (but not mandatory fees), a student must hold *at least* a .25 FTE (10 hours per week/one course per semester) appointment or higher, which is equivalent to teaching one course, and must register for nine credit-hours of coursework in the fall and spring terms. In order to qualify for a GA assignment in the summer, a student must be registered for six hours of course work during the summer terms (summer assignments are not guaranteed and should not be counted on). Students in their final semester of enrollment may register for only two credit-hours and still keep eligibility for the assistantship. Students in good standing may teach and receive the tuition payment for a maximum of two years while working toward the MA degree, three years while working toward the MFA, and four years while working toward the PhD. (Doctoral students who have achieved candidacy status may apply for a fifth year of funding, which is contingent upon evidence of satisfactory progress towards degree.) To be eligible for health insurance benefits, a student must hold *at least* a .25 FTE (10 hours per week) appointment. More information on graduate student health insurance is available at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/health-insurance.php>.

### Graduate Assistant Requirements

Graduate Assistants will also be required to attend a two-week training and orientation, conducted by the Director of Composition and the Assistant Director of Composition, prior to the start of the fall semester.

All Graduate Assistants will be required to take **ENC 6745**, Practice in Teaching Composition, during their first semester of employment. This course counts as elective credit toward the 33 required credits for the MA degree.

Applicants may express interest in an assistantship in their personal statement. A detailed description of the First Year Composition program is available at [hosted.usf.edu/FYC/](http://hosted.usf.edu/FYC/).

## APPENDIX A

### PhD Literature Portfolio Rubric – beginning Fall 2016

PhD Portfolio Rubric			
	Content	Critical Thinking	Writing
<b>Pass Plus</b>	<p>Essay offers unique and scholarly argumentative writing in conversation with recent and relevant scholarship and is ready to submit to a journal. The Field Statement is comprehensive and demonstrates depth of knowledge in field, appropriate contexts, solid knowledge of history, genre, author and/or theory. The Syllabus demonstrates a professional readiness to teach courses in her/his area of expertise. In the Oral Defense, answers all questions with a thorough knowledge of primary and secondary materials.</p>	<p>Essay demonstrates strong reason and logical thinking in a clear argument based in accurate knowledge of primary and secondary material. The Field Statement demonstrates insight into the field and creates logical and clear connections amongst materials. The Syllabus shows an ability to use texts and assignments to create effective inclusive learning environments. In the Oral Defense, answers all questions correctly and offers plausible, well defended interpretations that draw on appropriate research to support claims and references a range of critical opinion.</p>	<p>All areas of the portfolio are engagingly, concisely written with few, if any, grammatical or stylistic problems. Voice is appropriate for audience. Style is consistent throughout each section.</p>
<b>Pass</b>	<p>Essay offers scholarly argumentative writing in conversation with recent and relevant scholarship, but more work needs to be done to be publishable. The Field Statement is sufficiently comprehensive and demonstrates depth of knowledge in field; includes some appropriate contexts, solid knowledge of history, genre, author and/or theory. The Syllabus demonstrates a readiness to teach courses in her/his area of expertise. In the Oral Defense, answers all questions well with a</p>	<p>Essay demonstrates a clear argument based in accurate knowledge of primary and secondary material. The Field Statement demonstrates insight into the field but the depth and/or coverage of knowledge may be lacking in some parts. The Syllabus shows an ability to use texts and assignments to create inclusive learning environments. In the Oral Defense, answers all questions well and offers a plausible interpretations that draw on appropriate</p>	<p>Concisely and correctly written with only minor grammatical or stylistic problems. Voice appropriate for audience. Some inconsistency in style.</p>

	knowledge of primary and secondary materials.	research but may not fully engage its claims.	
<b>Deficient</b>	Essay offers a weak argument with numerous errors and inconsistencies and/or offers a consistent argument that fails to take significant recent and relevant scholarship into account. The Field Statement demonstrates lack of knowledge of appropriate contexts, history, genre, author, and/or theory. The Syllabus lacks coherence or does not demonstrate professional readiness to teach courses in her/his area of expertise but lack coherence. In the Oral Defense, answers questions but makes multiple significant errors in knowledge of primary and secondary materials.	Essay lacks an argument, clarity, or substantiation in primary and secondary material. The Field Statement does not demonstrate insight into the field or fails to make connection amongst materials. The Syllabus lacks critical insight. In the Oral Defense, makes errors of interpretation or fails to connect arguments with examples or support.	Writing is inconsistent, with some major grammatical or stylistic problems; voice may be inappropriate for audience.

### PhD Literature Exam Rubric – prior to Fall 2016

PhD Exam Rubric			
	Primary Content	Critical Thinking (competence in interpreting and evaluating primary and theoretical texts in three areas)	Writing
<b>Pass Plus</b>	Answers questions correctly, with sufficient and apt support in primary materials, demonstrates depth of knowledge in field, appropriate contexts, solid knowledge of history, genre, author and/or theory; demonstrates facility with related information.	Demonstrates reason and logical thinking in a clear argument based in accurate knowledge of primary material. Demonstrates insight into the question and the materials and offers a plausible, well defended interpretation. Draws on appropriate research to support claims and references a range of critical opinion.	Engagingly, concisely written with few, if any, grammatical or stylistic problems. Voice is appropriate for audience. Style is consistent throughout.
<b>Pass</b>	Answers questions correctly with sufficient support in primary materials,	Establishes a clear argument based in accurate knowledge of primary	Concisely and correctly written with only minor grammatical or stylistic

	demonstrates good knowledge of the field, but with fewer references; includes some appropriate context, knowledge of history, genre, author or theory.	material. Demonstrates insight into question, but argument relies on some generalities or unsubstantiated claims. Refers to appropriate research to establish context but without fully engaging its claims.	problems. Voice appropriate for audience. Some inconsistency in style.
<b>Pass Minus</b>	Answers questions, but makes some errors in knowledge of primary materials; minimal references to context, history, genre, author or theory; or references with some inaccuracy.	Provides a plausible argument that lacks clarity or substantiation in primary material. Demonstrates some insight into the question, but either makes errors of interpretation or fails to connect argument to examples or support.	Writing is inconsistent, with some major grammatical or stylistic problems; voice may be inappropriate for audience.
<b>Fail</b>	Does not address question or shows lack of knowledge of the subject; many errors in references to primary materials, context, history, genre, author or theory.	Does not establish an argument; answer lacks interpretation and offers minimal summary of material.	Writing shows consistent problems in grammar, style, and voice.

## APPENDIX B

### PhD Rhetoric and Composition Exam Rubric: Part I

PhD R/C Exam Rubric Part I: A 24-hour take-home exam			
	Primary Content	Critical Thinking	Writing
<b>Pass Plus</b>	Answers question correctly; demonstrates broad and deep knowledge of area; demonstrates mature and insightful understanding of materials discussed; situates answer in relevant history and theory; incorporates a number of appropriate sources,	Demonstrates mature insight into the question and the materials; provides a judicious assessment of theories, potential controversies or alternate positions; offers a plausible, well-defended interpretation; draws on appropriate research to support argumentative claims; references a range of critical opinion.	Organizes a great deal of material concisely and clearly; engagingly written without grammatical or stylistic problems; voice is appropriate for audience; style is consistent throughout.
<b>Pass</b>	Answers questions correctly; demonstrates good knowledge of the area; demonstrates a working understanding of material discussed; includes some appropriate historical and theoretical context; provides only adequate support in the scholarship, and with fewer references.	Understands the question and materials; offers some assessment of theories and acknowledges controversy or alternate positions; Interpretation is not wrong and depends on unexamined generalities; refers to appropriate research to establish context but without fully engaging its claims.	Concise and organized though not as powerfully organized as pass plus; with only minor grammatical or stylistic problems; voice appropriate for audience; some inconsistency in style.
<b>Pass Minus</b>	Answers questions, but makes some errors in knowledge of primary materials; demonstrates uneven or inadequate knowledge of the area; demonstrates uneven or poor understanding of materials discussed; little reference to historical or theoretical context; relatively few or erratic references to the	Demonstrates little insight into the question and material; offers reductive interpretation that does not engage controversy or alternate opinions where they exist; makes errors of interpretation or fails to connect argument to examples or support. Provides a plausible argument but lacks adequate support in the	Writing is inconsistent, with some substantial organizational, grammatical or stylistic problems; voice may be inappropriate for audience.

	scholarship.	scholarship; does not engage critical opinion.	
<b>Fail</b>	Does not address question or shows lack of knowledge of the subject; incorrectly interprets materials discussed; Makes incorrect claims; makes few references to specific scholarship; ignores historical and theoretical context.	Misunderstands or fails to address the question; lacks a clear interpretation or offers a wrong interpretation of the material; oversimplifies the material; ignores controversy or differences on position; does not establish an argument; lacks adequate references to published scholarship.	Writing shows consistent problems with organization, clarity, grammar, style, and voice.

**PhD Rhetoric and Composition Exam Rubric: Part II**

<b>PhD R/C Exam Rubric Part II: A manuscript suitable for publication</b>				
	<b>Primary Content</b>	<b>Argument</b>	<b>Methodology (for empirical research only)</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<b>Pass Plus</b>	Identifies a significant topic; addresses a new topic or advances existing knowledge; makes original claims; interprets the literature correctly	Establishes the importance of the topic and the need for the article by citing, as appropriate, the relevant literature; articulates a clear purpose and thesis; provides appropriate and adequate evidence for claims; is clearly organized and developed; articulates a conclusion warranted by the analysis or discussion.	Research design is sound; methodology is sufficient to support conclusions; research design is clearly and appropriately described	Grammar, lexicon, style and format are professional and appropriate for the target journal; Writing is mature and fluent.
<b>Pass</b>	Identifies a current topic that is of interest to the field; makes some contribution to the scholarly	Addresses the question of the importance of the topic or need for the article by citing some relevant literature; identifies a general thesis and purpose, though may	Research design is sound; conclusions are not incommensurate with methods;	There are not significant problems with grammar, lexicon, style and format; writing is adequate to

	conversation; makes claims that are not repeating existing knowledge; has only minor problems interpreting the literature.	need clarification; provides evidence for claims; is organized and offers a specific conclusion	research design is introduced if not clearly articulated	the argument and audience.
<b>Pass Minus</b>	Identifies a research topic, but not one that is significant or important to contemporary scholarship; reviews rather than creates new knowledge; makes claims that are derivative or not in dispute; has significant problems interpreting the literature.	Does not adequately establish the need for the article and cites little relevant literature; has only a general and unclear thesis and purpose; has evidence for claims but not enough; has some problem with organization; needs a better conclusion.	Research design is weak; methodology is inadequate to the conclusions; research design is not discussed adequately.	There are some problems with grammar, style, lexicon, or format for the journal; writing has some inadequacies
<b>Fail</b>	Does not identify a clear topic or identifies a topic that is not important, current or new; does not advance the scholarship; makes reductive or outdated claims; misinterprets the literature.	Does not establish the need for the article and fails to cite relevant literature; has no clear thesis or purpose; lacks evidence for major claims; is not well organized; lacks a conclusion or offers an inappropriate or unsubstantiated conclusion.	Research design is absent or faulty; methodology is inappropriate for conclusions; methodology is not addressed.	There are significant problems with grammar, style, lexicon or format for a professional journal; writing is poor and inadequate to the professional context.

## APPENDIX C

### Dissertation Rubric (Literature and Rhetoric & Composition Tracks)

PhD Dissertation Rubric			
	Primary Content	Critical Thinking (competence structuring argument and analyzing/evaluating evidence)	Writing
<b>Pass Plus</b>	Develops detailed and coherent discussion of a relevant, original and astute critical problem, sufficient in length (min. 37,500 words), based in dialogue with the most important scholarship; aptly analyzes and evaluates sufficient primary and secondary materials, demonstrates depth of knowledge in field, appropriate contexts, solid knowledge of history, genre, author and/or theory; makes a significant contribution to scholarship.	Demonstrates reason and logical thinking in significant and clear arguments based in accurate knowledge of primary and secondary material. Structures the arguments persuasively across a significant number of chapters. Analyzes and evaluates appropriate research to support claims and references a significant range of critical opinion. Distinguishes clearly student's unique contribution to scholarship.	Engagingly, concisely written with few, if any, grammatical or stylistic problems. Voice is appropriate for audience. Style is consistent throughout. Documentation is complete and accurate.
<b>Pass</b>	Develops coherent discussion of a relevant critical problem, sufficient in length (min. 37,500 words), based in dialogue with scholarship; offers original analysis of sufficient primary and secondary materials, demonstrates depth of knowledge in field, appropriate contexts, solid knowledge of history, genre, author and/or theory; makes a contribution to or	Demonstrates reason and logical thinking in arguments based in accurate knowledge of primary and secondary material. Structures the arguments across a significant number of chapters. References appropriate research to support claims and references a range of critical opinion, but argument relies on some generalities or unsubstantiated claims.	Concisely and correctly written with only minor grammatical or stylistic problems. Voice appropriate for audience. Some inconsistency in style. Documentation is mostly complete and accurate.

	amplifies existing scholarship.	Situates original contribution in relation to appropriate research but without fully engaging its claims.	
<b>Pass Minus</b>	Develops discussion of a relevant critical problem, sufficient in length (min. 37,500 words), based in dialogue with scholarship; offers analysis of sufficient primary and secondary materials, demonstrates depth of knowledge in field, appropriate contexts, solid knowledge of history, genre, author and/or theory; resituates existing scholarship.	Provides a plausible argument that lacks clarity or substantiation in primary material and secondary material. Argumentation is uneven or undeveloped across all chapters. Some errors of interpretation or failure to connect argument to examples or support.	Writing is inconsistent, with some major grammatical or stylistic problems; voice may be inappropriate for audience. Documentation is uneven or incomplete.
<b>Fail</b>	Does not develop discussion of a relevant critical problem based in dialogue with scholarship; does not offer analysis of sufficient primary and secondary materials, demonstrates lack of knowledge of the subject; many errors in references to primary materials, context, history, genre, author or theory; is insufficiently related to existing scholarship.	Does not develop a critical argument; chapters lack analysis or original interpretation and offer summary of material.	Writing shows consistent problems in grammar, style, and voice. There are major errors or missing items in documentation.