

- I. There are at least seven to eight new programs coming online this year. Albany and Arlington were both lost.
- II. The Consortium is in the process of formalizing its relationship with CCCC as an organization.
- III. **Stuart Brown (New Mexico State University)** -- Status of utilizing MLA as the primary recruitment site of doctoral students.
 - a. Preferred candidates are being hired before the MLA conference.
 - i. How does the Consortium sidestep this dilemma?
 - ii. Does this issue need to be addressed more formally through a systematic inquiry?
 - b. Can the market be quantified in a short synopsis without relying on MLA for this information?
 - i. Is the market regulated or competitive?
 - ii. How accessible are the hiring guidelines of the Council of Graduate Programs in Higher Education?
 - iii. Who abides by the policies and deadlines of the Council?
 - iv. How can this information be made visible to graduate students and programs? Which listserves should this information be made available to?
 - c. Programs are advertising in the Chronicle and on listserves.
 - d. The Consortium cannot know or control the practices of individual institutions – our policy should be to inform graduate students of how the hiring of positions are being conducted.
 - e. Should the Consortium go outside the MLA in recruiting for positions?
 - i. Guidelines would be needed.
 - ii. Going outside the MLA conference could change some institutional constraints – it “violates” the season for hiring.
 - iii. It may be divisive for composition and rhetoric programs hire at various times and other English studies departments hire solely at MLA.
 - iv. There is a specific timing factor in the preparation of graduate students for hiring at MLA.
 1. Normally starts in the fall semester.
 2. Has listserv activity shortened this cycle by allowing potential candidates to begin looking early?
 - v. From a student’s perspective, getting staggered offers might create a situation where offers must be considered serially.

- vi. The Consortium should not make it difficult for graduate students to accept the opportunities that are available to them.

IV. Ralph Voss (University of Alabama)

- a. Small composition program laboring in a typical English department.
- b. Provided summary of program via handout.

V. Deborah Brandt (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

- a. What are students reading for exams and what questions are faculty members asking them?
 - i. 24 Consortium institutions polled.
 - ii. Procedural information was freely given - no reading lists or copies of exams were provided.
 - iii. Would the consortium be committed to sharing information on exam questions and reading lists?
 - 1. Might students be asked to sign a waiver so that their exam answers could be used for research purposes?
 - 2. Need to address the graduate directors of every institution that has a Masters program in Composition and Rhetoric to improve the response rate to our queries.
 - iv. www.wisc.edu/english/consortium -- doctoral exam practices in PhD programs in composition and rhetoric.
 - 1. Most typical format is written/oral exams over candidate-generated reading lists with some candidate input.
 - 2. Summary of program information is not yet available on the website – profiles only.
 - v. www.english.uiuc.edu/cws -- several exams and reading lists.
- b. Might this study reveal interesting trends in the direction of the field?
 - i. In the decentralized creation of canons?
 - ii. Where graduate students are coming from into the programs and how that is shaping reading lists.
- c. How might we develop healthy PhD programs without undergraduate and masters programs to feed them?

VI. Louise Wetherbee Phelps (Syracuse University) – How do we reach our best potential candidates? (Complete documentation of this discussion will be provided by Louise Phelps.)

- a. The broad issue is visibility for the field.
- b. The specific issue is that the National Research Council (NRC) does not list composition and rhetoric as a field and this affects the distribution of opportunities in a number of, mostly unknown, ways.
- c. Should composition and rhetoric be listed as a sub-field of English or separate?
 - i. Proposed taxonomy and methodology report of who will be added to the NRC list:
 - 1. Composition and rhetoric could likely be listed as a sub-field of English studies.
 - 2. It would take the documentation of the number of PhDs produced by all programs since 1993 to make this so.
 - 3. Need 500 PhDs granted over the most recent five years across at least 25 different programs.

4. Need to be viewed alternatively to being a “practical” program.
5. The relevant criteria include the identification of new and emerging fields, which will be listed as they meet the threshold.
 - a. Students must choose to list their degree in the field.
 - b. “English” coded on applicable forms then a write-in for composition and rhetoric?
 - c. Do we instruct students on how to fill these forms out?
 - d. We need to investigate how these codes are determined and how to affect them.
- d. What might our plan of action be?
 - i. If we don’t try for autonomy, it will never happen – we should go forward under the banner of composition and rhetoric even if some programs are still housed in English departments.
 - ii. A standing visibility committee will be created (Louise, Jim, Gail).
 - iii. A committee will be created to explore the NRC taxonomy.
 - iv. Dissertation abstracts will be examined to determine if there are individuals listed in doctoral records that are unknown to the consortium.
 - v. The number of graduates from each program since 1993 must be determined by querying individual programs themselves.
 - vi. Janice will look into the history of the field.
 - vii. It would be beneficial to have another faculty member or graduate student to do survey work and “number crunching”.
 - viii. How might MLA be of assistance in this endeavor?
 1. Might the Consortium build a presence at the MLA conference?
 2. Would a potential liaison with MLA be beneficial in determining the practicality and benefit of a higher level of visibility at MLA?
 - ix. An initial letter should be drafted and include:
 1. An approximate list of the number of programs and planned programs.
 2. An historical statement on the Consortium, programs, and related materials.
 3. A statement of intention to document the number of graduates from these programs.
 4. The fact that there are over sixty journals in the field.
 5. The disproportionate number of composition and rhetoric jobs on the MLA joblist.
 6. Self-identifying faculty numbers, CCCC numbers, etc.
 - x. It needs to be explained (in person) how difficult it is to document what is being asked because composition and rhetoric programs are spread throughout the English and communications disciplines.
 - xi. Deans of graduate schools could be enlisted for specific help.

VII. Janice Lauer (Purdue University) – Opening a discussion on international graduate students.

- a. Most international students have an MA degree from an American institution and have found out about a doctoral program while enrolled as a master’s student.

- b. How do programs recruit international students?
- c. How might the Consortium examine the process of accepting applications?
 - i. What are the post 9/11 issues?
 - ii. Would it help international students to have access to application tips available on websites?
 - iii. How can applicants be evaluated vis-à-vis standards?
 - iv. Should ESL faculty be consulted in the evaluation process?
- d. Orientation and coursework for international students.
 - i. How do we orient international students to programs in relation to their unique needs?
 - ii. How can we connect international students to campus resources?
 - iii. Should international students have extra visits set-up with their advisors?
- e. In-class discussions with international students.
 - i. Some students' cultures see casual discussion as undesirable.
 - ii. What would be the efficacy of on-line discussion groups?
 - iii. Should students be required to bring reading responses?
 - iv. What would appropriate coursework for international students be?
 - 1. The problem with stereotyping students.
 - 2. The challenge of helping them.
 - 3. Necessary background preparation for them.
- f. Post-graduation issues.
 - i. It is important to get international students assistance in placement after graduation.
 - ii. It is also important to help these students assess and face special problems they may encounter if they choose to stay (e.g. make sure they have the credentials they need to stay).
- g. Financial need of international students
 - i. Need to show university support for these students as long as they study.
 - ii. Is funding through research assistantships a possibility?
- h. How do we capitalize on students in other countries developing a receptivity to composition and rhetoric?

VIII. Web Page

- a. Currently not in operation due to lack of funding
- b. The Consortium currently has approximately \$500 in its operational account.
- c. Should dues for the Consortium be reinstated?

IX. Meeting Format

- a. The Consortium will continue meeting with the panel and roundtable formats.
- b. Items of interest for next year's agenda should be emailed to Stuart Brown at sbrown@nmsu.edu.
- c. The current Executive Committee will continue (by unanimous vote).

Prepared by: Patrick Corbett
 Clarion University
s_plcorbett@clarion.edu

Subject: Re: [Consortium] the doctoral consortium at 4C's

Dear Consortium Members. Christine Norris (at Purdue) has done a tremendous job updating our membership list and getting people on the new listserv. Our great thanks for her diligence and time.

The Session information (see below) is a guide to our working agenda, however Louise Phelps and Pat Sullivan will have an updated plan at the meeting. As always, we see this session as a "work in progress" and very much open to input from the constituency.

Here's the info from the program.

As listed under Special Events on p. 69 of the program.

Murray Hill A, 2nd floor, 1 to 4 p.m.

The presenters listed are Doug Hesse, Chris Haas, Deborah Brandt, Chris Farris, and Louise Phelps with Pat Sullivan chairing.

The topics (or "discussion starters" as Doug Hesse suggests we consider them) are

Doug Hesse and Chris Haas: The state of "method" and the methods courses in doctoral programs

Deborah Brandt: Preliminary and qualifying exams

Chris Farris: Broader institutional influences on rhet and comp doctoral programs

Louise Phelps: Status of "Using Technological Innovation for Collaboration among Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition: A Preliminary Proposal" and the NRC

Pat Sullivan: Status of electronic resources [Webpage; listserv]; she has also begun designing a Webpage; we may want to brainstorm some ideas for this—one of mine is based on keeping tabs on where graduates are placed/where faculty move). An issue here that seems important is whether to spend Consortium funding situating this website/listserv independently of a specific university (get a .org suffix as opposed to a .edu).

My regrets at not being there this year, but I am looking forward to San Antonio in 2004.

Consortium mailing list

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Janice Lauer

From: consortium-bounces@linnell.english.purdue.edu on behalf of Doug Hesse
[ddhesse@ilstu.edu]
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2004 11:17 PM
To: louise wetherbee Phelps; consortium@linnell.english.purdue.edu
Subject: Re: [Consortium] NRC taxonomy

Louise (and Chuck and all),

Glad to hear that the Consortium worked on this in San Antonio. I was otherwise occupied there :) and missed the discussion, but it's heartening to hear about the committee and plan.

Doug

At 08:48 PM 4/15/2004 -0400, louise wetherbee Phelps wrote:

>I am on my way out of town, but when I return next week will start
>putting
>together a summary of what was discussed at the Consortium meeting about
>addressing the taxonomy issue (the committee that will work on this at NRC
>starts meeting in the fall). I have identified a number of people, some
>not at the meeting, who agreed to work on different aspects of the plan. I
>also plan to contact someone at the NRC (who had a recent injury, so I
>couldn't talk to her before 4Cs) to see if I could meet with her this
>summer in Washington.

>
>more on this later--

>
>Louise

>

>Consortium mailing list
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**CONSORTIUM OF DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN RHETORIC AND
COMPOSITION**

2004

University of Alabama
University of Arizona
Arizona State University
Ball State University
Bowling Green State University
University of California, S. Barbara
University of California, S. Diego
Carnegie Mellon University
University of Connecticut
Florida State University
Georgia State University
Illinois State University
University of Illinois, Champaign
Indiana University
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Iowa State University
Kent State University
Louisiana State University
University of Louisville
University of Maryland
University of Massachusetts
Miami University
Michigan Tech University
University of Michigan
Michigan State University
University of Minnesota
University of Mississippi
University of Nebraska
University of Nevada, Reno
University of New Hampshire
New Mexico State University
University of New Mexico
City University of New York

SUNY, Albany
SUNY, Stony Brook
University of North Carolina, Gr.
Northern Illinois University
Ohio State University
University of Oklahoma
Penn State University
University of Pittsburgh
Purdue University
Rensselaer Polytechnic
University of Rhode Island
University of South Carolina
University of South Florida
Southern Illinois University
University of Southwestern Louisiana
Syracuse University
University of Tennessee
Texas A & M University Commerce
Texas Christian University
University of Texas, Arlington
University of Texas, Austin
University of Texas, El Paso
Texas Woman's University
University of Utah
University of Washington
Washington State University
Wayne State University
University of Wisconsin, Madison

Appendix D cont.

~~Appendix E~~ 

CONSORTIUM OF DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN RHETORIC AND
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U Wisconsin, Madison Dept. of English 600 N. Park St.
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|

LISTSERV: CONSORTIUM-L@LISTSERV.SYR.EDU
 HOME PAGE: http://www.uo.edu/cas/English/agora
 DAI Category: Rhetoric and Composition .0681

Janice Lauer

From: consortium-bounces@linnell.english.purdue.edu on behalf of Stuart Brown [sbrown@nmsu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 2004 12:01 PM
To: consortium@linnell.english.purdue.edu
Subject: [Consortium] Fwd: Consortium notes from CCCC 2004



Notes for ATTO0004.txt (235
Consortium of PhD Pr. B)

Dear Consortium members:

See the attached notes about our meeting at CCCC. They were ably taken by a graduate student who happened to sit in our session--because he had a laptop at hand, we "drafted" him to take notes (he felt uncomfortable taking "minutes"). Anyway, he did a commendable job.

I will also take this opportunity to call for agenda items for next year's CCCC meeting. I will take responsibility for putting a proposal together to submit for our Wed. afternoon meeting. But provide me with them no later than April 20.

Please send to me any items (and indicate your willingness to present them) you think might be appropriate. As you can see from the notes attached, we had quite a rich agenda.

More later,

Stuart

>X-Original-To: sbrown@cccserver.nmsu.edu
>Delivered-To: sbrown@cccserver.nmsu.edu
>Date: Sun, 04 Apr 2004 21:50:30 -0400 (EDT)
>From: Patrick Corbett <s_plcorbett@clarion.edu>
>Subject: Consortium notes from CCCC 2004
>To: sbrown@nmsu.edu
>X-Spam-Checker-Version: SpamAssassin 2.63 (2004-01-11) on
>scratchy.nmsu.edu
>X-Spam-Level:
>X-Spam-Status: No, hits=-4.9 required=5.0 tests=BAYES_00 autolearn=ham
> version=2.63
>
>Stuart,
>
>I have attached the notes I took at the Consortium of PhD Programs in
>Rhetoric and Composition meeting in San Antonio. They are in MS Word
>2000 format. I hope that, given how I stumbled upon this meeting, they
>are coherent, useful, and complete.
>
>It was a pleasure meeting you, and I look forward to seeing you again
>in San Francisco next year.
>
>Sincerely,
>
>Patrick Corbett

Stuart C. Brown
Director of Writing Programs
& Associate Head
Department of English, MSC 3E

The Case for Rhetoric and Composition as an Emerging Field

The Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition October, 2004

lwphelps@syr.edu

315-443-1091

The Writing Program College of Arts and Sciences

239 HB Crouse Syracuse, NY 13244-1160

To: Taxonomy Committee for NRC Assessment of Research Doctorate Programs

From: Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition (Louise Wetherbee Phelps, Coordinator of Visibility Project)

Subject: Request to Include Rhetoric and Composition in the NRC Taxonomy as an Emerging Field *Date:* October 31, 2004

C: Dr. Charlotte Kuh, Deputy Executive Director of PGA and Director of the Study

In June, 2004, Dr. Louise Wetherbee Phelps, Professor of Writing and Rhetoric at Syracuse University, met with Dr. Charlotte Kuh as a representative of the national Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition. On behalf of the Consortium, she wanted to inquire how Rhetoric and Composition could be recognized in the NRC's revised taxonomy of research disciplines, so that information about the field can be gathered consistently in the upcoming NRC Assessment of Research Doctorate Programs. She noted that Rhetoric and Composition did not appear in the draft taxonomy even as a subfield, despite the fact that the field as a modern discipline dates back to the 1960s and its Ph.D. programs have experienced remarkable and continuing growth since the 1980s.

Based on Dr. Kuh's counsel and our own reading of the Committee's draft study on methodology, we are writing here as a consortium of 70 universities with doctoral studies in Rhetoric and Composition to request that Rhetoric and Composition (R/C) be included in the revised taxonomy as an "emerging field." In this memo, we describe doctoral education in Rhetoric and Composition and outline the case for inclusion.

The Consortium is still in the process of collecting and analyzing data on R/C Ph.D. programs to support this case. The difficulty in doing so reflects the problems of tracking the emergence of an interdisciplinary field, whose doctoral programs vary greatly in their titles, intellectual configuration, structures, and locations. Nonetheless, the Consortium itself is a strong argument that such programs have emerged and assumed a

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common identity despite their diversity. We are currently conducting a survey to capture this information and to document that the field has reached a critical mass in doctoral programs and graduates that amply justifies including Rhetoric and Composition in the taxonomy as an independent, emerging field. An interim report on this survey is attached; a full report will follow in December.

The Emergence of Rhetoric and Composition as a Field of Doctoral Study

The formation of Rhetoric and Composition as a contemporary discipline is conventionally dated to around 1963, but founders saw it as reconnecting writing to a history of Western rhetoric stretching back to ancient Greece. In the sixties and seventies, scholars from various disciplinary backgrounds brought this humanistic tradition together with the methods of social and behavioral sciences to develop a new field focused on studying written

language. Studies of writing today interpret “text” and “discourse” broadly, addressing the transformative role of technology in communication and the creation of multimedia texts. Meanwhile, Rhetoric and Composition has become ever more interdisciplinary, drawing on a widening range of fields for its theories and research methodologies (See Appendix A for a brief history of the discipline.)

Doctoral programs reflecting these developments began to develop rapidly around 1980; the first survey of (often fledgling) doctoral studies in Rhetoric and Composition was published in 1987 (Chapman and Tate). In many cases, doctoral studies began as tracks or emphases within other degrees, although others were initiated specifically as degrees in Rhetoric and Composition (variously named). English departments were a natural site (because they housed writing instruction), but not an exclusive one, and even those programs situated administratively in English tended to affiliate with disciplines outside the department as well as within (e.g., Linguistics, Literature, Cognitive Psychology, Communication Studies). A second survey published in 1994 (Brown, Meyer, and Enos) showed substantial increases in doctoral specializations and formalized programs: from 53 universities reporting some specialization in Rhetoric and Composition in 1987 to 72 describing programs in 1993.

In the most recent survey, published in 2000 (Brown, Jackson, and Enos), the number shrank slightly (to 65) as programs consolidated and strengthened in quality, with some pruning (and overall enrollment up). The original tracks and emphases in R/C tended to evolve toward more autonomous programs or independent degrees, although programs incorporating Rhetoric and Composition within an integrated (generalist) degree continue to fit some universities, students, and available faculty positions. A number of R/C doctorates are now situated in independent writing departments, programs, or centers.

Recent reports suggest that doctoral study may be experiencing another spurt of growth, with a number of universities (e.g., Michigan State, Virginia Tech, North Carolina State) undertaking significant commitments to creating new Ph.D. degrees in Rhetoric and Composition with a strong faculty core and strategically defined missions. Others are adding concentrations. Although a number of major programs have sustained a record of high quality for a decade or more, as a whole doctoral education in Rhetoric and Composition remains in a fluid, formative period.

The Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition

In 1993, in recognition of the increasing number and importance of Ph.D. programs related to the study of written communication, a group of scholars formed the Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition, which meets annually at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). (See Appendix B for a brief history of the Consortium and a list of current Consortium members.)

Universities with doctoral studies in Rhetoric and Composition, including independent degrees, concentrations, tracks, and interdisciplinary configurations for advanced study, are invited to join and to name representatives. Its current membership is 70 universities (and growing). The Consortium maintains a listserv and a website and undertakes projects in support of scholarship and doctoral study in the field.

At the time of founding, the programs that came together in the Consortium recognized the need to adopt an umbrella term for a field of studies that was inherently interdisciplinary in its sources, traditions, and methodologies. It was a difficult and potentially contentious decision. There was (and is today) no single term used by Ph.D. programs or by scholars that encompasses all the complexities of the field itself or accounts for the diverse ways that doctoral studies in writing and rhetoric are configured and articulated at different universities. These differences reflect both the historical formation of Rhetoric and Composition through the

convergence of different intellectual traditions, producing competing visions of the field, and also the local conditions that have produced distinctive interdisciplinary integrations and partnerships for doctoral education. Any choice by the

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Consortium also carried with it the risk of potential confusion about the relationship of the field to other, cognate disciplines with which our own scholarly community has overlapping subject matter and close affiliations.

The Consortium adopted “Rhetoric and Composition” as a generic designation of the field because these terms and their variants are the most commonly used in scholarly discourse and in doctoral program titles to refer to the discipline as a whole. They are also the most distinctive to the field and (especially when linked) are the least likely to produce confusion with other disciplines. The linkage expresses the field’s dual scholarly heritage and distinguishes its study of rhetoric from the subfield of Rhetoric within Communication Studies.

Identifying Doctoral Studies in Rhetoric and Composition

Program Titles

Doctoral degrees and specializations in Rhetoric and Composition continue to show individual variation in names and titles, designed to differentiate them from other programs in emphasis, concept, and/or interdisciplinary affiliations. They appear in various administrative and structural locations, not always easily identifiable (see “Program Locations” below).

To help in identifying programs, I list below primary terms for the field or its subject matter that may be found in program titles (separately and conjoined) or descriptions of areas of study within a broader degree:

- rhetoric, composition, and their variants and combinations
- writing
- literacy
- discourse
- text
- professional/technical or scientific communication [see below]

“Rhetoric,” “composition,” and “writing” are by far the most commonly used to name what is studied. Titles may combine any of these with other topical terms (e.g., language, communication, technology, information design) or disciplinary field and subfields (e.g., Linguistics, Cultural Studies, Literature).

Program Locations

Although many Rhetoric and Composition programs originated in English departments, where most writing teachers were located, the founding scholars in Rhetoric and Composition saw the field from the beginning as an independent discipline regardless of its location. That was especially the case since the first and second generation of scholars migrated into writing studies from many fields besides literature, bringing with them their research traditions and theoretical perspectives. In fact, R/C degree programs grew up opportunistically wherever they could find a home: in departments of humanities; in ad hoc interdepartmental structures; in interdisciplinary centers. With the rise of independent units in writing (programs, departments, centers), some doctoral studies are moving or starting up there, where they are more easily constituted as full degree programs. English departments, however, continue to house many programs, either as relatively autonomous “concentrations” in an umbrella degree or as separate degrees.

As one might expect in an emerging field, doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition are found at various stages of formalization from minors to full specializations or independent degrees. This fact, along with their diversity of structures and locations, can make it difficult to recognize or evaluate the autonomy of the program: in some cases a “concentration” can be completely autonomous, while in another case it may be a minor option within a broader program. Below, I have categorized and exemplified programs in these terms.

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Full programs in Rhetoric and Composition:

- specializations/concentrations in R/C that are autonomously defined within a broad Ph.D. degree, i.e., with their own requirements, exams, and/or admissions, and a core of R/C faculty

Examples: Purdue, University of New Hampshire, University of Massachusetts Amherst

- named degrees in R/C within departments more broadly defined (e.g., English, language and

literature, humanities)

Examples: University of Arizona, Bowling Green, RPI, Michigan Tech

- independent degrees within independent academic units in writing, rhetoric and composition

Example: Syracuse, University of Texas Austin

- independent degrees that are interdisciplinary and/or not located traditionally in a department (e.g., placed in a college or center):

Examples: University of Utah, University of Michigan, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of California Santa Barbara

Minors or strands within other programs:

- R/C emphases, concentrations, minors, tracks, specializations that are not defined as “programs” in themselves

Example: University of Alabama (distinguishes its “concentration” in the Ph.D. in English from its “full specialization”: Ph.D. in Composition, Rhetoric & English Studies)

Integrated Programs with strong element of Rhetoric/Composition: Example: Illinois State

Program Categories for the NRC Taxonomy

Programs in Rhetoric and Composition do not yet exhibit a high degree of specialization in the form of subfields that have branched off and attained the status of separate degree programs. Rather, they vary at the level of how they define the field in interdisciplinary terms (through affiliated faculty and courses) or in the way they focus the degree by their mission. At present we identify only one true subfield with its own degrees: **rhetoric and professional/technical or scientific communication (or writing)**. Rather than branching off from Rhetoric and Composition, this specialization has a semi-autonomous status and independent history that converged with the development of Rhetoric and Composition in the nineteen-seventies and eighties. Within Rhetoric and Composition, this specialization usually links studies in professional, technical, business, or scientific communication to rhetoric or writing studies, producing researchers and communication directors for the professions as well future faculty members for undergraduate majors and graduate programs.

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Thus we propose categorizing programs in Rhetoric and Composition as follows:

Field:

- Rhetoric and Composition [generic]

Examples: Carnegie Mellon, Penn State, University of Wisconsin Madison, Miami University, Ohio State, University of Louisville

- Rhetoric and Professional/Technical or Scientific Communication (and variants] **Examples:** Iowa State, New Mexico State, Texas Tech

As I understand the NRC draft taxonomy, we should instruct our programs in Rhetoric and Professional/Technical or Scientific Communication to list themselves both in the generic category of Rhetoric and Composition and also in this well-defined specialization as a subfield.

Some programs do not fit neatly into these categories. For example, some universities define their programs as completely integrated or fused studies (e.g., in “English” studies or “Cultural Critical Studies”) rather than an intersection of relatively autonomous fields, including Rhetoric and Composition. Classification of these as Rhetoric and Composition programs can only be determined in the short run by their self-reports (representing faculty identification with the discipline) and in the long run by the scholars they graduate who affiliate primarily with the scholarly community of Rhetoric and Composition.

Other specializations are likely to emerge in the next decade, but they have not reached the level of differentiation that supports major tracks or degree programs, especially since most Rhetoric and Composition programs are quite small. However, some are distinct enough to be standard categories in job ads, including, for instance, technology and digital media, writing program administration, writing across the curriculum or writing in the disciplines (WAC/WID), writing centers, and basic writing (see Stygall).

Autonomy and Relationship to Cognate Disciplines

Relationship to English

In my conversation with Dr. Kuh, she raised the possibility of listing Rhetoric and Composition both as an independent field and also as a subfield of English. The Consortium discussed this possibility at its annual meeting and strongly opposed classifying Rhetoric and Composition as a subfield of English studies, even temporarily. Scholars in the Consortium see such a classification of Rhetoric and Composition as historically inaccurate and misleading because of this field's multiple source disciplines and the varied intellectual configurations and institutional locations of its doctoral programs. English itself is becoming an umbrella term for increasingly disparate specializations that find themselves historically placed in the same department and often now take the form of different degree programs (e.g., Creative Writing, Linguistics, Cultural Studies). Although many Rhetoric and Composition programs are still located nominally in English degrees, or placed in English departments, most have a distinct identity and have moved toward autonomy within those structures, or even separation in independent units.

In addition, the Consortium believes that a subfield classification, allowing for ranking only those R/C programs located in English departments, would be unfair to programs located elsewhere (including some of the strongest and best-established) and would produce skewed, misleading results.

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Relationship to Communication Studies

Although it may appear that Rhetoric and Composition programs could easily be confused with Rhetoric programs in Communication Studies, in fact the two are quite distinct in perspective and institutional location. Some Rhetoric and Composition programs include Communication as an interdisciplinary element or affiliated field, and the two fields engage in cross-disciplinary dialogue within shared journals and professional organizations. Among these are the newly formed Alliance of Rhetoric Societies, discussed below.

Relationship to Creative Writing and Other Studies of Writing

There is very little possibility for confusion with Creative Writing, since doctorates in this area are rare. In a few doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition, Creative Writing is an interdisciplinary component, either as one strand of English studies or as part of a broadly inclusive study of writing and writing instruction. Increasingly, Rhetoric and Composition faculty are preparing graduate students to teach in disciplinary or interdisciplinary majors in writing or rhetoric that cover a broad range of genres.

Meeting the Criteria for Critical Mass

Many of the founders of the field had their original scholarly training in other disciplines. But in the last two decades, the cumulative impact of graduates trained specifically in the field of Rhetoric and Composition has created a very robust national faculty, included several generations of tenured professors. These scholars publish not only in Rhetoric and Composition (journals, edited collections, and single-authored books) but also in related disciplines (e.g., Communication Studies, Applied Linguistics, ESL, Cultural Studies) and in interdisciplinary publication venues. Attached (Appendix C) is evidence of this large body of scholarly work, including

1) a selected list of refereed journals in which Rhetoric and Composition scholars publish their work 2) a list of edited series in Rhetoric and Composition and in which R/C scholars are published.

The primary professional organization with which R/C scholars affiliate is the Conference on College Composition and Communication, founded in 1949. Its membership (combined individual and institutional) is currently around 8000, including 1000 graduate students. Scholars in the field can also join a variety of specialized organizations, some of which are themselves cross-disciplinary in nature and membership. (See Appendix D, for a selected list of organizations in Rhetoric and Composition as well as listservs and discussion groups.) Scholars in Rhetoric and Composition tend to hold citizenship in multiple disciplinary and transdisciplinary communities. Recently, scholars in Rhetoric and Composition joined together with colleagues in Communication Studies and other disciplines to form an Alliance of Rhetoric Societies around their common interests in rhetoric; its membership comprises both individual departments and professional organizations (e.g., CCCC, Rhetoric Society of America, National Communication Association, International Society for the History of Rhetoric). According to President Gerald Hauser, "ARS came into being as a response to the difficulty rhetoric scholars have experienced in learning about each other's work, in sharing

insights with those who are working on similar projects but in different traditions, in making their collective voice heard by granting agencies, and through an absence of coordination among their respective scholarly organizations” (ARS Home Page, www.rhetoricalalliance.org).

The sheer number of tenured and tenure-track faculty members across the country who teach and publish primarily or exclusively in Rhetoric and Composition argues that the field has probably met the NRC criteria for critical mass in its doctoral degrees. However, documenting this reality in terms of degrees in R/C granted by doctoral programs is not easy. Until 1996, there was no dissertation code for Rhetoric and Composition in the DAI, and it is not yet used consistently enough to offer reliable figures. Not all programs have kept accurate records, especially in early years while transitioning from minor concentrations to full specializations. While the overall number of degree-granting programs has stabilized at somewhere around 70, they are still in a generative

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and somewhat volatile phase, especially those that are small or less autonomous. Some highly productive programs in the early years (e.g., University of Southern California) have closed, while promising new ones are too young to have many graduates. The last of three surveys of program development (by self-report) was published in 2000 (Enos, Jackson, and Brown) and is out of date; a new one is planned for 2006.

For the purposes of documenting degree production and other features of programs (faculty size, enrollment, etc.) for NRC, the Consortium is presently gathering data through a survey of R/C doctoral programs that will be tabulated and analyzed within the next month. Meantime, the process of distributing and administering the survey has updated the Consortium’s membership to include at least 10 more universities with R/C programs than its 2003-04 membership. A number of these are recently founded, in final stages of approval, or in planning. The attached interim report (Appendix E) provides preliminary data from the survey. Final results will follow in about a month.

Finally, I have attached a bibliography which includes not only works cited here but selected works on the discipline and its doctoral programs.

Participating in the NRC Study

Whatever the decision of the Committee on inclusion of Rhetoric and Composition in the taxonomy, we plan to mobilize our members to provide information to campus coordinators of the 2005 NRC survey on their degree programs in Rhetoric and Composition as an independent field. According to Dr. Kuh, NRC could facilitate these efforts by identifying Rhetoric and Composition to the campus coordinators as an emerging field and requesting information on its programs. As the survey planning proceeds, I will seek Dr. Kuh’s further advice on how the program directors and campus coordinators can ensure that this information on Rhetoric and Composition programs is integrated and interpreted as evidence for one field with multiple representations, rather than (as we surmise happened in the past) being overlooked or invisible because of the programs’ diverse names and variable locations.

I would be very pleased to answer questions from the Committee, Dr. Kuh, or researchers associated with the NRC doctoral survey. I would appreciate your letting me know when we might expect a response that I can report to the R/C Consortium at its annual meeting, March 16, 2004. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Here is contact information for me:

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Research Doctorate Programs

Study on Methodology and Assessment

TAXONOMY

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In any assessment of doctoral programs, a key question is: Which programs should be included? Constructing a taxonomy of programs is to provide a framework for the analysis of programs as they exist today, with an eye to the future. A secondary question is: What programs should be grouped together and what names should be given to these aggregations?

CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION

The construction of a taxonomy inevitably confronts limitations and requires executive decisions. The proposed taxonomy builds upon the previous studies, in order to represent doctoral research and training and to provide a basis for potential users of the proposed information important to them. Those users include scholars, students, academic and industrial and governmental employers. Furthermore, a taxonomy must correspond to the actual programmatic organization of doctoral studies. In addition, however, a taxonomy should also facilitate the development of new and diversifying activity. Thus, it is especially true in the area of recommendations that follow should be taken as advisory rather than binding by the committee appointed to conduct the whole study. These efforts are further complicated by the institutional nomenclatures, representing essentially the same research and training in different fields. The rise of interdisciplinary work. The Committee did its best to construct a taxonomy of most graduate programs are organized in most research universities but realizes that the fit may not be perfect. Thus, the subject should remain open to review by

We recognize that scholarship and research in interdisciplinary fields have grown significantly in the past few years. Some of this work is multidisciplinary; some is crossdisciplinary or interdisciplinary. We have attempted to devise a single standard for all possible combinations. Where possible, we have attempted to acknowledge interdisciplinary fields such as Neuroscience, Biomedical Engineering, and Environmental Health. In other instances, we listed areas as emerging fields. Our goal remains to identify and name interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary fields. Once they become established scholarly areas and meet the criteria for inclusion in the study established by this and future committees, they will be added to the taxonomy.

The initial basis for the Committee's consideration of its taxonomy was the classification of Doctorate Records File (DRF), which is maintained by the National Science Foundation for a consortium that includes the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Education.² Based on these studies, we reviewed the fields included in the 1995 Study to determine whether new fields had been added and whether the criteria themselves were sensible. In earlier studies, the criteria for inclusion had been that a field must have produced at least 500 Ph.D.s over the most recent 5 years and that at least 25 programs had produced 5 or more Ph.D.s in the last 5 years in at least 25 universities.

these criteria, the Committee agreed that the field inclusion criterion should be kept, the humanities should continue to be included even though they no longer met the ti

Recommendation 3.1: The quantitative criterion for inclusion of a field used in should be, for the most part, retained—i.e., 500 degrees granted in the last 5 y The Committee also reviewed the threshold level for inclusion of an individual progr in the average size of programs, generally felt that a modification was warranted. A i is required to evaluate a program.

This parameter is modified from the previous study—3 degrees in 3 years—to acco fields. The 25-university threshold is retained.

Recommendation 3.2: Only those programs that have produced 5 or more Ph.D should be evaluated.

Two fields in the humanities, Classics and German language and literature, had bee studies but have since fallen below the threshold size for inclusion in terms of Ph.D. numbers of faculty remain, however, to assess the scholarly quality of programs. In t with earlier studies and the historical importance of these fields, the Committee felt t included. Continuity is a particularly important consideration. In the biological scienc redefined fields, the fields themselves had changed in a way that could not be igno humanities have a different problem. A number of them are experiencing shrinking e argued that inclusion in the NRC study may assist the higher-quality programs to su

Recommendation 3.3: Some fields should be included that do not meet the qu were included in earlier studies.

The number of degrees awarded in a field is determined by the number of new Ph.D from the Survey of Earned Doctorates based on the NSF taxonomy. However, there that these fields correctly reflect the current organization of doctorate programs. The investigate this question by requesting input from a large number of scholarly and pr Appendix B). Beginning in December 2002, the proposed taxonomy was also prese and suggestions were invited. As of mid-June 2003, over 100 suggestions had been taxonomy and the list of subfields were discussed with the relevant scholarly societie also used in the pilot trials, and although the correspondence was not exact, the pilo fit with their graduate programs. This taxonomy included new fields that had grown c last study. It also reflected the continuing reorganization of the biological sciences. T by the Committee, compared with the taxonomy for the 1995 Study, appears in Tabl

Inclusion of the arts and sciences and engineering fields preserves continuity with pi of agriculture recognizes the increasing convergence of research in those fields with biological sciences and the legitimacy of the research in these fields, separate and i traditional biological disciplines.

The biological sciences presented special problems. The past decade has seen an doctoral training in the basic biomedical sciences. However, these Ph.D. programs a of arts and sciences, which was the focus of the 1995 Study. Many of them are local and were overlooked in earlier studies. The Committee sought input from basic bio in medical schools through the Graduate Research Education and Teaching Group Association of Medical Colleges to assure systematic inclusion the next time the stu

TABLE 3-1 Taxonomy Comparison—1995 Study and Current Committee

Major Fields	
1995 Taxonomy	2005 Taxonomy
<p>Biological Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Cell and Developmental Biology Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior Molecular and General Genetics Neurosciences Pharmacology Physiology 	<p>Life Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Structural Molecular Biology Developmental Biology Cell Biology Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Microbiology Genetics, Genomics, and Bioinformatics Immunology and Infectious Diseases Neuroscience and Neurobiology Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Environmental Physiology Plant Sciences Food Science and Food Engineering Nutrition Entomology Animal Sciences <p><i>Emerging Fields</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biotechnology Systems Biology
<p>Engineering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerospace Engineering Biomedical Engineering Chemical Engineering Civil Engineering Electrical Engineering Industrial Engineering Materials Science Mechanical Engineering 	<p>Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerospace Engineering Biomedical Engineering Biological and Agricultural Engineering Chemical Engineering Civil and Environmental Engineering Electrical and Computer Engineering Operations Research, Systems Engineering Materials Science and Engineering Mechanical Engineering
<p>Physical Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Astrophysics and Astronomy Chemistry Computer Science Geosciences Mathematics Oceanography Physics Statistics/Biostatistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Astrophysics and Astronomy Chemistry Computer and Information Science Earth Sciences Mathematics Applied Mathematics Oceanography, Atmospheric Sciences Physics Statistics and Probability <p><i>Emerging Fields</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nanoscience and Nanotechnology Information Science

TABLE 3-1 Continued

Major Fields	
1995 Taxonomy	2005 Taxonomy
Arts and Humanities Art History Classics Comparative Literature English Language and Literature French Language and Literature German Language and Literature <i>(History listed under Social and Behavioral Sciences)</i> Linguistics Music Philosophy Religion Spanish Language and Literature	Arts and Humanities American Studies History of Art, Architecture, and Classics Comparative Literature English Language and Literature French Language and Literature German Language and Literature History <i>(Linguistics listed under Social and Behavioral Sciences)</i> Music Philosophy Religion Spanish and Portuguese Language Theatre and Performance Studies Global Area Studies <i>Emerging Fields:</i> Race, Ethnicity, and Post-Colonial Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Film Studies
Social and Behavioral Sciences Anthropology Economics Geography History <i>(Linguistics listed under Arts and Humanities)</i> Political Science Psychology Sociology	Social and Behavioral Sciences Anthropology Communication Economics Agricultural and Resource Econom Geography <i>(History listed under Arts and Humanities)</i> Linguistics Political Science Psychology Sociology <i>Emerging Field</i> Science and Technology Studies

Recommendation 3.4: The proposed study should add research-doctorate programs in the fields in engineering and the arts and sciences that have been assessed in the study. The committee should make a special effort to include programs in the basic biomedical sciences in medical schools.

The Committee reviewed doctorate production over the period 1998-2002 for fields in the Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and American Studies. It identified those fields that had grown beyond the size threshold, and it reviewed the organization of those fields. In addition, it reviewed the organization of those fields that had expanded them somewhat, reflecting changes in doctoral production and the changes in those fields. The committee's recommendations, as mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, should be implemented by the committee appointed to conduct the full study.

Recommendation 3.5: The number of fields should be increased, from 41 to 57. A number of additional programs in applied fields urged that they be included in the study. The committee decided not to include those fields for which much research is directed toward the applied fields. These fields include social work, public policy, nursing, public health, business, architecture, kinesiology, and education. This exclusion is not intended to imply that high quality research is not done in these fields. Rather, in those areas in which research is properly devoted to improving practice, the task of such research requires a more nuanced approach than evaluation of scholarly research. The committee also includes measures of the effectiveness of the application of research. The committee's task is beyond the capacity of the current or proposed methodology. It does recommend

can achieve a consensus on how to measure the quality of research, the NRC should take the measures in future studies.

The question can also be raised: Are the additional costs in both respondent and collection of the number of fields by 37 percent justified? To answer this question, it is useful to consider the increase. First, the Committee believes that the current taxonomy reflects the classification of programs as they exist today. The Committee felt it was better to increase the number of fields in the expanded taxonomy than to force institutions to shape themselves to the Procrustean bed. Second, the Committee was convinced that newly included large programs, such as those in the agricultural sciences, could benefit from having the quality of scholarship in their programs assessed by peer review. Such information, as well as data describing the programs, could assist potential students in their selection among many programs. Third, the agricultural sciences are an area in which fundamental research occurs. They were excluded from earlier studies primarily because of the traditional arts and sciences fields. Today, they are changing and are becoming more like the applied biological sciences. In addition, they are an important part of land-grant colleges and universities, an important sector of graduate education. On the cost side, the expense of gathering data has fallen impressively as information technology has improved. The primary additional cost is the cost of assuring adequate response rates.

NAMING ISSUES

The Committee wanted its taxonomy to be forwardlooking and to recognize evident trends in the growth of knowledge. One such example is the growth in interdisciplinary research. This trend is reflected in the study in a number of ways: the naming of broad fields, flexibility in the number of fields a faculty member may claim affiliation, and the recognition of emerging fields.

The Committee recognized that activities in engineering and the physical sciences are distinct and deserve respects.

Recommendation 3.6: The fields should be organized into four major groupings: Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering. Mathematics and Physical Sciences are merged into one field, Mathematics and Physical Sciences.

As discussed above, the Committee urges that the agricultural sciences be included in the life sciences because of their focus on basic biological processes in agricultural applications and research and doctorates in these fields, separate and independent of other traditional fields. This leads to the more inclusive name of "life sciences" for the group of fields that include the agricultural and biological sciences.

Recommendation 3.7: Biological Sciences, one of the four major groupings, should be named Life Sciences."

The question of naming arises in all fields. Graduate program names vary by university and by the time the program was established and what the area of research was called at that time. The Committee believes that programs and faculty need some guidance, given a set of program names, as to how to name themselves. This can be accomplished through the inclusion of subfield names in the field names to identify areas of specialization within a field. They are not all-inclusive but will help programs and evaluators to recognize and identify the specific activities of complex fields. Programs will not be ranked individually. They will, however, permit the identification of specific activities to general programs for the purpose of subsequent analysis. The Committee obtained input from programs through consultation with scholarly societies, by requesting subfield titles on the program survey, and through inquiries sent out to faculty. These subfields are listed below.

Recommendation 3.8: Subfields should be listed for many of the fields.

Some programs will find that the taxonomy fits, but others may find that they have several fields, a large number of subfields, or conversely, have programs that contain two or more fields. The Committee anticipates that these sorts of problems will arise and asks that programs try to fit themselves into the taxonomy to help assure comparability across programs. For example, a physics program may al-

astrophysics subspecialty. This program should list its physics faculty as one “program” and list its astrophysics faculty as another, separate program, even though they are administratively separate. Programs that combine separate fields listed in the taxonomy should indicate this in their questionnaires and the final tables will report that the fields are part of one program. A task left to the next committee is to assure that the detailed questionnaire provides both accurate assignment of faculty to research fields and accurate descriptions of programs and students.

The flip side of this problem arises in the agricultural sciences. Many institutions have multiple programs in each subfield. Their faculty lists should contain faculty names from all the programs, with separate listings for each program. These conventions, although somewhat arbitrary, make it possible to list programs from programs that would otherwise be too small to rate. In all cases, faculty should be listed by subfields on the faculty questionnaire. This would permit analysis of the effect of rate

FINDINGS FROM THE PILOT TRIALS

Six of the pilot sites got to the point of administering the questionnaires and attempting to rate programs within the draft taxonomy. The taxonomy proved generally satisfactory for the life sciences. A particular problem was found with “molecular biology.” It was found that molecular biology is a tool that is widely used across the life sciences but is not a specific graduate program. It is true, to a lesser extent, for cell biology. Given the taxonomy, many biological programs are highly interdisciplinary and combine a number of fields. The Committee hopes to ask respondents to indicate if faculty, who specialize in a particular field, teach and supervise broad biological

science graduate program.

Another problem was that the subfield listing was viewed as “dated.” The Committee is querying colleagues at their own and other institutions and by asking scholarly societies, however, that should be revisited prior to the full study.

EMERGING FIELDS

The upcoming study must attempt to identify the emergence of new fields that may cross or separate fields in the future. It should also assess fields that have emerged in the past. At the time of assessment, these fields present two problems. First, although an area of study exists, it may or may not have its own doctoral program. Cinema studies, for example, may exist as a program or it may exist in graduate programs in English, Theatre, or Communication. The taxonomy presents data only about separate and named programs gives a misleading idea of the field. Second, the emerging areas of study may be transitory. Computational biology, for example, may exist. It may become a broad field that will, in the future, include genomics, proteomics, or, alternatively, it may be incorporated into yet another field. The Committee agrees that these fields should be recognized in the study but that they were either too new or too small to set of faculty for reputational comparison of programs. Quantitative data should be collected to assist in possible evaluation in future studies.

Recommendation 3.9: Emerging fields should be identified, based on their increasing activity (e.g., race, ethnicity, and Post-Colonial studies; feminist, gender studies; nanoscience; computational biology). The number of programs and data are insufficient to warrant full-scale evaluation at this time. Where possible, they should be listed as subfields. In other cases, they should be listed separately.

Finally, the Committee was perplexed about what to do about the fields of area studies from parts of the world. These fields are highly interdisciplinary and draw on faculty across disciplines. If, themselves, they are too small to be included, yet they are likely to be of growing importance in a global economy and its accompanying stresses continue. The Committee decided

"Global Area Studies," in the Arts and Humanities and to list each area as a subfield

Recommendation 3.10: A new broad field, "Global Area Studies," should be in and include as subfields: Near Eastern, East Asian, South Asian, Latin American Studies.

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Please respond with feedback to: resdoc@nas.edu

TAXONOMY

LIFE SCIENCES

Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Structural Biology

Biochemistry

Biophysics

Structural Biology

Cell Biology

Developmental Biology

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Behavior and Ethology

Biogeochemistry

Evolution

Physiological ecology

Population biology

Terrestrial and aquatic ecology

Genetics, Genomics and Bioinformatics

Bioinformatics

Genetics

Genomics

Immunology and Infectious Disease

Immunity

Immunology of Infectious Disease

Immunopathology

Immunoprophylaxis and Therapy

Parasitology

Microbiology

Environmental microbiology and ecology

Pathogenic microbiology

Microbial physiology

Virology

Molecular Biology

Neuroscience and Neurobiology

Molecular and cellular neuroscience

Systems neuroscience

Computational neuroscience

Cognitive neuroscience

Pharmacology, Toxicology and Environmental Health

Pharmacology

Toxicology

Environmental health

Medicinal/Pharmaceutical chemistry

Physiology

Systems and Integrative Physiology

- Comparative Physiology
- Cellular Molecular Physiology
- Plant Sciences
 - Agronomy and crop sciences
 - Horticulture
 - Plant pathology
 - Forestry and forest sciences
 - Plant breeding and genetics
- Food Science and Engineering
 - Food engineering and processing
 - Food microbiology
 - Food chemistry
 - Food biotechnology
- Nutrition
 - Animal
 - Human, community and international
- Animal Sciences
 - Domestic animal sciences
 - Wildlife science
 - Aquaculture and fisheries
- Entomology
- Emerging fields:
 - Biotechnology
 - Systems biology
- ARTS & HUMANITIES**
- English Language and Literature
 - English literature to 1800
 - English literature since 1800 (including Anglophone)
 - American literature
 - Ethnic and minority American literature
 - Theory
 - Cultural studies
 - Feminist, gender and sexuality studies
- Music (except performance)
 - Composition
 - Musicology
 - Ethnomusicology
- History
 - United States
 - European
 - Latin American
 - Asian
 - African
 - Middle Eastern
 - Intellectual history (including history of culture, science, technology and me
- History of Art, Architecture and Archaeology
 - Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque art and architecture
 - American art
 - Modern art
 - Asian art
 - Theory and criticism
- Philosophy
 - History of philosophy
 - Metaphysics
 - Philosophy of science

- Epistemology
- Philosophy of mind and Language
- Ethics and political philosophy
- Religion
- Spanish and Portuguese Language and Literature
 - Spanish linguistics
 - Spanish literature
 - Portuguese literature
 - Latin American literature
- Comparative Literature
- French and Francophone Language and Literature
 - French linguistics
 - French and Francophone Literature
- German Language and Literature
 - German literature
 - German linguistics
- Classics
 - Classical literature and philology
 - Ancient history (Greek and Roman through late Antiquity)
 - Ancient philosophy
 - Classical archaeology and art history
 - Indo-European linguistics and philology
- Theatre and Performance Studies
 - History of theatre and drama
 - Performance studies
 - Theory
- American Studies
- Global Cultural Studies
 - Slavic Studies
 - East Asian Studies
 - Latin American Studies
 - Near Eastern Studies
 - African Studies
- Emerging Fields:
 - Race, ethnicity and post-colonial studies
 - Film studies
 - Feminist, gender and sexuality studies

PHYSICAL SCIENCES, MATHEMATICS AND ENGINEERING

Chemistry

- Analytical Chemistry
- Biological Chemistry
- Inorganic Chemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Physical Chemistry

Physics

- Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics
- Cosmology, Relativity, and Gravity
- Condensed Matter Physics
- Elementary Particles, Fields, and String Theory
- Engineering Physics
- Fluids
- Nuclear Physics
- Plasma Physics
- Quantum Physics

- Applied Mathematics
- Mathematics

- Logic
- Topology
- Algebra, number theory and algebraic geometry
- Analysis
- Discrete mathematics and Combinatorics
- Geometry
- Computer Science
 - Artificial intelligence
 - Theory
 - Systems
 - Programming languages
- Earth Sciences
 - Soil Science
 - Geology
 - Geochemistry
 - Paleontology
 - Geophysics and seismology
 - Environmental sciences
- Oceanography and Atmospheric Sciences and Meteorology
 - Oceanography
 - Atmospheric sciences
 - Meteorology
 - Fresh water studies
- Statistics and Probability
 - Biostatistics
 - Probability
 - Statistical theory
- Astrophysics and Astronomy
- Electrical and Computer Engineering
 - Computer engineering
 - Communications engineering
 - Electrical and electronics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
 - Environmental engineering
 - Environmental fluid mechanics and hydrology
 - Environmental systems engineering
 - Geotechnical engineering
 - Remote sensing
 - Structural engineering
 - Transportation systems engineering
 - Water resource systems
- Materials Science and Engineering
 - Structural
 - Biological and Bio-inspired materials
 - Functional and device materials
 - Environmental materials
- Aerospace Engineering
- Biological and Agricultural Engineering
 - Bioinstrumentation and Measurement including microscopy and imaging
 - Agricultural Engineering, including microbial systems
 - Systems biology
- Biomedical Engineering
 - Biomolecular Engineering, including cell and tissue engineering
 - Biomechanics
- Operations Research, Systems Engineering and Industrial Engineering

Operations research
Systems engineering
Industrial engineering

Emerging Field:

Nanoscience and nanotechnology
Information science

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Psychology

Clinical and abnormal psychology
Cognitive psychology
Developmental psychology
Industrial and organizational psychology
Social psychology
Biological psychology

Economics

Econometrics
Economic theory
Industrial organization
Labor economics
Public economics
Growth and development
International economics
Behavioral economics

Agricultural and Resource Economics

Linguistics

Applied (includes Second language acquisition)
Comparative and historical linguistics and linguistic diversity
Computational
Psycholinguistics
Sociolinguistics
Semantics, syntax and phonology

Political Science

Political theory
American politics
Comparative politics
International relations
Public Policy
Models and methods

Sociology

Theory
Methods and mathematical sociology
Historical sociology
Criminology
Social stratification, including race and ethnicity
Organizations, occupations and work

Anthropology

Social and cultural
Biological and physical
Archaeological

Geography and Regional Science

Communication

Speech and rhetorical studies
Mass communications
Communication studies

Emerging Field:
Organizations, Occupations, and Work
Science & technology studies

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DOCTORAL EXAM PRACTICES
IN
22 Ph.D. PROGRAMS IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION
PREPARED FOR THE CONSORTIUM OF PH.D. PROGRAMS
IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

by

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Department of English
University of Wisconsin-Madison

March 2004

Profiles provided by: Arizona State University, Carnegie Mellon University, Georgia State University, Illinois State University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Iowa State University, Michigan State University, New Mexico State University, Ohio State University, Purdue University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Syracuse University, University of Alabama, University of Arizona, University of California-Santa Barbara, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Minnesota, University of Nebraska, University of New Hampshire, University of Pittsburgh, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Preface

At the 2003 meeting of the Consortium of Ph.D. Programs in Rhetoric and Composition held at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in New York City, I agreed to assemble descriptions of doctoral exam practices at Consortium institutions. My interest was in ascertaining what graduate students in rhetoric and composition were reading to prepare for their exams and what kinds of questions their professors were asking them. Drawing in part on an article by Heidi Estrem and Brad Lucas in the 2003 *Rhetoric Review*, I drafted a protocol to solicit information about the following aspects: purpose, format, aim of examination, structure, authorship, eligibility and preparation, technology, graders and grading criteria, attrition, relationship of the exam practices to larger departmental or institutional policies, recent revisions and anticipated revisions of the exam, and existing reading lists and sample exams.

The draft of survey questions was circulated via the consortium list-serve and I revised the protocol based on helpful feedback. In October 2003, I sent the final version of the survey protocol to members of the Consortium asking for replies by late November. At the same time, I encouraged those who did not have the time or inclination to fill out the survey in depth to direct me to any existing web sites or mail me any existing documents by which I could assemble a profile of exam practices. This second option proved to be popular among respondents; overwhelmingly, I was directed to program information and exam descriptions posted on websites. As a result, I reduced the survey protocol to a more basic set of categories and collected very few examples of actual reading lists or exam questions. However, these profiles should provide a useful glimpse into the range of practices and philosophies currently governing Ph.D. exams in our programs.

In the end 22 institutions provided information for this survey. I thank all the individuals who responded to the call. What follows is, I hope, only a first pass at understanding this important dimension of graduate education. I hope we might continue to build on this document, adding information from more institutions and, eventually, more in depth descriptions.

Deborah Brandt

Arizona State University
Ph.D. Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics

NAME: Ph.D. Examination

AIM: To demonstrate breadth of knowledge in the field and depth of knowledge in the area of research, establishing evidence that a student is well prepared for undertaking the rigors of a dissertation project.

FORMAT: Part One is a portfolio containing three article-length essays (15-25 pages); an approved bibliography for the written exam in the area of specialization; and a transcript. Part Two is a three-hour written exam in the student's specialization.

TIMING: Part One is usually taken upon completion of coursework although it can be taken after completing 12 hours past the master's degree. Part Two is typically written the semester after the portfolio requirement has been satisfied.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Students form a three-member supervisory committee to which the portfolio is presented. The essays in the portfolio must represent three different areas of study within the concentration and must employ more than one approach. One essay may represent the student's area of specialization. Students preparing the portfolio are expected to work closely with the chair of the supervisory committee and gain approval of choice of papers in matters of breadth and theoretical approach. The essays are meant to demonstrate ability to produce scholarly work at a level expected by the profession and consistent with the degree program. Essays may be revised versions of work submitted in courses. At the time the portfolio is submitted, the student also prepares a 40-item (minimum) bibliography of works central to the area of specialization and the dissertation. After consultation with the student and other members of the committee, the committee chair approves the list. For Part Two of the exam, the committee prepares a written examination based on the bibliography. Typically students will need to answer two out of 4 or 5 essay questions. In some cases, the student will supply a question.

GRADING: The supervisory committee evaluates the portfolio and judges it (1) acceptable; (2) acceptable with minor revisions; (c) acceptable with major revisions; (d) unacceptable. The committee has the option of awarding an extraordinary portfolio a "pass with distinction." Students whose portfolios are judged unacceptable are not allowed to continue in the program. Written exams are graded High pass/ Pass/ Low Pass/ Fail. If the student fails one or more questions, the exam may be retaken once.

RECENT OR ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: The program is in the process of reviewing the current structure to streamline the required portfolio papers and design an exam that better serves to prepare students for their dissertation research and writing.

More info at: <http://www.asu.edu/clas/english/gradstudies/phdrc.htm>

Carnegie Mellon University

NAME: Qualifying Examination

AIM: To determine if a doctoral student has a substantial knowledge of major theoretical work in the discipline and expertise in a specific area and method of scholarly research.

FORMAT: A written exam not to exceed three hours and an oral exam not to exceed two hours.

TIMING: Normally in the semester after completion of formal course work. Sometimes during the last semester of classes. Not normally given in the summer. The qualifying examination is one of four requirements for admission to candidacy. (The others are completion of course work, a teaching and research internship, and language/research tool requirement.)

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Doctoral students enlist a faculty member to serve as their committee chair. The chair assists the student in identifying a specialized area and general areas for examination and identifying members of an Examination Committee. The Examination Committee normally consists of the chair (who is in the student's specialization) and two other faculty members. In consultation with the committee, the student writes a 10-page petition and reading list providing a critical analysis of the major trends in the literature and relevance to the dissertation area. Petitions are circulated to the whole of the Rhetoric faculty for response. Then a meeting is held among the student, the Exam Committee, plus one extra faculty member chosen by the committee chair to provide outsider input. At this meeting, a final plan for a revised proposal is made. A final version of the proposal is then approved by the committee. The proposal serves as the basis for the written examination, which is comprised of two or three questions developed by the committee chair, usually in consultation with other committee members. The oral exam is held at least two days after the written exam. At least 24 hours prior to the oral exam, the committee chair gives the student one question to prepare in advance. The student addresses this question in the first half hour of the oral. The remaining time is open to committee member questions about the oral presentation or the written exam or other questions based on the proposal and reading list.

GRADING: The Exam Committee deliberates in private at the end of the oral. One grade is given: pass or fail. Students may retake the exam or part of exam. Second failure may result in recommendation for withdrawal.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

More info at: http://english.cmu.edu/degrees/phd_rhetoric/phd_rhetoric.html

Georgia State University

NAME: Qualifying Examination

AIM: To prepare for the dissertation.

FORMAT: Two written exams (4 hours on student's chosen specialty + 3 hours on a chosen non-specialist area) followed by a two-hour oral examination. Students choose from 13 standing exam areas, including technical and professional writing as well as rhetoric and composition.

TIMING: After completing all foreign language examinations, residency requirements, and coursework. Exams offered twice a year, in spring and fall semesters. Student is admitted into candidacy after successful completion of written and oral exams. Students notify Director of Graduate Studies of their intention to take the exams at least one semester ahead of time.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Candidates generate reading lists in consultation with a faculty supervisor. Exams are composed by a three-member Examination Committee (supervisor plus faculty from student's areas of specialization). Written exams include an ID section plus three essay questions, one on bibliography, one on a major figure, and one on a major theory or trend.

GRADING: Exams are graded pass / fail. Students must pass both parts of the written examination before proceeding to the oral. Student has two chances to pass each part of the exam.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: Take home exam with greater flexibility in types of questions asked.

More information at <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwweng/pdf/Gradbook02.PDF>

Illinois State University

NAME: Comprehensive Ph.D. Examination

AIM: To demonstrate ability to synthesize disparate course and independent research experiences.

FORMAT: A three-part written exam.

TIMING: Students take exams after finishing all their coursework, in the third year.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: For each of the three parts, students compile a synthesis statement of 1000 words, accompanied by a reading list of 25-30 books or the equivalent. The exam questions are written by a three-member examination committee, based directly on the synthesis statements. Two of the parts are 3-hour written exams; the third part is a one-week take home essay, resulting in a 10-20 page work.

The parts of the exam are:

1. Synthesis of Issues in English studies
2. Pedagogy in English studies
3. Specialization (i.e. "rhetoric," "children's literature," etc.)—Take home

GRADING: The student's examination committee grades the exam. Grades are Pass / Pass with Distinction / Fail. Students have three chances to pass the exam after which they are recommended for dismissal.

ANTICIPATED REVISION: None specified

More info available at: <http://www.english.ilstu.edu/graduate/phdengstudies.html>

Illinois State University

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STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: For each of the three parts, students compile a synthesis statement of 1000 words, accompanied by a reading list of 25-30 books or the equivalent. The exam questions are written by a three-member examination committee, based directly on the synthesis statements. Two of the parts are 3-hour written exams; the third part is a one-week take home essay, resulting in a 10-20 page work.

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GRADING: The student's examination committee grades the exam. Grades are Pass / Pass with Distinction / Fail. Students have three chances to pass the exam after which they are recommended for dismissal.

ANTICIPATED REVISION: None specified

More info available at: <http://www.english.ilstu.edu/graduate/phdengstudies.html>

GRADING: The dissertation committee evaluates the student on breadth of knowledge and readiness to do dissertation. Each criteria receives one of these possible outcomes: Pass/Pass (the student continues the dissertation process); Fail One or Both but Reschedule (may be used only once and requires a second culminating evaluation meeting); Fail (Used after the student has failed the second culminating evaluation meeting and results in termination).

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

More information at <http://www.english.iup.edu/graduate/cv/>

Iowa State University

NAME: Ph.D. Portfolio Assessment and Preliminary Examination

Portfolio Assessment

AIM: The aim of the portfolio is to determine students' readiness to complete research and writing tasks in the discipline and their command of rhetorical strategies and conventions. It also provides students feedback on their potential for achieving the Ph.D.

FORMAT: The portfolio includes two papers that demonstrate a student's ability to define a problem or issue; make and support claims; cite and synthesize sources; and sustain a coherent argument. In addition, students provide a concise (2-page) rhetorical analysis of each paper, discussing the situational context (its purpose, audience); rhetorical strategies (specific textual elements) that carry the argument forward; and the process of the paper's development.

TIMING: No later than the third semester in the program. The Examinations Committee sets a precise deadline each term.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Portfolio papers represent the student's best scholarly work. They are revised versions of papers written for Ph.D. coursework. One is a lengthy scholarly essay (10-20 pages) and the other is a shorter paper, such as a book review, short analysis, or comment/response (2-5 pages). Students work on revisions in cooperation with the course instructor with which the paper originally was written.

GRADING: Portfolios are submitted anonymously and evaluated by a standing Examinations Committee. The student's program advisor attends the meeting but does not vote. Portfolios are evaluated for their proficiency in academic writing, demonstrated skill in rhetorical analysis, and indications of potential promise or difficulty in completing work for the degree. After the portfolio is evaluated, two members of the Examinations Committee and the program advisor meet with the student to provide feedback. If a portfolio does not show sufficient mastery, the student is asked to submit another portfolio with two different papers and analyses. This portfolio must be submitted the following semester. It is evaluated by the Examinations Committee, the program advisor, and the Director of Graduate Education. Students can submit only two portfolios and an acceptable portfolio is necessary to proceed to the preliminary examination.

Preliminary Examination

AIM: The preliminary examination certifies that students have the general knowledge to engage in the conversation of the discipline and helps students prepare to work on their dissertation.

FORMAT: A written comprehensive examination based on a reading list followed by a specialized exam with written and oral components whose format can vary widely. (See Specialized Exam below)

TIMING: During the last semester of coursework or later.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Students construct reading lists in consultation with their Program of Study committees. Each reading list contains a comprehensive range of articles and books representing not only a cross section of the discipline but also a concentration of texts reflecting the student's research interest. Length of lists is negotiated between student and committee. While final approval of the student's reading list rests with the POS committee, the Examinations Committee has an opportunity to review the lists and offer commentary. The student's POS committee writes the questions and approves the final version of the exam. Students are expected to talk with POS committee members about issues that might be topics for exam questions and may collaborate in writing questions. A draft of the exam is circulated to POS committee members and two members of the Examination Committee who may offer commentary. Exams consist of 6 questions, of which the student must answer 3.

GRADING: The written comprehensive exam is evaluated by five faculty not including the dissertation director, who attends the committee discussion and offers commentary but has no vote. The five voting members of the evaluating committee include two members of the student's POS committee, two members of the Examinations Committee who are also in the student's area, and a member from outside the field. Passing requires a minimum of four positive votes from the evaluation committee. Exams are evaluated based on command of the material; quality of writing; coverage; and accuracy. In the event that the student fails the exam, the student is required, after receiving feedback and guidance from the evaluation committee, to take a second, different exam based on the same reading list at a later date to be determined. A student must pass the comprehensive before proceeding to the specialized exam. A second failure results in dismissal from the program.

The specialized exam: This exam is conducted solely by the POS committee and, although it contains both written and oral components, its format can vary rather widely. Each student works closely with the committee to develop a reading list and a format that reflects the student's particular research interests and negotiates procedures to be in place should a failure occur for all or any part of the written or oral exam. Upon successfully completing the specialized exam, the student is ABD and ready to pursue work on the dissertation.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported. The format described here was only recently instituted.

More information at: <http://www.engl.fastate.edu/graduatestudies/RPC/rpcphd.html>

Michigan State University

NAME: PhD Exams (Core, Field Concentration, Pre-Dissertation)

AIMS: Exams are designed to help students develop professional knowledge and expertise about their core field and areas of specialization. Exams are designed to help students review, assimilate, synthesize, and create knowledge and move forward as scholars and teachers.

FORMATS: Ph.D. students must pass two comprehensive written examinations—one in the Rhetoric and Writing core and the other in the student's selected field concentration. Portfolio work constitutes 50 per cent of each of these exams. The Pre-Dissertation Exam is an oral defense of the dissertation prospectus.

TIMINGS: The Core exam is typically taken in the fall semester of the third year. The Field Concentration exam is taken at the completion of 9 hours of field concentration coursework and after the Core exam. The Pre-Dissertation exam is completed within one year following completion of the first two exams.

STRUCTURE: The Core exam is in two parts: (1) a portfolio of 3-5 course papers with a reflective overview demonstrating synthesizing knowledge and (2) a one-week take home consisting of two essay responses of about 15 pages each based on questions derived from work in core courses. The Field Concentration Exam also is in two parts: (1) a portfolio pertaining to work in the concentration (including course papers, syllabi or instructional materials, electronic material, conference presentations) with a reflective overview; and (2) A 25-page literature review plus annotated bibliography addressing a topic, issue or question within the concentration. The literature review is meant as an opportunity to develop a dissertation topic. The Pre-Dissertation Exam is an oral defense of a dissertation prospectus.

AUTHORSHIP: Core exam - At least two months in advance of taking the core exam, the student consults with their Guidance Committee (four faculty members, at least three of whom are members of the graduate faculty in Rhetoric and Writing). The student develops a list of 4-6 topics, issues, or questions arising from their Ph.D. core course work and submits this list to the Guidance Committee at least one month before the scheduled take-home exam. Using the student's list, the Guidance Committee develops a set of three questions or prompts. The student selects two prompts to write on and has one week to prepare two responses, not to exceed 15 pages per response, including bibliographical references. One week before the core take home, the student submits the Portfolio. Concentration Exam - In consultation with the Guidance Committee, the student sets a date by which both parts of the field concentration exam will be submitted. Two months prior to this date, the student submits a one-page proposal for a literature review to the Guidance Committee for modification and approval. Pre-Dissertation Exam - The Guidance Committee conducts an oral exam based on a 20-page dissertation prospectus + bibliography.

GRADING: The Guidance Committee grades all exams on a scale of High Pass, Pass, Fail. For the Ph.D. field concentration exam and pre-dissertation exam, an additional grade option is "Revise and Resubmit." On any given exam a student must pass the portfolio and both questions

in order to pass the overall exam. (A student who fails any of the comprehensive exams has the opportunity to retake the exam once. The entire exam must be retaken during the following semester.) Writing for the exam should show expert knowledge of the given topic or issue, as well as familiarity with the readings being discussed. The writing should show that the student understands the topic thoroughly and is acquainted with how the field approaches the topic methodologically and theoretically. The writing should show that the student has the ability to assess the topic or issue critically, to evaluate and compare approaches, to synthesize diverse views, and to contribute to the field's understanding of the topic or issue. Additionally, the student's writing should be appropriate for its audience and its purpose; it should be well organized, clear and fluent, and of professional quality.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

Additional information at www.rhetoric.msu.edu/graduate/exams.html

New Mexico State University

NAME: Qualifying Examination and Comprehensive Examination

Qualifying Examination

AIM: To demonstrate requisite reading, writing, and critical skills to successfully pursue the Ph.D.

FORMAT: A portfolio that provides evidence of specific research interests and a clear research trajectory; demonstrates reading, writing, research and critical skills required to successfully pursue the Ph.D.; shows awareness of one's own capabilities and potential; and establishes a plan for shaping the academic career.

TIMING: The portfolio is assembled during the first six months of doctoral study, submitted on March 1, and evaluated by the end of the first year of study.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: The portfolio includes a cover letter with an overview and rationale of the works included in the portfolio and a brief statement of research interests; two strong pieces of work, one of which may have been written before entering the doctoral program; a critique of a scholarly article within the field of rhetoric and professional communication, not to exceed 1500 words; and a self-evaluation in which students assess their performance, address their strengths and areas for improvement; and discuss future research agendas, including possible dissertation topics and committee members. The portfolio is developed under the direction of the instructor of the Professional Seminar in Rhetoric and Professional Communication. This faculty member serves as advisor during the first year of a student's program.

GRADING: The portfolio is assessed by the entire Rhetoric and Professional Communication faculty and awarded a pass/fail grade. The faculty members prepare a first-year review letter. The student then meets with the advisor to discuss the portfolio and the first-year review letter.

Comprehensive Examination

AIM: The primary purpose of this exam is to both assess the student's preparedness for the dissertation and to provide groundwork for the dissertation by structuring the student's exam specifically toward the dissertation project. Secondary purposes for the exam include assessing the student's foundational understanding of the discipline and to satisfy the Graduate College's stipulation that a comprehensive exam take place.

FORMAT: The comprehensive examination is made up of (1) an acceptable preliminary prospectus for the dissertation (submitted to the student's doctoral committee); (2) delivery of a paper approved by the student's doctoral committee in a colloquium to which are invited the committee, other faculty and students; (3) a written comprehensive exam covering course work and related reading in rhetoric and professional communication and in the student's specialized area; and, following satisfactory completion of Parts 1-3, an oral examination covering course work as well as materials in Parts 1-3 of the exam.

TIMING: Students normally complete all four parts of the examination in the semester after completing course work.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Reading lists are developed by the student in consultation with the committee. Usually, students develop three lists (theory and history, practice and application, specialized area) around three specific topics related to the student's proposed dissertation project. Students develop three responses (one for each area listed above) to specific questions developed by the committee. Each response is no more than 1500 words and all are written as a take-home exam over a three-day period. Students may work closely with the committee in the design of the questions.

GRADING: The comprehensive exam is awarded a pass/fail grade by each member of the student's committee. Committee members provide commentary about their responses to the exam. Any student unsuccessful in part or all of the comprehensive examination will be expected to retake the necessary part(s) by the end of the following semester.

REVISIONS OR ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: The portfolio approach to the qualifying exam was recently instituted (replacing an exam in which students performed close readings of two scholarly articles in the field). With the addition of three new core faculty to the program, some further revisions may occur.

More information at: www.nmsu.edu/~english/programs/phdprofcom.htm

NAME: Candidacy Examination

AIM: To show the student's ability to write about a given set of texts from both the perspective of the field and from the student's focus within the field and to articulate the intersections between them.

FORMAT: A three-day, 5000 word, take-home written portion and a two-hour oral portion that follows up on the written.

TIMING: No later than three quarters after the completion of course work. To retain funding for the fourth year, students must complete the exam no later than the winter quarter of the third year.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: The student selects four faculty members to serve as a Candidacy Examination Committee with a designated chair. The committee meets with the student prior to the Exam to formulate reading lists and a focus area. The written exam addresses two questions, one of which is dedicated to the student's field and one which relates the students' focus to the student's field. The questions are written by the Exam Chair in consultation with other members of the committee. The questions are given to the student only at the time the written exam is administered. The oral examination must follow no sooner than a week but within two weeks after the written examination is completed. Prior to the oral, the student meets with the Candidacy Exam Chair to clarify expectations for the oral exam, which can include a 30-minute discussion of an intended dissertation project. The Oral Examination Committee consists of the members of the Candidacy Examination Committee plus a fifth member appointed by the Graduate School.

GRADING AND GRADING CRITERIA: Failure of the Candidacy Exam occurs if the Committee considers either that (a) the written and/or oral portions of the examination indicate that the candidate is not ready to proceed to a dissertation owing to insufficient knowledge of the field; or (b) the candidate is insufficiently focused on a dissertation project, which makes it unlikely that he or she will be able to submit an approved prospectus within two months. In case of failure, the Committee can specify the nature of the repeat examination, but it, too, must contain a written and oral portion. A second failure means dismissal from the Ph.D. program. A successful pass must be a unanimous decision of the Committee. The Chair of the Committee is required to submit a written report on the Candidacy Examination to the Graduate Director. Failure, in whole or in part, may occur if any one member (including the outside examiner) is not satisfied with the results. In the case of failure, each individual faculty member of the Committee may specify areas or material on which a reexamination must take place and so instruct the student. The chair of the committee will then submit a written account of what will be required of the student to repeat the Examination.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

More information at <http://english.ohio-state.edu/programs/graduate/phdprogm.html>

Ohio State University

Purdue University

NAME: Primary Area Examination

AIM: The 24-hour component of the primary area exam helps a student consolidate understandings of core material as well as prepare eventually to teach some of those courses. The week-long essay is intended to show that the student can successfully take and defend a scholarly position on a topic of interest to the student.

FORMAT: The Primary Area exam has two parts: (1) a 24-hour take-home with five questions (one each on the core courses in the primary area); (2) a 15-20 page essay written over a period of a week that responds to a prompt written by the exam committee to cover the student's stated interests.

TIMING: After core coursework has been completed, normally the summer after the second Ph.D. year.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: The Department Head appoints a three-member Primary Area examining committee. Those faculty work together to develop a 24-hour exam and the week-long essay prompts. Sometimes a faculty member not on the committee is consulted. Students have input on the topics and approaches identified for their prompts (although they can write on another prompt generated for the exam if they so choose). Exams are based on course content and on literature relevant to the issues covered. Students work in groups to study for the exam. In several of the courses they are given instruction and receive feedback on writing exam answers.

GRADING: The examining committee grades the exam. Possible grades are high pass, pass, fail. Each student is given written feedback as well as a grade.

RECENT OR ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: The exam structure is reviewed by each area every five years. The current structure has been in place for twelve years. The content and emphasis change regularly.

More info at: <http://rc.english.purdue.edu>

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

NAME: Qualifying Examination

AIM: To demonstrate an ability to develop and defend an informed position on topics of questions important in a major and minor area of study.

FORMAT: A written portion typically consisting of a four-hour major area exam and two, 2-hour minor exams, followed by a two-hour oral approximately one to two weeks after the written portion is completed.

TIMING: The fifth semester.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Students form prospective dissertation committees toward the end of the second semester, and the dissertation committee serves as the examining committee. The dissertation committee consists of at least four tenured or tenure-track Rensselaer faculty members, one of whom must be from outside the department. In consultation with this committee, the student declares a major area and two minor areas for examination and prepares a reading list covering all areas. The student reports progress on preparation for the exam periodically to the committee. Three committee members prepare questions for the written portion of the exam.

GRADING: The entire committee reads and evaluates the written exam and participates in the oral.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

More information at www.llc.rpi.edu

Syracuse University

NAME: Qualifying Exam

AIM: To serve as an integrative experience. Students are invited to use the exam to synthesize their course work into a broader, more mature understanding of the fields of composition and rhetoric and apply or extend their knowledge to meet their own goals.

FORMAT: A written component in three parts (covering one major and two minor areas) and an oral component, all normally taken over a total of a 21-day period. The major area is determined by the program track the student enters and the minor areas correspond to electives and independent studies in two secondary areas. The major exam is a six-hour exam on questions not previously seen by the student. One minor exam consists of a one-question take home exam written over a seven-day period. The third minor exam consists of a question researched beforehand and answered on campus in one, three-hour period, using notes and materials. The oral exam is a conversation involving free-ranging questions that probe the depth and breadth of knowledge in exam areas.

TIMING: Within a year of finishing coursework.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Students normally submit an application for the exam in the semester following completion of required course work. They are encouraged to begin working on it with the proposed chair well beforehand. The application includes an exam proposal and a reflective essay. The 10-page exam proposal (1) names a chair (advisor) to coordinate comprehensive exams; (2) outlines exam areas; and (3) provides a rationale for the choice of areas that is coherently related to the student's graduate experience and goals. The exam proposal is considered by the Graduate Committee (usually three faculty members and one graduate representative). A majority vote passes the proposal. A reflective essay of no more than 10 pages explains how the student has met a basic set of competencies and perspectives (use of technology for scholarship and teaching; a research tool or method; interdisciplinarity; historical perspective; and professional experience, such as teaching, internships, administrative assignments, other work experience). These competencies and perspectives, specified individually under the guidance of the student's advisors, are expected to be demonstrated on the exam. Although the two parts of the exam application may be done in any order, the reflective essay normally is completed no later than a month after the exam proposal is approved. The reflective essay is evaluated and approved by the faculty advisor.

Each student forms an examining committee made up of the chair and at least three other faculty members, two from the CCR faculty. Students work with committee members to plan themes, focus, individualized reading plans or lists, types of questions, and scope of coverage within general guidelines. Normally, one half of the exam readings go beyond course work. At least two exam committee members write questions for the major exam. One or two members write questions for the minor exam.

GRADING: All readers on a major or minor exam team will read all answers for their exam and, after consultation with other readers if desired, provide one grade for that exam area. Possible grades for each area of the written exam are pass, fail, and marginal pass. A student who fails a major or minor exam is allowed to retake it once. Failed exams should be retaken within three

months, unless the student has failed more than one exam, in which case all failed exams are taken together within one year. Under most conditions, an oral is not scheduled until all written exams are passed (at least marginally). If a student's performance in all areas of the exam is judged unanimously to be of the highest quality, the committee can award a pass with distinction.

RECENT OR ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

More info at <http://ccr.svr.edu>

University of Alabama

NAME: Preliminary Examination

AIM: To demonstrate competence in a specialization.

FORMAT: A four-hour written exam drawn from two of four topic areas followed by an oral based on all four topic areas. Topics usually are drawn from an issue of some note that's being debated in the journals and recent scholarship or from a sub-field, such as service learning.

TIMING: Following the completion of all coursework and foreign language requirements. A candidate becomes ABD upon passing both parts of the prelim.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Students consult with faculty in Composition, Rhetoric, and English Studies to identify four topic areas for examination and have them approved by the field advisor. The student and area faculty members agree on a basic reading list for each topic, the student prepares on all four topics, and then schedules the exam. The faculty choose two of the topics and devise a question for each. If the student passes the written part, the student schedules the oral part, at which time the student is examined on all four areas.

GRADING: The CRES faculty grades the exam. Grades are pass / fail. Students who fail the written preliminary exam may take it a second time. Students who fail the examination a second time will not be allowed to continue doctoral work.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: Yes but unspecified.

More information at <http://www.as.ua.edu/english/>

University of Arizona
Program in Rhetoric, Composition and the Teaching of English

NAMES: Qualifying Exam and Comprehensive Exams

1. Qualifying Examination

AIM: To demonstrate acceptability to undertake work leading to candidacy for the doctorate. The Qualifying Examination assesses the writing skills and professional potential of entering students and provides an opportunity for new students to work closely with a faculty mentor to reflect on their writing, coursework, and plan of study.

FORMAT: A portfolio that includes a 5-7 page reflective and projective essay; one revised seminar paper; four other graded seminar papers; a bibliography demonstrating a research agenda; and a proposal for satisfying the foreign-language requirement if not already fulfilled. After the portfolio is assessed, there is an oral exam on the works cited in revised paper.

TIMING: By the fifth semester if a student has entered with a B.A. and by the third semester if a student has entered with an M.A.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Students develop their portfolios and prepare for the oral in peer study groups and in collaboration with the chair they choose for their qualifying committee. Normally the chair responds to two major drafts of the required revision, after which the portfolio is submitted to the rest of the Committee, which consists of two faculty members chosen by the program director. After the portfolio is approved, a two-hour oral is held.

GRADING: The Examination Committee assesses the portfolio for research potential, analytical and reflective ability, and writing quality. The oral exam assesses the students' ability to summarize arguments of selected readings; identify stances and assumptions; compare methods, objectives, and conclusions; synthesize readings to identify issues; and develops analyses by drawing on their own studies, teaching, and research interests. Because the Qualifying "exam" is more of a mentoring/advising process, it is not a pass or fail evaluation.

2. Comprehensive Examination

AIM: To test the student's comprehensive knowledge of the major and minor subjects of study, both in breadth and depth.

FORMAT: Three major stages: (1) development of Reading Lists and Framing Paragraphs; (2) A three-part written exam of four hours each consisting of a general overview of rhetoric and composition; area of concentration; and area of interdisciplinary or related disciplinary study (with an optional fourth exam in an outside minor); and (3) a two-and-a-half hour oral exam.

TIMING: The third semester after completing the Qualifying Examination or not later than the fourth semester

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: One year before the exam, the student chooses a Comprehensive Examination chair of the committee and three other professors, at least three from RCTE. If a student has an official minor, one member of the committee must be from that field. The student works with the committee to develop readings lists (about 12-20 books and 16-24 articles) in the three areas of the exam. The draft of each Reading List begins with a contextual paragraph that describes the focus and principles of selection. The entire committee approves the lists no later than four weeks before the first written exam. The Exam Committee generates questions for the written exams. The written exams are normally taken over a period of two to three weeks. In each exam, candidates are commonly offered several questions from which to choose, and they usually are asked to write on two questions for two hours each. However, formats can vary. An oral exam is held at least three weeks after the written exam.

GRADING: Written exams are assessed on mastery of major arguments of the readings; succinct and insightful analysis; ability to situate readings within broader theoretical, pedagogical, and/or historical contexts; ability to reflect critically on arguments, contexts and lines of inquiry in the readings; development of original arguments; clarity and concision of the writing. In the oral exam students are judged on their ability to join a scholarly conversation; successfully address perceived weaknesses in the written exams; and offer insights into new lines of inquiry that arise from a discussion of the written exams. One overall grade is given: Pass / Pass with Distinction / No Pass. The Committee may ask the candidate to rewrite one or more of the portions of the exam before proceeding to the oral. If candidates do not pass the examination, they may be asked to repeat the whole exam or parts of it. No student is permitted a second attempt except upon recommendation of the examination committee, endorsed by the major department and approved by the Graduate College. The second exam, if approved, must be conducted by the original committee and may not take place until four months after the date of the first exam.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: Conversation begun

More information at <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~rcte>

University of California at Santa Barbara

NAME: Qualifying Examination

AIM: To advance a student to doctoral candidacy.

FORMAT: Candidates have two choices of format. Plan A is a critical review paper of sufficiently high quality to be submitted for publication. Plan B is a written examination of a length that is pre-specified. Exams can take place over one day, 10 days, or longer. Either Plan A or Plan B is followed by a two-hour oral defense.

TIMING: All students are expected to take their Qualifying Examination and advance to candidacy by the end of their fourth year in the program. Students who do not make this deadline may be placed on academic probation. The exam signals the end of course work, declaration of one's field of scholarship, and a possible reduction in registration fees.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: In conjunction with a faculty advisor, candidates write a brief (3 to 5 page) description of the areas of knowledge in which they will read and be examined and prepare a categorized reading list that speaks to major issues and their significance. The paper and preliminary reading list are presented to the examination committee, consisting of the faculty advisor and at least two additional faculty members (at least one from the program). The committee approves the proposal, sometimes with modifications. In the case of Plan B, the committee writes questions. An oral exam is scheduled for one week after submission of the review paper (Plan A) or answers to the examination questions (Plan B).

GRADING: The committee evaluates the exam on a pass / fail basis. A candidate must pass both the written and oral portions to advance to candidacy. If a student fails either portion, the committee will determine additional requirements.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

More information at <http://www.education.ucsb.edu/program/tl/index.html>

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

NAME: Special Field Exam

AIM: The Special Field Exam and the preparation for it serve as the bridge between coursework and the dissertation. The exam allows students to master the core knowledge appropriate to a specialist in the field. Such mastery makes possible productive engagement with other scholars in the field (at lectures, conferences, on e-mail discussion groups, in print, at job interviews). It should insure the ability to teach upper level courses and increasingly specialized courses in the field. It enlarges knowledge of scholarship and publication opportunities in the field. By enabling students to define with increasing precision the original contributions they wish to make to the field of their choice, it lays the groundwork for and sparks momentum toward the dissertation. Constructing the list and the rationale, studying for the exam, and taking it are part of the process of defining a professional identity within the discipline of writing studies. The Exam Requirements are designed to achieve this end.

FORMAT: A two-hour oral exam based on a student generated proposal and approximately 100-item reading list.

TIMING: After completing all Ph.D. coursework and receiving approval of the Special Field Proposal by the Graduate Studies Committee.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: At least three and one half months before the expected date of the exam, the candidate is required to submit to the Graduate Studies Committee a Special Field Proposal which is shaped in consultation with the Special Field director and three other faculty members chosen by the candidate. The proposal includes approximately 100 titles on which the candidate proposes to be examined and a one-page rationale for the shape of the list, including its relationship to the proposed dissertation topic. The reading list is to reflect the candidate's particular orientation, individual strengths, potential dissertation topic and emerging professional identity. The Graduate Studies Committee assesses and approves the proposal, sometimes suggesting revisions. Following approval, the candidate makes up 10 to 15 questions over the reading list subject to approval by the Special Field committee. The Special Field Committee questions the candidate over the readings and proposed dissertation. The Special Field Committee usually becomes the dissertation committee.

GRADING: The Special Fields Committee decides on whether the student passes the exam. Grades are pass with distinction / pass / fail.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: As needed. Exam procedures have been changed, formally and informally, approximately three times in the past five years.

More info:

http://www.english.uiuc.edu/gradprogram/information_for_current_students.htm

University of Massachusetts—Amherst

NAME: “Two Area” Qualifying Examination

AIM: To demonstrate one has the research and writing skills for the dissertation. A secondary purpose is to assist the student in moving toward a dissertation prospectus while also developing a second area of interest.

FORMAT: Two Area papers are prepared over time, much as one would research and write a paper for an independent study. The oral exam, based on the two papers, is two hours long.

TIMING: The time period for preparing the Area papers is not fixed. Often students do one area over a semester and a second during a summer; some spread them over a year. The recommended timing is during the fourth semester of the Ph.D. program, when students should have completed their course work. There is no penalty for taking the Two-Area examination later than the fourth semester, other than delay in being able to move on to form a dissertation committee and prepare the dissertation prospectus.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: The exam requires students to prepare two papers on areas that they propose, one in the area of research that the student hopes will lead to a dissertation and the other, distinct from the first, in a secondary field of research and/or teaching. The First Area essay describes as searchingly as possible a field of interest, defines important issues, takes stands, and considers possible methodologies. The Second Area essay defines the area of interest and describes current issues in the field. It may also include, where appropriate, a proposed undergraduate course description and syllabus. Generally, the student submits a combined maximum of 30 written pages defining two areas and a pair of bibliographies consisting of a minimum of 60 works. The reading lists are prepared in consultation with student-chosen faculty advisors in the two areas, both of whom serve on the exam committee along with two other members appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies. In the oral exam, the student is questioned on the area papers and reading lists and may discuss ideas for a dissertation.

GRADERS AND GRADING: The four faculty examiners decide on pass or fail on the basis of the two area papers and oral exam.

RECENT OR ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: Until a few years ago, students took a “three area” exam. The exam was changed to a two-area format to make the exam more manageable and allow for more focused work.

More information available at: <http://www.umass.edu/english/eng/gradframe.html>

University of Minnesota
Rhetoric and Scientific and Technical Communication

NAME: Preliminary Examination

AIM: To see that students have sufficient understanding of advanced study in the field to do doctoral research and to teach at the college level.

FORMAT: A written exam (a two-hour, on-site, no book exam and a 24-hour take home) followed by an oral defense of the written exam.

TIMING: During the third year, after completion of course work.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: Students are examined in 2 required areas (rhetorical history and theory; scientific and technical communication theory and research) plus an area of their own choice (e.g., environmental rhetoric, internet studies, technology and pedagogy). Students are tested on reading lists that are constructed with the Examination Committee (consisting of the student's advisor, two additional RSTC faculty and one faculty from a minor or supporting field). This committee is appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the student and the student's advisor. Reading lists are subject to approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Reading lists are somewhat standard, though they are revised to meet student interests. The examiners write the questions (although sometimes examiners and student agree on a question before the exam), and they are forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval. Sometimes an "outside" exam substitutes for part or all of one of the exams if a student works with faculty in another department. The oral exam is held about two weeks after the written. Usually the members of the Written Exam Committee are also members of the Oral Exam Committee.

GRADING: Two grades are possible on the written examination: Pass or Fail. If a student fails all three areas, they are withdrawn from the program. If they fail in one or two areas, they get a second try in the area(s). A grade of Pass is required before moving on to the oral. Three grades are possible on the preliminary oral exam: Pass, Pass with Reservation, No Pass. Students must receive, on their first try, a pass or pass with reservation on the oral to continue in the program. In the case of a Pass with Reservation, the committee decides on the next step.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: Students currently take prelims before submitting a dissertation prospectus, which they do after they take exams. A change is contemplated to encourage students to think about dissertations earlier and structure exams more closely in relationship to a dissertation. Right now, exams shadow course work; in a revision, the prelim would anticipate the dissertation.

More information available at: <http://www.rhetoric.umn.edu/gradhandbook.pdf>

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

NAME: Comprehensive Examination

AIM: To prepare a student for work on a dissertation, while insuring that the student will be able to teach survey and specialized courses at a number of educational institutions.

FORMAT: Two written components, one on the field and one on the focus, followed by a capstone oral.

TIMING: At the end of coursework (in the third or fourth year). Students achieve candidacy with the successful completion of the exams (assuming the foreign language requirements are met.) Any student with a teaching assistantship must achieve candidacy by the end of the summer after their fourth year in order to retain their assistantship. A student may petition the Graduate Committee for an extension of the candidacy deadline, but such an extension will not extend the total number of years a student may hold a TA.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: In preparation for the exams, students develop two reading lists of 30-40 texts each, working with two faculty members per list. These faculty members typically will comprise the Supervisory Committee. Students develop these lists with a view toward the kind of job they would like to attain after graduation. One list, referred to as "the field list," represents the relatively broader field in which the student wants to work (i.e., Composition Theory and Practice, History of Rhetoric, Rhetoric and Poetics, English Education, Literacy Studies, etc.). The second list, referred to as "the focus list," is more specialized and often leans more toward the subject of the dissertation (i.e., Gender and Rhetorical Practice, Critical Pedagogy and Literacy, etc.). The student submits both lists to the Department's Graduate Committee with a cover letter explaining the rationale for the field and focus designation, a plan for meeting the comprehensive exam requirement for each list, and the signatures of the faculty who have agreed to assess the exams and support the student's plan. At the student's discretion, a written component may take three forms: (a) a traditional, 3 to 4-hour exam over the list; (b) The Option I Portfolio (which includes a cover letter, a 20-page integrative essay with a thesis that brings together major texts from the reading list; an annotated bibliography of remaining list items; a statement of teaching goals; sample course syllabi based on the reading list with selected assignments and class activities; and professional writing that is informed by material on the reading list); or (c) A Scholarly Paper Portfolio (which includes a cover letter; a 30-40 page scholarly paper; an annotated bibliography on list items not used in the paper; a statement of teaching goals; and sample course syllabi based on the reading list with selected assignments and class activities). The department also allows students to fulfill the field and focus exam requirement by preparing a "Combined Portfolio." In this case, the student still prepares two lists but the integrative essay (Option I) must run a minimum of 40 pages and the scholarly paper (Option II) must run 40-60 pages. Doctoral students in Comp/Rhet routinely choose the portfolio format. If a written exam is chosen, students develop some questions to accompany their lists but understand that faculty may also develop questions.

The 60 to 90-minute Capstone Oral exam follows successful completion of the written components. The Supervisory Committee administers the oral but the committee can add other examiners with the student's approval. The purpose of the Capstone Oral is to give students the opportunity to articulate connections between texts and issues central to their written field and focus exams or portfolios. As the examining committee explores topics from the written examinations via integrative and interpretive questions, the student can articulate and expand on aspects of his or her thinking on the Field and Focus areas. This helps orient the student's work on the comprehensives toward the dissertation, teaching goals, and research projects. The Capstone Oral also can serve as an opportunity for the Committee and student to discuss the student's dissertation plans.

GRADING: As described above two faculty readers (usually, but not necessarily members of the student's supervisory committee) independently read and assess the field and focus exams. Each reader judges the exam as a "pass," "no pass," or "revise and resubmit" and writes comments for the student to consider. If there were to be a disagreement between readers, the Graduate Chair could select a third reader or negotiate a solution with the student and the readers (but this hasn't been necessary). If the student fails or is asked to revise, she or he will do so with specific comments from the readers as to what needs to be done to meet the comprehensive examination standards. If a student fails a portfolio twice, he or she must petition the Graduate Committee in writing for permission to revise and submit it a third time or take the exam in a different format. After the Capstone Oral, the chair of the Supervisory Committee completes a consensus report which deems the Capstone Oral examination results as "pass," "no pass," or "conditional pass," and submits it to the Graduate Chair. Students who receive a "conditional pass" must do further work to pass the Capstone Oral, the nature and extent of which will be clearly delineated in the "Consensus Report" which is given to the student.

RECENT OR ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: No changes planned, although there is concern about the time students take to complete the portfolio option. The Comp/Rhet faculty meets with graduate students annually as a group to discuss, among other things, the assessment practices and criteria for comprehensive exams. The faculty also is developing additional advising materials to make the exam process more productive and efficient.

More info available at: http://www.unl.edu/english/html/comp_rhet/comp_rhet.html

University of New Hampshire

NAME: Qualifying Examination

AIM: To test the candidate's expertise developed in the course of doctoral studies and certify the candidate as academically prepared to undertake the writing of a dissertation.

FORMAT: The qualifying exam consists of three parts: (1) a 24-hour, open-book take home General Section (which entails about eight hours of work); (2) a 48-hour, open-book take home devoted to each of two Qualifying areas of specialization (again, each part entails about eight hours of work); and (3) a two-hour oral exam to be scheduled not more than one week after the written exams. The General and Qualifying sections of the exam must be taken within a single week. The Qualifying Exam must be taken on two consecutive days. One 24-hour period is devoted to Composition Studies and the second 24-hour period to a secondary area of specialization, such as literary studies, linguistics, or literacy studies.

TIMING: The General and Qualifying Exams take place in the student's third year in the doctoral program. Students are encouraged to begin shaping their exam areas during the second year of study.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: In consultation with the student, the Graduate Director chooses a chair of the Examination Committee and then the committee chair and the Graduate Director, again in consultation with the student, choose three additional faculty members in the student's fields of specialization. In preparing for the Qualifying Exam, students work with members of the exam committee to prepare reading lists, which must be placed on file in the Graduate Office by the time of the exam. The Examination Committee prepares questions. The General Examination consists of interpretive responses to passages drawn from significant work in the field of composition studies.

GRADING: The exam committee arrives at one overall grade following the oral. Grades are Pass with Distinction / Pass / Fail. Students who fail must retake the exam by the beginning of their fourth year of study. Two failures constitute grounds for dismissal.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: Some discussion about the future of the "passages" format of the general exam.

More information at <http://www.unnh.edu/composition/phd/exams.html>

University of Pittsburgh

NAME: The Ph.D. Project

AIM: The Ph.D. Project fulfills the University requirement for a comprehensive examination prior to being granted doctoral candidacy. The Ph.D. project is an occasion to integrate various aspects of the changing disciplinary practices of English studies and to define a broad area of inquiry for subsequent work. The Project allows students to examine and synthesize a range of interests that ordinarily lead into the more detailed inquiry of a dissertation. Through this project the student demonstrates a breadth of knowledge as well as an ability to work on a single problem.

FORMAT: The Project is in four stages: (1) a 5-10 page proposal + bibliography addressing an issue in the field; (2) a working paper or papers of approximately 30 pages based on the proposal; (3) a six-hour written exam (taken in two, three-hour segments) based on the paper(s) and project overall; and (4) an oral exam of up to three hours, following up on the project and written answers. Students enroll in an independent study course while writing the project paper(s).

TIMING: Students must have their project proposals approved and reviewed by the end of their third year in the program, their second term as a Teaching Fellow, or their sixth term in residence. The Project Paper(s) and the Project Examinations must be completed by the end of the fall term of the fourth year in the program, the third term as a Teaching Fellow, or the seventh term in residence. Students who are in good standing and are scheduled to prepare projects are given priority for summer teaching appointments.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: The Ph.D. project begins with a 5-10 page proposal plus bibliography that indicates the relationship between the project and prior graduate level study; situates the project with respect to theoretical and critical issues; defines a program of historical research into the emergence and significance of the topic; and explains why the field of study should be constituted in the manner proposed. The proposal goes to the Graduate Procedures Committee for ~~approval~~ advice and suggestions. Then, in consultation with the project committee, the student writes a working paper or several papers of about 30 pages based on the proposal. After the project committee approves the project paper(s), it schedules written examinations with questions composed by committee members. The exam may be open-book. After the written examination, an oral is held, following up issues in the paper(s) and the written exam and perhaps raising other related issues.

GRADING: After the oral, the project committee members render one grade of pass / fail / or pass with distinction. Failed Ph.D. Project exams may be repeated only with the permission of the Graduate Procedures Committee. Project exams may be retaken only once, and must be retaken within two academic terms of the original exam date. A student whose initial performance is very unsatisfactory is not permitted to repeat it.

ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: None reported.

More info at: <http://www.english.pitt.edu/composition/graduate.htm>

University of Wisconsin-Madison

NAME: Preliminary Examination

AIM: To develop breadth and depth for future research and teaching and to reinterpret coursework within broader traditions and scholarly debates.

FORMAT: An eight-hour written examination taken in four-hour segments over two days followed by a two-hour oral exam over the written answers.

TIMING: Students are eligible to take the preliminary exam after they have completed six courses in the comp/rhet concentration and at least one of their tool requirements. All students must complete course work, tool requirements, and the preliminary examination by no later than the end of their sixth semester in the program or else face probation and potential suspension of their teaching assistantship.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP: The Examination Committee consists of all members of the comp/rhet faculty who write exam questions collectively. Generally students must answer six written questions (three on each day) from a selection. All students are examined on a common core reading list consisting of 75 items. In addition, they read two additional, standing 50-item reading lists in two subspecialties of their choice (rhetoric, discourse, literacy, pedagogy, semiotics, critical theory). Students may opt to individualize the sub-specialty reading lists by removing ten standing items and replacing them with 20 items chosen by the student subject to faculty approval. Also subject to faculty approval, each student contributes one self-authored question to the written examination.

GRADING: The Examination Committee grades the examination based on a scale of High Pass, Pass, Marginal Pass, Fail. Students must receive at least a marginal pass on the written examination to proceed to the oral. Two marginal passes (on the written and oral) translate into a Fail. In the event of a failure on either or both portions of the exam, the student may retry one more time. A second non-pass results in dismissal from the program.

RECENT OR ANTICIPATED REVISIONS: A reevaluation of the graduate program, including the preliminary examination, is planned for 2004-05. Some preliminary discussions have centered on designing exam procedures that better synthesize subspecialties.

More information at: <http://www.wisc.edu/english>

International Graduate Students: Challenges and Opportunities

6.22.10

Background (Our experience at Purdue). While most of the international graduate students in English at Purdue come to study ESL, the Graduate Program in Rhetoric and Composition has graduates who have come from Asia, Africa, and Europe. Currently we have 4 international students, and have 5 ESL students taking R/C as a secondary area for the PhD. Most years we receive applications from international students, and our challenge is to find students who will be a good fit for our program. Our international students have been excellent students who greatly enrich the graduate program.

Our international applicants typically are PhD students who have been in the US for their MAs, as R/C is not widely known internationally as a graduate program of study. In addition to the standard requirements, the Department of English requires international students to take TOEFL and a test of written and spoken English (unless their first language is English). R/C abides by these requirements because we do not admit students without aid (and almost all teach). This last wrinkle – the teaching for aid – prevents us from admitting some very qualified applicants who seem ill-suited to immediate teaching.

Some Challenges [THESE ARE INTENDED TO BE STARTING POINTS FOR DISCUSSION. I INCLUDE SOME POSSIBLE ACTIONS, BUT MANY OTHERS ARE POSSIBLE . . .]

1. Application/Acceptance

- Increasing applications: Post 911 US policies have made obtaining a student visa more difficult and time consuming. Further, some universities add extra hoops for applicants. [possible action: You may want to have tips for international students section of your website as a way to help potential applicants understand the new processes]
- Finding good fits: How do you evaluate applicants from universities (or countries) whose education and standards are not known to you? [possible action: ESL faculty has much more experience with international universities] How do you determine whether the students will be satisfied with the educational program at your university? [possible action: email exchanges]

2. Orientation/Coursework

- Comfort: How do you get international students oriented to your program? What special needs do they have? [possible actions: connect students with campus resources for international students; set up two visits with adviser during the first month to discuss class, teaching, and life]
- Contribution in Classes: Some international students find the casual discussion in American classes problematic; some of their classmates may expect the international student is quiet or having language problems. [possible actions: online asynchronous discussion list (to give the international student more time, if it is a language problem); require students to bring a reading response to class and share; please share others]
- Finding the Appropriate Coursework: Advisors need to be alert to avoiding the stereotyping of students (i.e. expecting them to want ESL writing), to finding necessary background courses for some interests (e.g. American history for those interested in cultural studies); and to getting them the needed appointments to stay in the US after graduation if that is their goal (e.g., ESL courses; Writing Center).

3. Job Search

- International: If the person is returning to his/her home country, what resources do they need in finding a position? [possible action: Find what process is for finding work there and how faculty should write their supporting letters]
- US: What special problems will this person have in searching for a job? If economics stay poor, it will increasingly difficult to argue that an international PhD is needed to fill a US job. [possible action: be sure students have credentials in a needed job skill area – e.g., ESL, writing center, WAC, business writing, tech writing, computers]