

Rhetoric, Writing and Culture

Program and Application Information

Department Chair:	Dr. Elizabeth Birmingham
Graduate Coordinator:	Dr. Verena Theile
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Department Location:	318 Minard Hall
Department Phone:	(701) 231-7143
Department Web Site:	www.ndsu.edu/english/graduate_programs/phd_degree/
Application Deadline:	February 1
Degrees Offered:	Ph.D.
English Proficiency Requirements:	TOEFL iBT 100; IELTS 7

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
 - research 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 institutions
- 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 awarded based on the applicant's scholastic record and letters of recommendation. Students need to apply to the Graduate School to be considered for admission in the Department of English and before they are eligible for an assistantship. Letters of interest for teaching assistantships, detailing prior experience (if applicable) and qualifications, need to be submitted as part of the application to the program.

Teaching assistantships are reviewed and renewed annually based on academic and professional performance, as well as funding. The annual stipend is \$14,000, which is in addition to tuition waivers (including summer) for the duration of the degree program; TAs are responsible for books and fees. In rare cases, teaching fellowships may be granted to advanced doctoral students who have passed their comp exams and completed their course work. Scholarships (<https://www.ndsu.edu/english/scholarshipsandfellowships>) are available through the Department, the College, the Graduate School, and the University.

The Ph.D. program requires 90 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree and a minimum of 60 graduate credits taken beyond the M.A. and at NDSU.

- Students must take a minimum of 30 credits at the 700- or 800-level.
- English 764: Teaching Strategies is required of all Graduate Teaching Assistants who have not taken a similar class elsewhere.
- Students must take 48 of 60 credits at NDSU from within the Department of English.
- Students with a master's degree in another discipline may be required to complete additional graduate course work in specific areas of English, as specified by their adviser and supervisory committee.
- No more than 10 credits may be transferred into the program

Code	Title	Credits
Plan of Study		
Core Courses		12
ENGL 755	Composition Theory	
ENGL 756	Composition Research	
ENGL 760	Graduate Scholarship	
ENGL 762	Critical Theory	
Other Research Methods		3
Students select, in consultation with their adviser, at least one of the following methods courses.		
COMM 704	Qualitative Research Methods in Communication	
COMM 767	Rhetorical Criticism	
HIST 701	Methods of Historical Research	
SOC 700	Qualitative Methods	
SOC 701	Quantitative Methods	
Pedagogy		
Students select, in consultation with their adviser, at least one of the following pedagogy courses.		
COMM 704	Qualitative Research Methods in Communication	
ENGL 764	Classroom Strategies For TA'S	
ENGL 765	Upper Division Writing: Pedagogy, Practice, and Technology	
ENGL 766	Teaching Literature	
Addition Courses		21-51
Students must take English courses that match their research goals and deepen their understanding of the field. Three additional methods, theory, or pedagogy courses may be taken from outside the English department, as approved by adviser and graduate director. Courses in the category may be at the 600-,700-, or 800-level.		
ENGL 649	Usability and User Experience	
ENGL 655	International Technical Writing	
ENGL 656	Literacy, Culture and Identity	
ENGL 659	Researching and Writing Grants and Proposal	
ENGL 753	Rhetorics, Poetics Of New Media	
ENGL 754	Rhetorics of Science and Technology	
ENGL 758	Topics in Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture	

ENGL 759	History of Writing Instruction
ENGL 761	Writing: Invention to Innovation
COMM 700	Research Methods in Communication
COMM 707	Quantitative Research Methods in Communication
COMM 782	Theories of Persuasion

Additional English options: Students with no background in English studies must include courses in literature and linguistics in their plan of study and that topics/studies courses may be repeated.

ENGL 652	History of the English Language
ENGL 653	Social and Regional Varieties of English
ENGL 654	Language Bias
ENGL 671	American Realistic Literature
ENGL 672	20th Century American Writers
ENGL 674	Native American Literature
ENGL 676	Topics in American Literature
ENGL 680	Medieval Literature
ENGL 682	Renaissance Literature
ENGL 683	Topics in British Literature
ENGL 685	18th Century Literature
ENGL 686	Romantic Literature
ENGL 770	Studies in American Literature
ENGL 780	Studies in British Literature

Experiential Learning

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Flexible credits for English 795: Experiential Learning may be earned in the following ways:

- 1) Teaching Mentorship (0-6 credits), may be taken twice. Students work with faculty to read theory and co-teach 200-, 300-, or 400-level class.
- 2) Internship (0-6 credits), may be taken twice. Students work outside or inside academia in administrative, editing, or consulting roles.
- 3) Life-Experience Credit (0-3 credits). Students submit, in consultation with their advisor and the graduate director, a portfolio that reflects their professional experience prior to enrolling in the program.

Comprehensive Exams

Comprehensive exams are taken after the successful completion of 72 credits (grade B or higher) and are administered by the student's supervisory committee, which is comprised of a committee chair and two readers from within the department. The exams consist of two timed, written exams and conclude with the defense of the dissertation proposal.

Language Requirement

Students are required to demonstrate foreign language competency by the time they begin to write the dissertation.

ENGL 899	Doctoral Dissertation (The dissertation proposal concludes the comprehensive exams and precedes formal work on the dissertation. The supervisory committee is comprised of the three members of the exam committee, plus a Graduate School Representative (GSR) from outside the department.)	15
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Total: 90 credits

Anastassiya Andrianova, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 2011

Field: British Romantic and Victorian Literature, Drama, Translation, Pedagogy, Postcolonial Literature, Slavic Literature, Animal Studies

Lisa R. Arnold, Ph.D.

University of Louisville, 2011

Field: Rhetoric and Composition, Writing Program Administration, History of Writing Instruction

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., Emerita

University of Nebraska, 1971

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

Sean Burt, Ph.D.

Duke University, 2009

Field: Ancient Jewish Literature, Genre Theory, Ancient Hebrew Poetry, Poetics, Horror Literature & Theory

Gordon Fraser, Ph.D.

University of Connecticut, 2015

Field: Nineteenth-Century and Early American Literature; American Studies; Nationalism and Revolution

Adam Goldwyn, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 2010

Field: Medieval Studies, Medieval Greek World, Influence of Ancient Greek Culture in the Middle Ages

Alison Graham Bertolini, Ph.D.

Louisiana State University, 2009

Field: Contemporary American Literature, Literature of the Southern United States, Women's Literature, Contemporary Ethnic and Postcolonial Literature

Linda L. Helstern, Ph.D., Emerita

Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, 2001

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

R.S. Krishnan, Ph.D., Emeritus

University of Nebraska, 1981

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

Bruce Maylath, Ph.D.

University of Minnesota, 1994

Field: International Technical Communication, Rhetoric and Composition, Linguistics

Robert O'Connor, Ph.D., Emeritus

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., Emeritus

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, Shakespeare, Early Modern Drama, European Literature, Literary Theory, Science Fiction and Fantasy, Film and Adaptation Studies

Emily D. Wicktor, Ph.D.

Kansas, 2010

Field: 19th Century British Literature and Culture, particularly Victorian Sexuality and Sexual History; Rhetoric, Composition, and Pedagogy; Literary Theory; Modern British and American Drama; Research Methods and Methodology