

We welcome committed students intent on extending their philosophies of teaching writing. The intent of the program is not to supply a steady stream of strategies for instructors; rather, an intensive study of research and theory provides a broad perspective from which candidates may make informed pedagogical decisions. That is, the program isn't aimed at supplying a technique or strategy you can use *tomorrow*; it is aimed at supplying a philosophical perspective you can use *every day*. So, the M.A. in Rhetoric & Teaching Writing is well suited to those who teach in the public schools, who teach or wish to teach in the community colleges, or who wish to pursue a doctorate.

Frequently-asked questions about the M.A. concentration in Rhetoric and Teaching Writing:

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1. Whom should I contact with questions not answered here?

Matt Moberly, Coordinator, MA-RTW mmoberly@csustan.edu

2. How do I get advising for the concentration and my overall MA program?

The program coordinator is also adviser to all students in the RTW concentration (including students in a dual concentration that involves RTW). It is mandatory that you be advised each spring, and a hold will be placed on your fall registration until you have been advised. You should query the coordinator/adviser when you have questions related to any aspect of your progress through the concentration.

3. What are the required courses and required number of units in the concentration?

The M.A. degree requires 30 units; required courses in the RTW concentration are:

- ENGL 5001 History of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
- ENGL 5010 Seminar: Composition/Rhetoric (may be taken twice for credit)
- ENGL 5020 Assessment in English
- ENGL 5870 Research in Composition
- ENGL 5894 Teaching Composition
- ENGL 5941 Internship: Teaching Writing

4. In what order should I take these courses?

The gateway course into the concentration is ENGL5001, so it is important to take that course in your first semester if possible. ENGL5894 is normally a prerequisite to teaching, so if you want to be able to teach early on in your program, take that as soon as possible (see also item 6).

5. What other courses may I take?

Many options are available; discuss with the coordinator to make sure these courses enhance your program of study.

Any ENGL-prefix graduate course

ENGL5980: Individual Study up to six units.

Upper-division undergraduate ENGL-prefix courses approved in advance by your adviser.¹

Courses from other programs.²

Other units may be usable in the program; inquire and get approval *before* taking them.

6. What's the difference in and connection between 5884 and 5894?

ENGL5894 is a three-unit course required as part of the concentration in RTW; the course is also a prerequisite for Teaching Associates.

Teaching Associates are supervised by the Director of Composition and are normally required to attend small-group or individual meetings during the first semester of teaching to discuss their teaching experiences. Teaching Associates are allowed, but not required, to take ENGL5884, a one-unit practicum, in order to receive credit for the required meetings. ENGL5884 is not required in the concentration but may be counted and may be repeated for credit up to a maximum of two units in the degree program.

7. What is a Teaching Associateship (TAship)? Why should I apply? How do I apply?

A teaching associateship is a paid position that places you in charge of a class while still under the guidance of a supervising professor (the Director of Composition). The TAship is an integral part of your education in the English MA program that allows you to get hands-on experience in planning a course, delivering direct instruction, and responding to and evaluating student work in writing courses (ENGL 1000, 1001, or 1002, 1006, 1007). Teaching experience is an important element of your resume when applying for future employment.

For more detailed information on the Writing Program, see

<http://www.csustan.edu/WritingProgram/>

For application forms and deadlines see

<http://www.csustan.edu/WritingProgram/Pages/ApplicationMaterial.html>

8. What about dual concentrations?

Dual concentrations may combine any two of the three concentrations (LIT, RTW, TESOL) and normally require 39 units. We feel that the dual concentrations offer a strong statement that students are very well qualified in two areas. Generally speaking, you must meet the specific

¹You must do work in the class substantially beyond what is required of the students taking the course for undergraduate credit. Arrange that additional work with the instructor and complete the **4000 Level Course Verification Form** *very early* in the term. The instructor should place a memorandum in your file indicating that the course was completed for graduate credit.

²Inquire about counting units *before* doing the work and secure a memorandum from the Coordinator for your department file.

requirements of each concentration, including both comprehensive examinations. Work with the coordinators of both concentrations when designing your dual program and verify your specific program by completing the [Dual Concentration Form](#). Also seek approval for any changes after the plan has been approved.

9. How can I ensure that I'm following the most efficient path to degree?

Meet with the coordinator yearly to review progress and plan next steps. In the interim, email/text questions and follow up with a meeting request if questions are not clarified.

Keep track of your progress with this checklist:

Required courses (18-21 units)	
	ENGL 5001 History of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
	ENGL 5010 Seminar: Composition/Rhetoric (may be taken twice for credit)
	ENGL 5020 Assessment in English
	ENGL 5870 Research in Composition
	ENGL 5894 Teaching Composition
	ENGL 5941 Internship: Teaching Writing
Additional Coursework (9-12 units)	
	Total (at least 30 units completed within 7 years from beginning program)*
Other components	
	Comprehensive Examination (required)
	Advanced Project (optional)

*Dual concentrations (LIT/RTW; TESOL/RTW) require at least 39 units.

10. What is the comprehensive examination? When may I take it?

The comprehensive examination is a 72-hour, take-home test composed based on the required reading list and a supplemental reading list of at least ten works that you design in consultation with your exam committee. Think of the supplemental reading area as the intersection of a major interest for you and preparation that will extend your expertise. Normally, you will receive two sets of two questions and respond to one question from each set. Usually, one of the sets will include a question related to your supplemental area and reading list. Exams may be taken in your next-to-last or last semester and are administered in the first week of May or the first week of November.

Instructions, sample examination questions, and reading lists:

Instructions:

1. If you have questions about these instructions or the questions, please query immediately via email.
2. Answer one question from Set A and one question from Set B.

3. Label the essays, e.g. A1, B2, and copy the entire question at the beginning of the essay.
4. Expectations for an examination achieving “pass” or “high pass”:
 - Response to all parts of the question
 - An effective introduction and conclusion
 - Analysis, synthesis, and clear organization
 - A distinct voice—one that speaks from evidence drawn from the approved readings lists
 - Incorporation of evidence from readings that is *direct, focused, specific, and clearly linked to the discussion at hand*
 - Accuracy of information from sources used
 - Fair use of sources and correct MLA documentation including parenthetical citations and works cited
 - Very well written at the sentence level—very low level of error
 - Each essay should be no fewer than 3000 words, excluding the question, graphics, and works cited.
5. Return your essays electronically as an attached Word document or as plain text email within 72 hours to all readers.

Sample questions.

Set A:

A1. Achieving fairness and equality in the classroom is as complex a process as it is important, and it is an undertaking that likely varies from instructor to instructor. In an essay that discusses fairness and equality in the classroom:

1. Provide working definitions of "fairness" and "equality" and discuss any differences in the meanings of two terms.
2. Discuss fairness and equality in light of the work of Freire, especially as exemplified in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (go beyond a discussion of "banking education"), and in light of Burke's *Rhetoric of Motives*, especially as relates to his ideas of "identification" and "consubstantiation."
3. Linked to "2," provide a brief list of principles, with brief explanations for instructors, for achieving fairness and equality, as you have defined them, in the classroom. Especially pertinent are any restrictions instructors should impose on themselves. (This part should take no more than one page of your essay.)

A2. A friend of mine once opined that "good academics are good little rule followers." That may be truer than we like to admit. In *The Social Construction of Reality*, Berger and Luckmann note that, after family and along with church, school is the most powerful form of socialization most of us encounter. Focusing on Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* discuss how institutions attempt to seize us into conformity and what levels of conformity are appropriate for an instructor in first-year composition to demand (as an agent of a state-supported university beholden to taxpayers who fund about 50% of students' education).

Set B:

B1. Drawing from the *Journal of Basic Writing* over the last ten years, summarize the major issues, trends, and changes in basic writing pedagogy and instruction signaled by publications in that journal. For those who work in and design basic writing programs, what are the most important lessons we can draw from this body of work?

B2. A couple of indicators of the power of a theory are its durability and adaptability; for

example, we consider classical discourse theory powerful in part because it has endured and is adaptable to important functions of current discourse. Is Kinneavy's *A Theory of Discourse* and its grounding in aims durable/adaptable in relation to later writers who might be considered to more "political" or "progressive." (If so, how do these theorists complement and reinforce one another; if not, what are the limitations of Kinneavy's work vis-à-vis the other theorists.)

MA-RTW comprehensive examination required reading list revision.

Students in the program as of fall 2016 may select either the revised or the previous list; students matriculating after fall 2016 use the revised list:

Revised MA-RTW Reading List (October 2016)

Revised

A Guide to Composition Pedagogies Gary Tate et al., 2nd ed.*
A New History of Classical Rhetoric George Kennedy
A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers Erika Lindeman, 4th ed.
Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, Pedagogy Robert Connors
Cross-Talk in Comp Theory Victor Villanueva & Kristin Arola, 3rd ed.
Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition Lester Faigley*
Literacy as a Moral Imperative: Facing the Challenges of a Pluralistic Society Rebecca Powell
(Re)Articulating Writing Assessment for Teaching and Learning Brian Huot*
Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures: Refiguring College English Studies James Berlin (Lauer Series)*
The Essential Don Murray: Lessons from America's Greatest Writing Teacher Don Murray
The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present Patricia Bizzell & Bruce Herzberg excerpts:*
 "Encomium of Helen" Gorgias
 Gorgias Plato
 Phaedrus Plato
 Rhetoric Aristotle
 Philosophy of Rhetoric Campbell
 Language as Symbolic Action Burke
 The New Rhetoric Perelman
 The Uses of Argument Toulmin
 "The Laugh of the Medusa" Cixous
Writing Without Teachers Peter Elbow

*These texts will likely be covered in courses within the program, depending on the instructor

Previous

On Rhetoric Aristotle (1991 Kennedy translation)
Phaedrus Plato
Gorgias Plato
A Rhetoric of Motives Kenneth Burke
Literacy: A Critical Sourcebook Ellen Cushman, et. al.
Writing Without Teachers Peter Elbow.
Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition Lester Faigley
Listening to the World: Cultural Issues in Academic Writing Helen Fox
(Re)Articulating Writing Assessment for Teaching and Learning Brian Huot
A Theory of Discourse James Kinneavy
The Structure of Scientific Revolutions Thomas Kuhn
The Performance of Self in Student Writing Thomas Newkirk
Literacy as a Moral Imperative: Facing the Challenges of a Pluralistic Society Rebecca Powell
Computers in the Composition Classroom: A Critical Sourcebook Michelle Sidler, et. al.

An initial *supplemental* reading list focused on feminist/cultural rhetoric and criticism might look like:

Anzaldua, Gloria *Borderlands/La Frontera*

Anzaldua, Gloria *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*
Campbell, Karlyn Kohrs "The Sound of Women's Voices"; "Inventing Women: From Amaterasu to Virginia Woolf"; *Man Cannot Speak for Here: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric*

Cixous, Helene *The Laugh of the Medusa*

Grimke, Sarah *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman*

Lunsford, Andrea "Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric: Gloria Anzaldua on Composition and Postcoloniality"

Poirot, K. "Mediating a Movement, Authorizing Discourse: Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics*, and Feminisms Second Wave"

Rich, Adrienne *What Is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics*

Woolf, Virginia *Professions for Women*

11. How do I arrange to take the comprehensive examinations?

The semester before you plan to complete your program, discuss the formation of your committee and the designation of committee chair with the program coordinator/adviser. After discussing the committee membership, contact potential committee members to see if they are able to serve on your committee. One member must agree to serve as your committee chair, and you should then work most closely with that person concerning throughout the examination process. Once you have a committee, complete and submit the form at <http://www.csustan.edu/English/documents/GradExamCommitteeForm.doc>

Work with your chair to develop the initial version of your supplemental list and the explanation of the area of your interest the list covers. Once you have a draft supplemental list, arrange to meet with your committee early in the semester in which you wish to take your examination to discuss your area of interest and the exam format and to schedule the specific testing dates.

Normally, RTW comprehensive examination committees are composed of two or three RTW faculty (Moberly, Paterson, Thompson, Wittman). For students doing an RTW/LIT dual concentration, a separate examination committee should be composed for LIT; please see the coordinator of the LIT concentration for direction. For students doing an RTW/TESOL concentration, please see the coordinator of the TESOL concentration for direction.

12. Should I do an Advanced Project?

An advanced project is a significant research project culminating in a lengthy document comparable to a thesis. A project is an excellent opportunity to gain specialized knowledge in a specific area of rhetoric and composition. If you intend to pursue a doctorate after completing the M.A., an advanced project is excellent practice for the dissertation that doctoral programs require. If you are considering an advanced project, set up a meeting with the Coordinator to discuss the specific requirements and process.

13. How long do I have to complete my degree?

From the date you begin, you have seven years to complete the program. After the seventh year, you will begin to "lose" coursework which may or may not be revalidated. If coursework is not revalidated, you will have to retake any courses that have expired.

14. Where can I get information about career opportunities?

Talk to the program coordinator as part of your advising and to your other professors and colleagues as you progress through the program. Get on the department's graduate-student listserv where job opportunities are sometimes posted

<http://lists.csustan.edu/mailman/listinfo/eng-gradstudent-l>.

The campus also has a Career Services Center, see <http://www.csustan.edu/career/>

15. How do I apply for graduation?

Most of the paperwork is completed by staff and faculty in the department; however you will need to submit an [Application for Graduation](#) to the Enrollment Services Office (MSR120) in the first two weeks of the term you plan to graduate.