

# Rhetoric, Writing and Culture

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<http://www.ndsu.edu/english/>

**Department Chair:** Dr. Kevin Brooks

**Graduate Coordinator:** Dr. Miriam Mara (miriam.mara@ndsu.edu)

**Department Location:** 219 Morrill Hall

**Telephone Number:** (701) 231-7143

**Degree Offered:** Ph.D.

**Application Deadline:** February 1 for fall semester only

**Test Requirements:** GRE General Test

**English Proficiency TOEFL ibT 100**

**Requirements:** IELTS 7

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## Doctor of Philosophy

The Rhetoric, Writing and Culture Ph.D. degree program is open to all qualified graduates of universities and colleges of recognized standing. The Ph.D. in Rhetoric, Writing and Culture provides students with employable skills in the area of professional and technical communication. This innovative and regionally unique program invites students to work at the intersection of rhetorical, textual, and cultural studies. The number of positions available in technical communication significantly surpasses the number of new Ph.D.s produced each year by a sizable margin. Graduates from NDSU's program may pursue careers as:

- professors in universities or colleges;
- training and development specialists, user-experience experts, and human-computer interaction specialists in industry;
- technical, scientific, or professional writers and editors in research and development organizations, high-tech companies, non-profit organizations, or government agencies.

Hands-on experience is essential to our program. The Rhetoric, Writing and Culture Ph.D. requires six credits of experiential learning. Students can work with professors or mentors in disciplinary writing. Others opt to intern for non-profits or local industries.

NDSU offers opportunities for students in the Ph.D. program to teach discipline-specific writing, such as writing in the sciences, writing for engineers and writing in business and finance. Ph.D. students are eligible for Presidential Doctoral Graduate Fellowships.

To be admitted with full status to the program, the applicant must fulfill all of the requirements set out below.

## Admission Requirements

- In most cases, applicants are expected to have completed a Master of Arts or Science, but exceptional candidates may be admitted directly out of the Bachelor's degree
- Have completed a BA, BS, MA, or MS from an accredited educational institution.
- Have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.5.

Conditional admission may be granted to students who do not meet all requirements for admission or have deficiencies in prerequisite course work, but demonstrate potential for graduate study. Such students

may be required to take additional courses to address deficiencies in prerequisite course work.

In addition to the Graduate School required materials, applications must include:

- an academic writing sample, not to exceed 20 pages, that reflects the student's academic or professional interests and that demonstrates the student's critical and analytical abilities
- A statement of purpose that includes the following:
  - coursework you plan to complete in the program
  - faculty members with whom you wish to study
  - scholarship you plan to pursue
  - a sense of what you hope to do once you have completed a Ph.D. degree in English
  - how your education and/or life experience have prepared you for graduate work
- official transcripts from all previous undergraduate and graduate records
- when applicable, a letter stating your interest in and qualifications for a teaching assistantship.

Preferred additional materials:

- Practical and / or Professional writing sample not to exceed 10 pages

## Financial Assistance

Teaching assistantships are available and are based on the applicant's scholastic record and letters of recommendation. However, the student must first make application to the Graduate School and be accepted for admission before she/he is eligible for an assistantship in the Department of English. Letters of application for teaching assistantships should be submitted at the same time as the application to the program is submitted to the graduate school and should specify experience and qualifications.

Graduate students are awarded teaching assistantships for the academic year only. As of the 2009-2010 academic year, the annual stipend is \$14,000. University graduate tuition charges (not fees) are waived for all TAs. Teaching Fellowships are available to selected TAs after completing course work. Moreover, the Department of English annually awards the Rooney Scholarship (2010: \$1,220) and the Madeline S. Gittings Scholarship (2010: \$1,000) to deserving graduate students.

The Ph.D. program requires 90 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree and a minimum of 60 graduate credits at NDSU. Students must take a minimum of 30 credits at the 700 level.

Students admitted to the Ph.D. are required to demonstrate foreign language competency by the time they begin to write the dissertation. Students may meet this requirement in one of the following ways:

1. Demonstrate advanced reading competency in one foreign language equivalent to successful completion of a second-semester, third-year (300-level, 6th semester) college language course.
2. Demonstrate intermediate reading competency in two foreign languages equivalent to successful completion of two second-semester, second-year (200-level, 4th semester) college language courses.
3. Demonstrate intermediate reading competency in one foreign language equivalent to successful completion of a second-semester, second-year (200-level, 4th semester) college language course and, in consultation with the student's advisor and the graduate director,

demonstrate competency in one special research skill (written rationale will be required at time of request). See Graduate Handbook for additional information.

Within the first semester of graduate work, each student is assigned an academic adviser who helps in overseeing the student's plan of study. A graduate student in English should enroll in no more than 3 credits of ENGL 793, Individual Study/Tutorial, during his/her graduate career. Exceptions are provided for through a graduate form signed by the chair of the department and the adviser.

#### Plan of Study

#### Core Courses 6

ENGL 755 Composition Theory

ENGL 760 Graduate Scholarship

ENGL 764 Classroom Strategies For TA'S

#### Research Methods 6

ENGL 756 Composition Research

ENGL 762 Critical Theory

COMM 708 Advanced Qualitative Methods in Communication Research

COMM 767 Rhetorical Criticism

HIST 701 Methods of Historical Research

SOC 700 Qualitative Methods

#### Didactic credits 33

18 credits must be in Rhetoric and Writing courses (two courses must be from English and two from Communication) and

15 credits of Elective courses (any graduate-level class not listed elsewhere on the student's plan of study, approved by student's adviser).

#### English studies courses (literature and linguistics) 24

Students may transfer in graduate credits in this area or take English 600 and 700 level literature and linguistics classes not listed as part of the English Ph.D.

#### Experiential Learning 6

Teaching mentorships, field experiences, and internships, inside or outside the academy in research, administrative, editing, consulting, or writing roles

#### Complete Doctoral Comprehensive Exams when 72 credits are complete. The dissertation proposal is submitted after the successful completion of the comprehensive exams.

ENGL 899 Doctoral Dissertation 1-15

*\*Graduate students are strongly advised to take Core courses in their first year in the program or as soon as these courses are offered.*

#### Elizabeth Birmingham, Ph.D.

Iowa State University, 2000

Field: Rhetoric and Professional Communication, Gender Studies, Architectural History, Theory, and Criticism

#### Kevin Brooks, Ph.D.

Iowa State University, 1997

Field: Rhetoric and Professional Communication, Computers and Composition, Writing Program Administration

#### Muriel Brown, Ph.D.

University of Nebraska, 1971

Field: Medieval Literature, Modern Drama, Women's Studies

#### Linda L. Helstern, Ph.D.

Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, 2001

Field: Native American Literature, Modernism, Contemporary Poetry, Literature and the Environment

#### R.S. Krishnan, Ph.D.

University of Nebraska, 1981

Field: Restoration and 18th-Century British Literature, Postmodern Theories, British Novel, Postcolonial Literature

#### Andrew Flood Mara, Ph.D.

University of New Mexico, 2003

Field: Technical and Professional Communication, New Media, Rhetoric and Composition

#### Miriam O'Kane Mara, Ph.D.

University of New Mexico, 2003

Field: Postcolonial Literature, Irish Modern and Contemporary Literature, British Victorian through Contemporary Literature

#### Bruce Maylath, Ph.D.

University of Minnesota, 1994

Field: International Technical Communication, Rhetoric and Composition, Linguistics

#### Robert O'Connor, Ph.D.

Bowling Green State University, 1979

Field: Romantic Literature, Science Fiction and Fantasy

#### Kelly Sassi, Ph.D.

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2008

Field: English Education, Composition and Rhetoric, Native American Literatures, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

#### Dale Sullivan, Ph.D.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1988

Field: Rhetoric Theory and History, Rhetoric of Science, Rhetoric of Religion, Technical Communication

#### Amy Rupiper Taggart, Ph.D.

Texas Christian University, 2002

Field: Writing and Rhetoric, Pedagogy, Literacy Studies

#### Verena Theile, Ph.D.

Washington State University, Pullman, 2006

Field: 16th-/17th-Century Literature, Early Modern Drama, European Literature, Cultural Theory

#### Gary Totten, Ph.D.

Ball State University, 1998

Field: Late 19th-/Early 20th-Century American Literature, Travel Literature, Multi-Ethnic American Literature