

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies Graduate Handbook

(Revised as of September 2022)

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Welcome to the Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies

The Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies (WRS) was established in 2014. Prior to that, the department was known as the University Writing Program (UWP), established in 1984. The University of Utah thus has a rich history in writing instruction, pedagogical research, and rhetorical analysis. For more than three decades, WRS has drawn connections between academic and professional writing; writing instruction; and discipline-based preparation for post-college employment. Since 1993, we have offered masters and doctoral program tracks that emphasize the study of rhetoric, literacy, and composition. When we were only a program, we granted these degrees in partnership with three other departments: English, Communication, and Education, Culture and Society (ECS). Since becoming a department, the WRS has developed its own graduate program, the details of which are described in this document. We offer the MA/MS and the PhD.

This handbook presents basic information about the program, its requirements, and procedures, as well as establish expectations that will allow graduate students to complete the program in good standing. Students and faculty should familiarize themselves with the information contained herein. Should questions or concerns develop, they should be directed to the WRS Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

We hope that you find your time here intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding. We believe graduate study in WRS at the University of Utah provides valuable personal and professional opportunities for growth and maturation. We also understand that this time can present obstacles and anxieties. WRS and the DGS are committed to working with you and providing support when and where you need it to ensure that your time in this program is successful, productive, and enjoyable.

This handbook acts as a starting point to your graduate career, but you should continue to consult it as you progress. Some of the information contained herein will be more relevant later in your graduate studies. Congratulations on your acceptance to this truly unique Rhetoric and Composition Graduate Program and welcome to the U of U!

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Contact Information

Reporting Structure

If you have any questions about graduate study and life or if you run into any issues, there are three people you can contact at any time. The first person you should approach with any question is the Director of Graduate Studies, or the DGS. The current DGS is Dr. Maureen A. Mathison, who can be reached via email at maureen.mathison@utah.edu. If you have questions about courses, requirements, and the like, please contact Karli Sam, the department graduate advisor. If your needs are not met by the DGS or the graduate advisor, please feel free to contact the Department Chair, Dr. LuMing Mao. If you have questions regarding paychecks or anything to do with the administration of money, please contact Polly Light. The executive secretary, Katya Pilkington, assists with teaching needs (add codes, copies, etc.).

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Admission Requirements & Procedures

We welcome applications to the graduate programs in Writing and Rhetoric Studies from all interested and potential applicants. The following describes how to apply to a degree program.

The admissions requirements for the University of Utah are found here:

<https://gradschool.utah.edu/graduate-catalog/admissions> for the Grad School, and here <https://admissions.utah.edu/apply/graduate> for the University. Please read through these admissions requirements. If you have any questions, contact the DGS for help: (Maureen.mathison@utah.edu).

For consideration of admission to the MA/MS or the PhD programs, you need to fill out an application (<https://writing.utah.edu/graduate/howtoapply.php>) and submit the following documents: 1) full academic transcripts; 2) statement of purpose; 3) writing sample of between 15 and 25 pages; 4) three reference letters; and 5) a current CV.

Application for the graduate program must be completed no later than December 15 of each year.

Transfer Credits. Credit may be transferred from another graduate program only *if the degree was not completed*. No more than six credits will be accepted. Students who would like to transfer credits will make a case for the credits to the DGS, who will decide in consultation with the graduate student advisor and the Department Chair.

General Information

Orientation for Incoming Students

The Department of Writing and Rhetoric annually admits a small cohort of students into the graduate program. To welcome all incoming students, an orientation is held the week prior to the commencement of the Fall Semester. At the orientation, department regulations and procedures are reviewed, students are introduced to faculty members, and questions about the department are addressed. Toward the end of the first semester, graduate students will convene again with the graduate director to address additional questions that student may have entered their second term.

Required First-Semester Course

Students are required to enroll in *WRTG 6200: Introduction to the Field* (1 credit) their incoming semester. The course provides a theoretical and practical orientation to the field and expectations for graduate performance toward a career.

Advising

The first semester incoming students work with the DGS, who will assist them in making decisions about their courses, progress, and any issues that may appear until they have a supervisory chair. The DGS may help the student choose a supervisory chair who will direct the student's exam and/or project, thesis, or dissertation.

MA/MS Program Requirements

The expected learning outcomes for the MA and MS degrees, coursework requirements, and other requirements are described in this section.

The Master of Arts (MA) degree is for students in writing and rhetoric studies doing introductory research on writing and rhetoric topics, typically from a humanities perspective. MA students complete a project, written exam, or thesis. MA students are required to demonstrate proficiency in a language (see Language Requirement section below). MA students complete a project, written exam, or thesis.

The Master of Science (MS) degree is for students in writing and rhetoric studies doing research in writing and rhetoric topics, typically from a humanities/social scientific perspective. MS students are not required to demonstrate proficiency in a language. MS students must complete WRTG 7060: Scientific Writing. MS students complete a project, written exam, or thesis.

Program Coursework

In order to complete the MA or MS Degree, students will take the equivalent of 10 courses (30 credit hours) over two years. They will also be required to either take a written exam, complete a thesis, or create and complete a project. Coursework hours include hours for the exam (3 CR), thesis (6 CR) or project (3-6 CR).

Core Courses. MA/MS Students must take at least two of the following core courses: 1) WRTG 6350: Composition Theory and Practice; 2) WRTG 7740: Rhetoric I; 3) WRTG 7750: Rhetoric II; and 4) WRTG 7770: Research Methods. *Core courses are taught on a two-year cycle, with every course offered at least once in two years. We suggest you plan accordingly.*

Electives. In addition to core curriculum courses, electives on special topics are available every year in WRS. Students may also take a maximum of two graduate level courses (6 credits) in other departments that align with their research interests. Students select electives in collaboration with their advisor. Exceptions to the two courses are on a case by case basis in consultation with the DGS.

Independent Study. Students may also choose to do an independent study with a faculty member as part of their elective coursework. In an independent study, the student and faculty mentor collaboratively create a reading list that they work through together. The independent study may culminate in a semester paper, an article, a project, a website, exam reading list, etc. The end of semester deliverable will be discussed and decided on by the student and faculty mentor. A maximum of two independent studies (6 credit hours) is permitted in consultation with the DGS. Independent studies are not encouraged in the first year.

Academic Expectations

Graduate students are expected to regularly attend all of their classes. Graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.0 semester and cumulative GPA throughout the program. A student who fails to maintain this average may be placed on academic probation and/or lose their assistantship. Although it rarely occurs, students will be notified as soon as possible if their academic or teaching performance falls below minimum standards. The department will work with the student to re-establish standing in the program.

Language Requirement

Requirements for the MA. Students in the MA program are required by the graduate school to be certified as having “standard proficiency” in a foreign language. In addition to language exams arranged through the Testing Center, MA students can also demonstrate proficiency through coursework. MA student must complete three semesters of a foreign language and pass with a grade of B or better. The Graduate School stipulates that coursework used to fulfill the language requirement must have been completed no more than six years before the date certifying

fulfillment of the requirement. The [Language Verification form](#) for certification is available in the [Department of World Languages & Cultures](#).

Requirements for the MS. There is no language requirement for the MS. However, students in the MS program are required to take WRTG 7060: Scientific Writing.

Mandatory Exams and Milestones for the MA or MS

Master's degree students have a choice of completing either a written exam, a project, or a thesis, all of which require a supervisory committee of 2-3 faculty members, depending on the culminating work.

Supervisory Committee Formation for the Written Examination

The written examination supervisory committee consists of the student's supervisory chair and the DGS. The student should select a supervisory chair by their third semester of coursework. Career-line faculty may not serve as supervisory chair.

Supervisory Committee Formation for a Project or Thesis

The thesis and project require a supervisory committee consisting of three faculty members, including their supervisory chair. Tenure-line and career-line faculty may serve on supervisory committees, but committees may only include one career-line faculty member, and career-line faculty may not serve as chair.

Chair. The student should select the chair of their supervisory committee by the end of their second semester of coursework. The chair will provide important guidance and feedback for the project or thesis.

Committee Selection. The student should select supervisor committee members in collaboration with their supervisory chair. Committee members should be selected based on specialty and knowledge. The committee chair and other members of the committee will give advice on readings and provide feedback on the thesis or the project.

Written Exam/Project/Thesis

Option 1: Written Exam

The student will work in collaboration with their supervisory chair and the DGS to select two topical categories.

1. The categories should correlate with the student's coursework and interests.
2. Drawing heavily on reading completed in coursework, the student should create a reading list for each category of between 15 and 25 articles, book chapters, and books, for a total of no more than 50 total readings.

3. When the lists are approved by the supervisor chair and DGS, the student should begin reading, taking 3-4 months to work through the readings.
4. The exam takes place in two parts, with one exam for each list. The questions for each list will be written in collaboration between the student and their supervisory chair, with the DGS adding additional questions as they see fit.
5. The written exam takes place in two three-hour blocks, with a one-hour rest period between them. The timing of the exam will be adapted for any student needing accommodations.
6. At the beginning of the first block, the student receives 2-4 questions to select from. The student will select 1 question and write on it, typically producing approximately 10 pages of prose (double-spaced). After a one-hour break, the student will receive the second set of 2-4 questions, select 1, and write on it for three hours (or the adapted timeframe). Students are permitted to use their readings materials and notes during the exam.

When the student and the supervisory chair agree that the student is ready to take the exam, they must let the DGS and the graduate advisor know, so that they can file the appropriate paperwork with the graduate office. This must happen *at least one month before the exams take place*.

If a student fails any section of the exam, they may retake it one time. The retake should take place no sooner than 1 week and no longer than 2 months after the failed exam, giving the student sufficient time to study.

Option 2: Project

Students completing a project should create a supervisory committee no later than the end of their second semester of coursework. The project should be decided upon by the student and their supervisory chair, and it must be robust enough to submit as a writing sample to apply to a PhD program or as part of a portfolio for workplace applications. Some past projects have included a research study on the use of technology in the classroom, an in-depth literature review on a specialty topic, a syllabus, curriculum, and assignment set, and a set of documents produced for a community partner. Students prepare a one-page description of the project with a list of no more than 50 relevant readings that the supervisory committee approves (see exam reading criteria above).

The project defense is open to the public. At least three weeks before the final oral defense, the student should submit an acceptable version of the project to the committee chair. Committee members should receive copies at least two weeks before the defense date. After the oral presentation, there will be a question-and-answer period. The length of the project oral defense is two hours. The defense date is set by the supervisory committee. When the student and the supervisory chair agree that the student is ready to defend the project, they must let the DGS and the graduate advisor know *at least one month before the defense take place* so that they can file the appropriate paperwork with the graduate office.

Option 3: Thesis

Students completing a thesis should create a supervisory committee no later than the end of their second semester of coursework. Students prepare a two-page description of the project with a list

of no more than 75 relevant readings that the committee approves (see exam reading criteria below).

The length of the thesis should be 60-75 pages. The thesis defense is open to the public. At least three weeks before the oral defense of the thesis, the student should submit an acceptable thesis draft to the committee chair. Committee members should receive copies at least two weeks before the examination date. After the oral presentation of the thesis, there will be a question-and-answer period. The length of a thesis oral defense is 2 hours. The defense date is set by the supervisory committee. When the student and the supervisory chair agree that the student is ready to defend the thesis, they must let the DGS and the graduate advisor know *at least one month before the defense take place* so that they can file the appropriate paperwork with the graduate office.

Expected Learning Outcomes MA/MS

1. **Source Use:** Student can read, understand, and use a diverse group of sources to frame and situate an argument and research.
2. **Rhetorical Theory:** Student can critically engage rhetorical theory that includes and extends beyond the Greco-Roman to include global rhetorical traditions, using a number of texts and perspectives from a number of genres (theory, method, practical, research, etc.). Students should be able to closely read broadly situated rhetorical theory, working toward theory building and demonstrable comprehension as evidenced by coursework and final project (written exam/thesis/project).
3. **Writing and Literacy Studies:** Student can critically engage writing and literacy studies theory, history, practices, and research. Student should be able to closely read writing and literacy studies theory, histories, practices, and research, working toward theory building and demonstrable comprehension, as evidenced by coursework and final project (written exam/thesis/project).
4. **Field Knowledge:** Student can demonstrate a broad understanding of their field of research.
5. **Method/ology:** Students can select and describe a methodology and method—or set of methodological techniques—and use them to design, conduct, and analyze independent research, as evidenced by successful completion of a written exam/thesis/project;
6. **Writing:** Students can communicate effectively in academic contexts using writing as evidenced by preparation of research proposals, coursework, and final project (written exam/thesis/project)
7. **Oral Communication:** Students can demonstrate effective academic oral communication skills, as evidenced by coursework and final project (written exam/thesis/project).
8. **Teaching:** Students can teach at the college/university level, including curriculum design and implementation, daily lesson plans and preparation, in-class performance (lecture and discussion), assignment design, and grading.
9. **Multimodal Literacies:** Student demonstrates knowledge of print and multimodal literacies. Student can critically engage multimodal rhetorical and pedagogical practices, including knowledge of theory and literacy models as well as teaching practices that use online tools and communication strategies, as evidenced by teaching observation and final project (written exam/thesis/project).

PhD Program Requirements

The PhD curriculum is designed for students doing advance-level work in writing, rhetoric, and literacy studies. PhD students complete their own, original research, resulting in a dissertation.

Progress Toward the PhD Degree

Four semesters in residence are required beyond the MA/MS, two of them continuous. At the beginning of the first year of study, all PhD candidates will consult with the Director of Graduate Studies about their planned coursework. *All work for the PhD must be completed within seven years of the original date of admission*; failure to do so will require reapplication for admission to the program and repetition of all qualifying examinations.

Program Coursework

The aim of the Writing and Rhetoric Studies Ph.D. is to give students solid preparation for academic careers through courses, seminars, and independent studies in composition and literacy theories, rhetorical theories and histories, research methods, and pedagogical theories.

Students must complete, with grades of “B” or higher, a minimum of 10 courses and 30 credit hours (including independent studies) at the 6000- or 7000-level, with the exception that coursework undertaken in another department, which may be on the 5000-level. For the PhD, an oral and written exam, prospectus, and dissertation are also required in addition to coursework.

Core Courses. Students enrolled in the PhD program must complete the following four core courses (12 credit hours): 1) WRTG 6350: Composition Theory and Practice; 2) WRTG 7740: Rhetoric I; and 3) WRTG 7750: Rhetoric II, and 4) WRTG 7770: Research Methods. *Core courses are taught on a two-year cycle, with every course offered at least once in two years. We suggest you plan accordingly.*

Elective Courses. Students may satisfy elective requirements by taking courses in other departments, selected in consultation with their supervisory chair and/or the DGS. These courses should align with the student’s research interests. A maximum of two courses (6 credits) may be taken outside the department, although exceptions may be made in consultation with the graduate director.

Independent Study. Students may also choose to complete a maximum of two independent studies with a faculty member as part of their elective coursework. In an independent study, the student and faculty mentor will create a reading list that they will work through and discuss together. The independent study may culminate in a semester paper, an article, a project, a website, exam reading list, etc. The end of semester deliverable will be discussed and decided on by the student and faculty mentor. Students are not encouraged to take independent studies their first year. A maximum of 2 independent studies may be taken (6 credits).

Minimum GPA

Graduate students are expected to attend all of their classes. Courses taken must receive a grade of B or higher in order to be considered passing. Graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.0 semester and cumulative GPA throughout the program. A student who fails to maintain this average may be placed on academic probation and/or lose their assistantship.

Although it rarely occurs, students will be notified as soon as possible if their academic or teaching performance falls below minimum standards. The department will work with the student to reestablish standing in the program.

Language Requirement

There is no foreign language requirement for the PhD.

Mandatory Exams and Milestones for the PhD

After successfully completing two semesters of coursework, students will write a pre-qualifying paper (see below for additional information). After the fourth semester of coursework, students will complete a qualifying comprehensive examination consisting of a written and oral portion. The pre-qualifying paper should be completed with the goal of potential publication. The written examination tests students' knowledge of reading lists while the oral examination is a defense of the written examination.

Supervisory Committee Formation

The PhD committee is made up of five people, with at least one member of the committee and no more than two members of the committee coming from outside the department. Your supervisory chair must be tenure-line faculty in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies. The committee will advise on every portion of the exam, prospectus, and dissertation and should be selected with potential support and advice in mind.

Supervisory Chair

The student should select the chair of their supervisory committee by their third semester of coursework. The chair will direct the student through the exam phase and provide important guidance and feedback for the prospectus and dissertation.

Supervisory Committee Selection

Students will select the rest of their committee in consultation with their chair. The committee will guide the student through the written exam process, offering reading selections and meeting to discuss said reading. Committee members should round out the committee by contributing information and feedback on topic, method, and theory. Tenure-line and career-line faculty may serve on supervisory committees, but no more than one career-line faculty member may serve on the committee, and career-line faculty may not serve as chair.

Supervisory Committee Roles

The committee's goal is to get the student through the examination and prospectus phases, and successfully write and defend the dissertation. To that end, they will provide thoughtful content suggestions, method and theory reading suggestions and practical guides, time for discussions of readings, methods, and theory, and feedback on writing at all stages.

When the student and the committee agree that the student is ready to take the qualifying exam, they must let the DGS and the graduate advisor know, so that they can file the appropriate paperwork with the graduate office. This must happen *at least one month before the exams take place*.

Required Supervisory Meetings

There are two required meetings: 1) the qualifying exam reading list approval meeting and 2) the dissertation prospectus approval meeting:

1. The qualifying exam reading list approval meeting should be convened at the beginning of the exam process before the student begins reading but after lists have been compiled with input from all faculty on the supervisory committee. The list approval meeting is the final occasion for faculty to give input on the list, which thereafter is considered final and closed.
2. The dissertation prospectus meeting should be convened when the prospectus has been finalized, but before work has started on the dissertation. In this meeting, the committee comes together to discuss and approve the prospectus and to give advice on the work involved in the dissertation.

Other meetings, though not required, are highly recommended. The student should meet with their supervisory chair often and meet with other members of the committee as is needed to complete the project in a timely way.

Examination Process

The examination process occurs in two stages: 1) pre-qualifying paper and 2) written qualifying examination with an oral defense. The following is a step-by-step overview of the process.

Pre-Qualifying Paper. At the end of the first year, a student will select a tenure-line faculty mentor with whom to work while they write a paper, with the goal of submitting it for publication. Selecting a faculty mentor provides students the opportunity to establish a working relationship with a faculty member who might potentially serve as their supervisory chair and see if that person's approach to mentoring matches the student's needs for the exam, prospectus, and dissertation phases of their graduate career. The student, in consultation with their mentor, will select an issue of importance on which to research and write. The student may begin with a paper they have written for their coursework to revise toward publication. The student will have three months in which to develop a paper ready for submission to a scholarly journal. The timeline may be adjusted in consultation with the mentor and the DGS. The student will meet regularly with their mentor, who will provide feedback and guidance throughout the process. The document should be approximately 25 pages in length.

Students may not progress to the writing qualifying examination until their mentor approves the pre-qualifying paper. In the event the mentor does not provide consistent mentorship or declines to pass the prequalifying paper by the end of the student's third semester of coursework, the student may appeal to the DGS. A faculty member may only mentor one student's prequalifying paper per year.

Written Qualifying Examination. Typically, at the end of the second year, the student begins preparation for the written qualifying examination.

1. **Reading list:** The first step of the qualifying exam process is putting together a reading list, made up of three parts: 1) theory list, 2) methods list, and 3) content/topic list. The list should include a narrative of no more than one page that explains each section of your list and how it is relevant to your particular focus. Reading lists should be prepared at least three months prior to taking the written exam. The list should be created in collaboration with the supervisory chair and other members of the supervisory committee. Typically, each committee member helps you prepare one portion of the list, and they will be responsible to examine the student on that portion of the list. It is common for the reading list to include between 90–110 works (articles, books, book chapters, books, collections and the like). The ratio of article/chapter to book should be determined with the supervisory chair and other committee members, based on the research.

Students should demonstrate strong familiarity with important details of the texts and be able to make substantive connections among them.

2. **List approval meeting:** After the student and their supervisory committee have developed the reading list, the student and supervisory chair will hold a meeting in which the entire committee meets, discusses the list, and ultimately approves the list. This meeting finalizes the lists. No readings should be added after this meeting.

The written qualifying examination: The supervisory committee prepares a set of questions, with each committee member contributing one question to their designated area. Questions are given to the student at the time of the reading list approval meeting. Students will have the option of selecting 3 of the 5 questions on which to write. They will have three months from the time of receiving the questions to complete the written exam. Exams are generally 45-60 total pages in length. The timeline for the written examination and oral defense may be extended given extenuating circumstances such as illness, family emergencies and so on.

The chair of the supervisory committee may meet with the student to discuss exam readings prior to submission the written examination. However, neither the chair nor committee members may provide direct feedback on any written portion of the exam until after the oral examination.

3. **Submitting the written qualifying examination:** Once it is composed, edited, and proofed, the written qualifying examination should be submitted to the DGS and the supervisory chair. The supervisory chair then distributes the written comprehensive examination to the supervisory committee members, who have 2 weeks to read it.
4. **The oral defense:** The oral defense of the written qualifying examination takes place two weeks after it has been completed. Questioning related to the written portion lasts approximately two hours. Immediately following the oral examination, supervisory committee members discuss the

student's written and oral performance and vote on approval. A simple majority rules.

In the event of a failure, in whole or in part, the exam may be repeated once, but not before the supervisory committee is satisfied that the student has had sufficient time for adequate preparation. Failed exams must be retaken within six months. If the student fails the exam, the chair of the supervisory committee will work with the student to create a mentoring plan to support the student as they prepare to take the exam again. The mentoring plan must be submitted to the DGS.

Prospectus

The prospectus is a 12–15-page double-spaced document that maps out your dissertation project in enough detail that your supervisory committee understands the relevance and importance of your project to the discipline. The document should include a description of the issue you are addressing, the literature that is relevant to your dissertation project, and the methods you will employ in the project. The prospectus may serve as a draft of a proposal or as a chapter of the dissertation that maps out the project.

Once the document is completed and your chair has approved it, a supervisory committee meeting is held where the PhD candidate explains their dissertation project and responds to questions, with the idea that the prospectus may be revised to enhance the scholarship/research. The meeting should be scheduled two weeks after the prospectus is completed. After the meeting, the student should contact the DGS and graduate advisor to inform them of the meeting. A copy of the prospectus should also be sent to them.

Dissertation/Project

All PhD students are expected to do original research that culminates in the completion and submission of a dissertation. A dissertation is typically five to six chapters long (180-250 pages), presenting the methods, theories, findings, and conclusions of original research. The actual format and design of the dissertation is decided in conjunction with your supervisory chair.

The graduate school has important information regarding specifications and formatting requirements for the dissertation at <https://gradschool.utah.edu/thesis>. These must be strictly followed. We recommend you take a chapter to them early on to make sure you are following the requirements.

Expected Learning Outcomes PhD

- 1. Source Use:** Student can read, understand, and use a diverse group of sources to frame and situate an argument and research.
- 2. Rhetorical Theory:** Student can critically engage rhetorical theory that includes and extends beyond the Greco-Roman to include global rhetorical traditions, using a number of texts and perspectives from a number of genre (theory, method, practical, research, etc.). Student should be able to closely read broadly situated rhetorical theory, working toward theory building and demonstrable comprehension, as evidenced by successful completion of the oral and written exam.
- 3. Writing and Literacy Studies:** Student can critically engage writing and literacy studies theory, history, practices, and research. Student should be able to closely read writing and

literacy studies theory, histories, practices, and research, working toward theory building and demonstrable comprehension, as evidenced by successful completion of the written and oral exam.

4. **Field Knowledge:** Student can demonstrate a broad understanding of their field of research;
5. **Method/ology:** Students can select and describe a methodology and method—or set of methodological techniques—and use them to design, conduct, and analyze independent research, as evidenced by successful completion and defense of a dissertation project;
6. **Writing:** Students can communicate effectively in academic contexts using writing as evidenced by preparation of research proposals, publication of manuscripts, written exam, or completion of a written dissertation.
7. **Oral Communication:** Students can demonstrate effective academic oral communication skills, as evidenced by successful defense of the oral examination, presentations in conferences, and an oral dissertation defense.
8. **Teaching:** Students can teach at the college/university level, including curriculum design and implementation, daily lesson plans and preparation, in-class performance (lecture and discussion), assignment design, and grading.
9. **Multimodal Literacies:** Student demonstrates knowledge of print and multimodal literacies. Student can critically engage multimodal rhetorical and pedagogical practices, including knowledge of theory and literacy models as well as teaching practices that use online tools and communication strategies, as evidenced by teaching observation and oral and written exams.

Important Deadlines for MA/MS and PhD Students

There are many deadlines that you will be held accountable to at the Department, College, and University levels. It is your job to keep track of them all. Please look at the following deadlines early and return to the often to make sure that you submit documents on time, ensuring a timely and smooth graduation process.

University Deadlines

The graduate school has a number of important deadlines, largely having to do with exam and thesis submission. Please refer to the graduate school's website for the most up to date information: (gradschool.utah.edu)

Academic calendar deadlines

- <https://registrar.utah.edu/academic-calendars>

International Teaching Program deadlines

- <https://gradschool.utah.edu/ita/important-dates-and-deadlines>

Thesis Office manuscript submission deadlines

- <https://gradschool.utah.edu/thesis/calendar>

University Fellowship deadlines, including Teaching Assistantship & Research Assistantship deadlines

- <https://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/graduate-fellowship-opportunities>

Graduation deadlines

- <https://registrar.utah.edu/graduation>

If a graduation deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, applications will be accepted without a fee through the next business day.

Graduation

Applying for Graduation

All graduate students must apply for graduation the semester prior to the expected completion date. All graduate candidates for graduation must submit an [Application for Graduate Degree](#) to the Registrar's Office, Graduation Division. Details about this application, including application deadlines and the required form, are available at:

<https://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/graduategraduation.php>.

Students should notify the Registrar's Office by the deadlines required as to which semester they plan on graduating. Graduation can take place in any semester, and students do not have to be registered during the semester of graduation. The Graduate School checks to see that all University and Graduate School requirements have been met. If a thesis or dissertation is involved, the Thesis Office will hold up graduation until all thesis or dissertation requirements have been met. Applications will not be accepted more than one year in advance.

Diplomas will be mailed directly to graduates within ninety days after graduation, provided that ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MET (*including Thesis and Dissertation Release and upload to ProQuest*). It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met all of the graduation requirements. Otherwise, your degree will not be conferred.

If you have questions concerning graduation, please contact the Graduation Division at: http://graduation@sa.utah.edu or <http://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/graduategraduation.php>

Important Forms

To keep track of graduate student progress, milestones currently are recorded *electronically*. Graduate students are responsible for making sure the graduate student advisor (Karli Sam) has entered them in their electronic files. Key milestone forms include:

- Request for Supervisory Committee
- Comprehensive Exam Form
- Prospectus Defense Form
- Program of Study, Doctoral Level
- Program of Study, Master Level

- [Apply for Graduation](#)

Required on the day of your defense:

- Report of Final Oral Examination for the:
MA/MS Thesis or Project
PhD Dissertation
- Supervisory Committee Approval of the:
- MA/MS Thesis or Project
PhD Dissertation
- Final Reading Approval

Other Relevant Forms include:

- Independent Study Form
- Independent Readings Form

Expectations for Professional Participation

Professional Development

The department hosts a number of lectures, workshops, and seminars every year. All graduate students, MAs, MSs, and PhDs, are expected to attend such events. These are excellent introductions to, and forums about the professional discourse of writing and rhetoric studies.

As a general rule, graduate students should: 1) become a member of at least one academic association such as the Rhetoric Society of America, the National Council of Teachers of English, or another such academic community, based on the student's interests and 2) attend and present at local and national conferences.

A strong research program is required of scholars working in rhetoric and composition, and students are expected to begin that research in graduate school. In their second and third years (at least), Ph.D. students should begin submitting proposals for local and national conferences. Students should also work toward publication, revising and fully developing conference and coursework papers and sending them out to appropriate journals. Journals previous students have published in include *Peitho*, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, and *Written Communication*, to name a few. Moves toward publication and conference presentation should be discussed with the student's chair or advisor.

Departmental Opportunities

Graduate Student Association Committee (GSAC)

The purpose of the Graduate Student Association Committee (GSAC) is to provide students a sense of community and support, and to create opportunities to learn about future professional

goals. GSAC members also play an advisory role in tenure-line professors' formal reviews for Retention, Promotion and Tenure (RPT).

GSAC Co-Presidents: Donny Penner and Mitzi Ceballos

RSA Student Chapter

Retórica Elevada is the University of Utah's Rhetoric Society of America (RSA) student chapter. Membership is free and open to all graduate students with interests in and across rhetorical traditions. Since 2015, the chapter has grown to become a thriving hub for rhetorical scholars at the U. *Retórica Elevada* is an important resource for emerging scholars to develop ties across disciplines at the University of Utah and beyond. The chapter organizes reading groups, writing workshops, and panel events that create opportunities for members of different departments to gather, share ideas, and collaborate.

For example, *Retórica Elevada* hosts the annual Dissoi Logoi: Scholars in Conversation event which brings together scholars across disciplines and institutions to discuss varying perspectives on an exigent issue or topic. Recent events have focused on rhetorics of public health, decoloniality and race, and rhetorical ethics in the digital age. Additionally, the chapter was central to the creation, planning, and hosting of the Rocky Mountain Rhetoric Symposium. The inaugural symposium was held on campus in October 2016 and brought dozens of graduate students and faculty together from the Intermountain West for a day of seminars, professional development classes, and writing workshops. The Rocky Mountain Rhetoric Symposium has now become a biennial event. All of this hard work was recognized in 2019 when *Retórica Elevada* won RSA's Outstanding Student Chapter award.

President: Elise Homan elise.homan@utah.edu

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Kendall Gerdes kendall.gerdes@utah.edu

Academic Requirements and Policies

Continuous Registration

Graduate students must maintain minimum continuous registration (at least 3 credit hours) during the fall and spring semesters. Independent studies and thesis hours count toward this requirement. Full-time status for graduate students is nine or more credit hours. If a student cannot maintain minimum continuous registration, they must request a **LEAVE of ABSENCE** from the Graduate School. If the student does not request the leave, the graduate school will inactivate the student's file, requiring the student to reapply for admission to the program before they will be allowed to continue working toward degree completion.

Students should be registered for graduate level courses (5000-6000 level for masters; 6000-7000 level for doctoral) until they have completed all requirements for the degree including the defense of the project, thesis, or dissertation.

Leave of Absence

Students who wish to discontinue their studies for one semester or more may request a leave of absence from the department, which may be granted subject to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. Leaves are granted and reviewed on a yearly basis in the following circumstances:

- a serious health condition of the student or family member,
- parental leave to care for a newborn or newly adopted child,
- a call to serve in military service, or
- other compelling reasons that the student's department believes is in the best interests of both the student and the University.

Continuous registration, for the purpose of this policy, refers only to registration during the regular academic year, fall and spring semesters. Students are not required to register for credit hours during the summer. There is nothing preventing students from registering for summer classes if they so choose. However, tuition benefits do not apply to graduate students enrolled in classes during summer sessions. (<https://gradschool.utah.edu/graduate-catalog/registration>):

Family & Medical Leave

Unpaid parental leave is available to any full-time graduate student in good standing who will serve as the primary caregiver of their newly born child, the newly born child of their partner, or an adopted child, under six-years of age (or under 18 if the child has special needs.) If both parents of the child are graduate students in the WRS department, leave will only be granted to one. Exceptions to these and other eligibility criteria (see FMLA policies for the university) must be approved by the Dept. Chair and the DGS. You should know that University policy prohibits discrimination against sex/gender which includes pregnant and parenting students and employees. State and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Act, also prohibit discrimination based upon sex, including pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions. If you believe you have been subject to discrimination, including having been denied an accommodation for a pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, please discuss this with the Director of Graduate Studies and/or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for your college. You may file a complaint with the OEO/AA. <https://oeco.utah.edu/>

Leaving the Program Early

Graduate students leaving the program without completing the requirements for a degree will not be awarded the degree.

Changing Committee Chair & Committee Members

When faculty leave the institution, or when graduate students wish to have a change in research direction, students may choose to change their committee chair. To make this happen, the graduate student should write a formal memo to the DGS, requesting the alteration in committee chair. The DGS will respond via email with a decision within a week. It is the student's

responsibility to have ongoing communication with both previous and new faculty chairs of the committee about the requested change until it is finalized.

If there is a PhD student who has not formed a committee by their fifth semester, or an MA/MS student who has not selected thesis/non-thesis option, nor formed a committee by their third semester, they will be expected to speak with the DGS. Depending on circumstances, an ad hoc committee of three tenure-line faculty members will be convened to assess the development and progress of the student. The ad hoc committee will make recommendations to the DGS regarding the advising and retention of the student.

Time Limit to Degree

All work for the MA/MS degree must be completed within four consecutive calendar years. On recommendation of the student's supervisory committee and supported by the DGS, the dean of the Graduate School can modify or waive this requirement. If the student exceeds the time limit and is not granted a modification or waiver, the department has the option to discontinue the student. Students whose studies have been interrupted for long periods of time and who have been granted extended time to complete their degrees may be required to complete additional courses, to pass examinations, or otherwise to demonstrate that they are current in their field.

The time limit for completing a Ph.D. degree is determined by individual departmental policy approved by the Graduate Council. Requests to exceed established time limits must be recommended by a candidate's supervisory committee and approved by the DGS and the dean of the Graduate School. Students whose studies have been interrupted for long periods of time and who have been granted extended time to complete their degrees may be required to complete additional courses, to pass examinations, or otherwise to demonstrate that they are current in their field. ([PPM 6-203 III.B](#)). Like most departments, WRS requires a seven-year time limit for their PhD students.

Petition for Completion Extension

If the student will need more than seven years, they may write a formal memo of petition, requesting more time to complete the degree. In that memo, the student should briefly describe the issues that have been impeding completion of the degree and explain whether they are in good standing, with a GPA of at least 3.0. The student should then propose a hard dissertation defense date and detail the procedure they will undergo to ensure that they will finish the degree. The petition should demonstrate a firm commitment to completing the degree.

The student will receive a response via email no later than two weeks after the petition is received.

If the department deems an extension acceptable, the student must petition the graduate school. A petition for an extension of a Graduate Student career beyond the established time limits will consist of a formal letter of request to the Graduate Dean. The letter will demonstrate that the student is in good standing. Good standing requires that the student has a satisfactory GPA for graduation, formed a supervisory committee, that a program of study has been completed and

approved by the faculty and directors of graduate studies/department chair, and that they have taken all required preliminary exams and thesis proposal exams required by the department. These must be fully updated in Graduate Tracking. The letter will be accompanied by a written completion plan that is signed by the student, the research supervisor, and the director of graduate studies or department chair.

The completion plan lays out specific milestones leading to completion, and dates for the completion of the milestones. The milestones must include formal evaluation meetings with the supervisory committee at least once per semester (if a thesis defense does not occur within the semester). Failure to complete the milestones by the specified deadline may result in the dismissal from the program (the supervisory committee would review such a situation and make a recommendation). Included with the petition should be a letter from the DGS articulating a firm commitment by the department, research supervisor, and the student to complete the agreement, including any commitments for financial support. Said letter must also provide a demonstration that the proposed path to graduation is feasible. The petition may request either a one-semester or two-semester extension. Further extensions will be considered for single semester extensions only, and any such request must provide a written update and a revised completion plan with updated milestones, dates, and signatures. Formal letters of petition should be sent to dean@gradschool.utah.edu.

Dismissal Policies & Procedures

Most students succeed in our program. However, there are situations where a student may be dismissed from the program.

Student performance is evaluated annually through student and faculty input to the Graduate Committee at their last meeting of Spring semester. These are formal reviews of student progress in the program and, if there are any issues regarding continuation in the program, these issues will be discussed and documented. A letter will be sent to each student and in the case of an unfavorable review, the student will meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss the review and create a plan to avoid dismissal. One semester is allowed to demonstrate improved performance, though exceptions can be made. However, the Graduate Committee or individual faculty, may, at any time, initiate dismissal processes of a student from the WRS graduate program and the Graduate School for failure to meet the academic requirements of the program or for academic or professional misconduct. If concerns arise due to behavioral misconduct, these issues are adjudicated through the Dean of Student's Office. In any such event, the procedures outlined in the "Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities" shall be followed (<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>).

Academic Requirements

WRS students must remain in good academic standing with the graduate school (GPA \geq 3.0) or risk probation and/or dismissal. If the student is on probation from the Graduate School, one semester is allowed to increase the student's GPA before the termination of the Tuition Benefit Plan (TBP, <http://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/tuition-benefit-program-guidelines/>) and dismissal from the program. In addition, students must pass each of the core WRS courses with a **B or**

better. The student will be informed during their review that there is an issue as delineated in the Graduate Student Handbook and the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. If such a situation is discussed during the review, the student, temporary or permanent advisor, and Department Chair will be notified in writing. If the situation is not improved, the Director of Graduate Studies will provide a letter of notification that the student has not met the criteria for continuing in the graduate program, resulting in their termination.

Below is a list of common conditions which cause a student to be academically vulnerable within the Ph.D. program. These have been discussed elsewhere throughout the handbook and are reiterated below. If a student satisfies any of the conditions listed, then the student is considered academically questionable unless there is a previous arrangement from the corresponding requirement.

- Failure to maintain a 3.0 grade point average (this is required by the Graduate School if the student wishes to continue to receive tuition benefit).
- Failure to select an advisor by the end of their second year (the official policy is that students should have selected an advisor by the end of their first year).
- Failure to select a supervisory committee by the end of their second year.
- Failing an oral or written qualifying exam (two failures of an exam will result in dismissal from the Program).
- Failure to make timely progress toward completion of the graduate degree as determined by the student's supervisory committee.
- Failure to meet other individualized requirements specified in letters of support or other letters written by the Graduate Committee or Director of Graduate Studies.

Students who fall behind in any of these categories, or who fail to meet other requirements specified for their program, must promptly appeal to the Graduate Committee if they wish to continue in the program (these issues may be pointed out to the student in the annual review, or in some cases, earlier). Dismissal from the WRS program shall result in termination of graduate student funding.

Academic Accommodations

Students are expected to timely fulfill all academic requirements of the Program. We encourage students who believe they have a disability that requires special consideration and academic accommodations to seek those accommodations directly from the University's Center for Disability and Access (801) 581-5020. Our goal is to support students and to provide the needed accommodations to help them be successful. We suggest accommodations be made as early as possible so that we can be proactive in our support.

Students Wishing to Leave the Graduate Program

Students should contact the Executive Administrative Assistant and the Director of Graduate Studies as early as possible if they are considering leaving the graduate program. The timing of a

student's departure from the program impacts whether tuition must be reimbursed and eligibility for a degree. Reimbursement for tuition is delineated on the description of the Tuition Benefit Plan on the Graduate School website: **“IMPORTANT: Students adding and/or dropping courses after the semester's published add/drop deadlines are responsible for any and all charges incurred, including withdrawals. Tuition benefit will not pay for withdrawn credit hours, and if registration falls below nine credit hours at any time during the semester, a student becomes ineligible for TBP participation and will be billed the full tuition for that semester.”**

Students will not earn and receive a Master or PhD degree if the Graduate School and Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies requirements have not been met when they leave the graduate program. As such, students are advised to discuss degree requirements with the Graduate Director by requesting a special interview before they consider leaving the graduate program. The student should recognize that they would be required to re-apply should they wish to continue in the program and work on another advanced degree.

Teaching Assistant Performance

Students holding Teaching Assistant positions are expected to perform competently and conscientiously in that role. TA's will receive periodic evaluations of their job performance, will be notified of any deficiencies, and will be monitored for improvement in job fulfillment. TA's who fail to meet their responsibilities after notice of deficiencies and an opportunity to improve may be terminated from their TA position. The Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies follows University of Utah policies delineated in University Policy 6-309 for the termination of an educational trainee position (<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-309.php>).

If a student is being considered for dismissal due to academic misconduct, the dismissal of a student from the program will be carried out in compliance with University of Utah Policy 6-400.

Financial Support

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Most graduate students enrolled in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing are financially supported through Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs). In order to qualify as a GTA, students must enroll in a minimum of nine credit hours per semester, but no more than 12 credit hours. GTAs are awarded for two (MA/MS students) or four (PhD students) years. GTAs are awarded based on timely completion of graduate studies and continual 'good standing' as an instructor, which is determined by both peer and student evaluations. An instructor in good standing will maintain a minimum **B** average in all coursework and consistently receive average to above average teaching evaluations. GTAs who are fully funded receive a stipend for both fall and spring semesters and a waiver of resident or non-resident tuition, current as of 2020-21. Some teaching may be available in the summer for a small number of GTAs.

Teaching Assistant Responsibilities & Policies

In order to qualify as a GTA, students must enroll in a minimum of nine credit hours per semester. GTAs are awarded for two (MA/MS students) or four (PhD students) years. GTAs must teach two sections of WRTG 2010 in the fall and one section in the spring, except for the first semester teaching, in which they teach one section of WRTG 2010 in the fall and two in the spring. During their first semester, GTAs must also enroll in the teaching colloquium (WRTG 7840). After the first year, GTAs may teach other courses on occasion and as needed.

Acceptance of an assistantship implies a commitment for both semesters of the academic year. The full year's tuition waiver will be rescinded for students who do not complete a full year's teaching.

In addition to teaching three sections of WRTG 2010 (or equivalent) per year, GTAs are expected to hold office hours for a minimum of two hours per class per week in addition to all other grading, preparation, classroom management, and text selection responsibilities. Full time students with a GTA may only work 15 hours outside of the University, unless otherwise arranged with the department chair.

Students should provide the graduate advisor, Karli Sam, with their updated contact information including their preferred email address upon arrival each fall. All students will be assigned a utah.edu email address and should check this account frequently for departmental and university updates.

Tuition Waivers

Graduate students in good standing, maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA, who are GTAs, and who are registered for at least 9 credit hours will receive a full tuition waiver of resident or non-resident tuition for fall and spring semesters. PhD students receive up to 8 semesters of tuition waiver, and MA/MS students receive up to 6 semesters.

Student Health Insurance

The university subsidizes 80% of a standard health insurance premium for full-time teaching assistants and teaching fellowships. Students may increase the coverage to \$250,000 or add a spouse and/or children at their own expense. Graduate students holding non-teaching fellowships or not participating in the Tuition Benefit Program may purchase insurance at their own expense, if they are full-time students (enrolled for a minimum of nine hours) and in good standing.

Students holding a tuition waiver have the responsibility to accept or decline the benefit, or change their coverage, at the beginning of fall and spring semesters. Students whose registration falls below nine hours are ineligible and will be required to pay the full premium. Participation in the program during fall and spring semesters automatically earns the student full-year coverage; that is, summer semester is covered, with no additional registration required. This subsidy is governed by the same time limits as the Tuition Benefit. Please reference the information available through the graduate school if you have more questions or wonder about deadlines.

<https://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/insurance-information>.

Residency

To maintain eligibility for tuition benefits, all domestic nonresident students must apply for Utah residency upon completion of 40 graduate level semester credit hours at the University of Utah. Go to www.admissions.utah.edu for details on how to qualify and how to apply for residency reclassifications.

Financial Resources

The following are other types of financial resources available for graduate students enrolled in the WRS:

Personal Money Management Center

- <https://personal-money-management.utah.edu>

Pivot

- <https://osp.utah.edu/news/pivot.php>

Feed-U Pantry

- <https://union.utah.edu/resources-spaces/feed-u-pantry/hours-about-us>

Student & Faculty Code

Statement on Inclusion and Diversity

Diversity in the classroom is key to providing and fostering critical, civil, and inclusive education. It is essential that we speak respectfully and listen attentively to one another in order to cultivate and sustain an open and equitable classroom environment. Respectful behavior will be extended to everyone (that is, students, instructors and staff), including respecting, for example, people of all ages, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, physical abilities, neurological and sensory processing, races, ethnicities, tribal affiliations and citizenships, nationalities, countries of origin, documentation status, language backgrounds, religious affiliations, political viewpoints, socioeconomic backgrounds, and educational pathways. We will not all think alike or share similar values, but we must learn to respect those differences and see them as our strengths to embrace rather than as our weaknesses to eschew or as dividing lines to flatten. Writing and Rhetoric faculty will not tolerate classroom or online discriminatory behavior or rhetoric. We must learn from one another as we strive to build empathy and reciprocity around those different locations and positions throughout the semester. Questions, discussions, and respectful debate and civil disagreement are encouraged and indeed expected.

Code of Conduct

Writing and Rhetoric Studies Code of Conduct

The Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies' code of conduct indicates our commitment to research and education that meets the highest ethical standards. We are committed to providing

an educational space, free of harassment and discrimination. We follow the definition of discrimination published on the University of Utah Office of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action website. “Discrimination means treating someone differently, i.e., disadvantaging the person, on the basis of being a member of a protected class described in University Policy 1-012 when:

1. such conduct adversely affects a term or condition of an individual’s employment, education, living environment, or participation in a university program or activity; or
2. a person’s membership in a protected class is used as the basis for or a factor in decisions affecting that individual’s employment, education, living environment, health care, or other participation in a university program or activity.”

The WRS will not tolerate discrimination or harassment. Harassment includes denigrating or inappropriate jokes and/or stories, unwanted touching or verbal sexual advances, stalking, following, intimidation, or any other unwelcome behavior. Students who feel they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment should contact the DGS and consult the University of Utah Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action at: <http://www.oeo.utah.edu>.

University Graduate School Code of Conduct

The Graduate School is committed to fostering excellence in our community of scholars and leaders. We recognize that diverse and inclusive teams are most likely to produce creative and impactful scholarship and are eager to ensure that each member of our academic community is respected and valued for their unique contributions. This Code of Conduct upholds the Graduate School’s commitment to conduct graduate and postdoctoral education according to the highest ethical and professional standard in compliance with all applicable University, state, and federal regulations.

The Graduate School is committed to providing a safe, harassment-free and discrimination-free environment for everyone. Harassment includes offensive comments or denigrating jokes related to nationality, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or veteran’s status, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing, photography, or recording, inappropriate physical contact, unwelcome sexual attention, and harassment through social media.

All University faculty, staff, and students are expected to comply with the applicable anti-harassment, anti-discrimination, and scientific and professional ethics laws and policies in effect at the University of Utah and at the institutions where they may be visiting.

Members of the University of Utah community who wish to report a violation of this Code of Conduct are encouraged to speak to or contact the appropriate administrator or Dean, including the Department Chair or Director of Graduate Studies of their academic program, the Dean of the Graduate School (David Kieda) and/or Associate/Assistant Deans of the Graduate School (Katie Ullman, Amy Barrios, Araceli Frias), or the University’s Title IX coordinator (Sherrie Hayashi).

Visitors, including participants at any University or Graduate School sponsored events, are expected to comply with these same standards, as well as to policies at their place of employment. In addition to any applicable reporting requirements at their home site, visitors are encouraged to report violations here as above.

Informal Dispute Resolution

During their time here in the program, it is possible, if unlikely, that a student will have conflict with either another student in the program or a faculty member. If that happens, we want to get the issue problem-solved and resolved as quickly as possible. Some potential problems might include, but are not limited to:

- conflict with chair
- conflict over workload
- conflict over dissertation project
- conflict over deadlines
- desire to change chairs, mid-stream
- conflict with a peer in classes
- conflict with a peer over teaching
- conflict in shared graduate student spaces
- and the like

Students are encouraged to go to the department DGS for conflict resolution. Students are also welcome to make an appointment with one of the Graduate School deans to voice complaints or concerns (can be requested through info@gradschool.utah.edu or by calling 801.585.5529).

Students should also be aware of the University Ombudsman's Office, which provides dispute resolution, resources, and the potential for mediation. More information: <https://academic-affairs.utah.edu/office-for-faculty/facultyombudsman>

Formal Dispute Resolution

This section describes the University procedures for students wanting to resolve disputes. Policy 6-400 covers the process of Academic Appeal: (<https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>)

Policy 6-400: Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

The Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities has seven parts: General Provisions and Definitions, Student Bill of Rights, Student Behavior, Student Academic Performance, Student Academic Conduct, Student Professional and Ethical Conduct, and Student Records.

Title IX

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination against all genders in educational institutions. Schools are required to ensure that campuses are free of sex discrimination and have an established procedure for handling complaints. <https://sexualassault.utah.edu/reporting/title-ix-on-campus-reporting>. The University of Utah has a Title IX coordinator to handle complaints of sex discrimination, including complaints of sexual assault and harassment:

Sherrie Hayashi, Title IX coordinator
Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action/Title IX
Park Building, Room 135
801-581-8365
sherrie.hayashi@utah.edu

Student Safety

Your safety is our top priority. In an emergency, dial 911 or seek a nearby emergency phone (throughout campus). Report any crimes or suspicious people to 801-585-COPS; this number will get you to a dispatch officer at the University of Utah Department of Public Safety (DPS; <https://safety.utah.edu/>). If at any time, you would like to be escorted by a security officer to or from areas on campus, DPS will help — just give a call.

The University of Utah seeks to provide a safe and healthy experience for students, employees, and others who make use of campus facilities. In support of this goal, the University has established confidential resources and support services to assist students who may have been affected by harassment, abusive relationships, or sexual misconduct. A detailed listing of University Resources for campus safety can be found at: <https://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/campussafety.php>

Your well-being is key to your personal safety. If you are in crisis, call 801-587-3000; help is close.

The university has additional excellent resources to promote emotional and physical wellness, including the Counseling Center (<https://counselingcenter.utah.edu>), the Wellness Center (<https://wellness.utah.edu>), and the Women's Resource Center (<https://womenscenter.utah.edu>). Counselors and advocates in these centers can help guide you to other resources to address a range of issues, including substance abuse and addiction.

Safety Resources

University Police: <https://safety.utah.edu/>
Phone: 911 or 801.585.2677
Emergency services

Crisis Line (24/7): <https://healthcare.utah.edu/uni/programs/crisis-diversion.php>

Phone: 801.587.300

For crisis intervention, emotional support, and mental health needs

Suicide Prevention Hotline – Utah: <http://www.suicide.org/hotlines/utah-suicide-hotlines.html>

Crisis Prevention – SafeUT Smartphone App: <https://www.uofuhealth.org/safeut>

Free 24/7 access to counselors for crisis prevention and emotional support

University Counseling Center: <https://counselingcenter.utah.edu>

Room 246, Student Services Building (SSB)

Phone: 801.581.6826

Sexual Assault Victim Advocacy: <https://advocate.wellness.utah.edu>

Room 328, Student Services Building (SSB)

Phone: 801.581.7779

Student Health Center: <https://studenthealth.utah.edu/services>

Madsen Health Center, 555 Foothill Drive

Phone: 801.581.6431

Women’s Resource Center: <https://womenscenter.utah.edu>

Room 411, Olpin Union Building

The Office of the Dean of Students: <http://deanofstudents.utah.edu>

Room 270, Olpin Union Building

Research Policies & Training

Research Misconduct

All research, whether at the dissertation stage or while still in coursework, must be completed according to the ethical standards of our academic communities. The WRS will not tolerate any form of academic misconduct, be it research or writing related. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to 1) plagiarism, 2) misrepresenting one’s work, 3) misrepresenting one’s contribution to a project, 4) cheating, and 5) fabrication or falsification of data. At the University of Utah, there are three levels of sanction: those imposed by the instructor(s), those imposed by the WRS, and those imposed by the University. An instructor may impose a maximum sanction of failing the student in the course. The Department could expel the student from the WRS, and the University could expel the student from the University. For each level of sanction, the student has the right to appeal to the professor, the WRS (course and department levels), and the university.

IRB

Anyone doing research that involves human subjects, must have the project approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is charged with the review of all research projects

that involve humans to ensure they comply with local, state, and federal laws, as well as the high ethical standards set forth in University policy. If students are working with human subjects in their research, they should be familiar with and compliant to IRB rules. More information here: <https://irb.utah.edu>.

Student Access to Physical Resources

Departmental Resources

Every Graduate Teaching Assistant will be assigned a mailbox where they will receive correspondence regarding departmental issues. Every graduate student also receives a key to LNCO 3870, a graduate student common area that can be used for studying and meetings with students. There are a limited number of lockers that can be used by graduate students in LNCO 38XX. Lockers can be checked out from Lisa Shaw, the graduate student advisor for the WRS: l.shaw@utah.edu.

Copies can be made for classes by Katya Pilkington, the WRS executive secretary. Please email the request with the documents for copying to katya.pilkington@utah.edu. Please give Katya 48 hours to make the copy, though most will be done within 24 hours.

University Resources

There are a number of university resources available to students:

University ID Card

University card information: <https://ucard.utah.edu>

TRAX Pass

UTA University pass: <https://commuterservices.utah.edu/mass-transit>

TRAX Schedules & Maps: <https://www.rideuta.com/Rider-Tools/Schedules-and-Maps>

Wireless Connections

Onboard to Utah wireless: https://onboard.utah.edu/enroll/uofu/prod_3/process

Software

Grammarly Access: <https://gradschool.utah.edu/grammarly>

New Student Guide to Digital Resources:

https://it.utah.edu/help/it_guides/new_student_guide.php

Hardware

University Bookstore: <https://www.campusstore.utah.edu/utah/home>

Surplus & Salvage: <https://fbs.admin.utah.edu/surplus/>

Paychecks & Direct Deposit

HR Paycheck Information: <https://www.hr.utah.edu/payroll/paycheck.php>

Housing

Graduate Student Housing Resources & Options:

<https://housingoptions.utah.edu/graduate-housing/>

Meals & Food

Utah Meal Plans: <https://housing.utah.edu/dining>

Arts & Entertainment

Arts Pass: <https://www.finearts.utah.edu/arts-pass>

Student Awards and Fellowships

There are a number of scholarships, fellowships, and research awards offered by the College of Humanities and University. Note that not all are listed below.

College of Humanities Awards and Fellowships

To look up current awards and scholarships offered by the College of Humanities, go to:

<https://humanities.utah.edu/students/scholarships.php>

Tanner Humanities Center Fellowships Full Grants/Research Fellowships

The Tanner Humanities Center will award up to 2 full-grant graduate fellowships each academic year. Fellows will receive a stipend, full tuition, and a semi-private office in The Center.:

Graduate School Awards and Fellowship

To look up current scholarships and fellowships offered by the Graduate School, go to:

<https://gradschool.utah.edu/funding/fellowships-scholarships-awards/grad-school-administered/index.php#fands>

Graduate Research Fellowship

This award is a one-year, non-renewable award. The fellowship is awarded by a committee of University of Utah faculty members active in research or creative work appointed by the Graduate Dean on the basis of student achievement and excellence (as assessed through references and academic records) and the quality, potential, and rigor of the research or creative proposal. Applicants must be nominated by their department. Application materials must be submitted to the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies Graduate Studies Committee at least two weeks before the application deadline established by the Graduate School. *Departments may submit a maximum of two ranked proposals.*

Steffensen Cannon Scholarship

Each Steffensen Cannon scholarship is awarded for one year, with the possibility of renewal for a second and final year, if the student remains in good standing. A Steffensen Cannon scholar may not accept remuneration from another scholarship during the tenure of the award. Since the scholarship is intended to provide the opportunity for full-time study, if a scholar wishes to accept employment, a written request including the nature of the proposed work, number of hours involved, why the work is necessary, and how it enables completion of the scholar's academic work in an excellent and timely manner must be submitted to the Steffensen Cannon Committee. The student submits the application without any ranking by the department.

Emerging Diversity Scholarship Fellows

For promising underrepresented graduate student who have successfully completed their first-year of full-time graduate students at the University of Utah and whose engagement in the academy will contribute to diversity in higher education. The student submits the application without any ranking by the department.

Ronald McNair Graduate Fellowship

For diverse, incoming graduate students who will be enrolled full-time in an eligible graduate program pursuing their first master's or doctorate degree. The student may qualify for 100% tuition benefit.

University Teaching Assistantship

The purpose of the University Teaching Assistantship program is to improve graduate education programs and training at the University of Utah in the service of undergraduate education through the creative use of graduate teaching assistants. Mentoring of graduate students to assist them in preparing for teaching careers is an integral part of the program.

External Sources

A list of external fellowships is also available at <https://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/external-opportunities>, and students also have access to Pivot, a new tool for finding foundation funding. <https://osp.utah.edu/news/pivot.php>

Student Travel Assistance

Travel funding from WRS is available for students in the department who are presenting at a conference, up to \$500. The request should be made to the office administrator as soon as the conference is confirmed. There are also awards offered through the Graduate School for virtual and in-person conferences, as well as early career professional development. More information on these awards can be found here: <https://gradschool.utah.edu/funding/travel-assistance/index.php>