Admission to Graduate Study

Students will be admitted in both the fall and spring semesters. Applications should be submitted by April 1 for the fall and by November 1 for the spring.

To be admitted into the program, students must satisfy the general requirements for admission to graduate study at the university with classified graduate standing, as described in Part Two of this bulletin. In addition, applicants must have a GPA of at least 3.0 in the last 60 semester units (90 quarter units) attempted in their bachelor’s degree studies.

Students applying for admission should electronically submit the university application available at http://www.csumentor.edu along with the $55 application fee.

All applicants must submit admissions materials separately to SDSU Graduate Admissions and to the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies.

Graduate Admissions

The following materials should be submitted as a complete package directly to:

Graduate Admissions
Enrollment Services
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA 92182-7416

(1) Official transcripts (in sealed envelopes) from all postsecondary institutions attended;

Note:
- Students who attended SDSU need only submit transcripts for work completed since last attendance.
- Students with international coursework must submit both the official transcript and proof of degree. If documents are in a language other than English, they must be accompanied by a certified English translation.

(2) GRE scores (http://www.ets.org, SDSU institution code 4682);

(3) English language score, if medium of instruction was in a language other than English (http://www.ets.org, SDSU institution code 4682).

Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies

The following materials should be mailed or delivered to:

Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
(Attention: Graduate Adviser)
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-4452

(1) Letter of application;

(2) A 750-1000 word statement of purpose;

(3) A writing sample (minimum 10 pages total, in one or separate documents);

(4) Three letters of recommendation.

Advancement to Candidacy

All students must satisfy the general requirements for advancement to candidacy, including the foreign language requirement, as stated in Part Four of this bulletin. With the approval of the graduate adviser, each candidate may fulfill the foreign language requirement in one of several ways: 1) by passing a local examination administered by one of the university’s foreign language departments, 2) by completing one three-unit upper division foreign language or literature course with a grade of C or better, or 3) by passing an examination to be determined by the graduate adviser if the chosen language is not one taught in a department at San Diego State University.

Rhetoric and Writing Studies

In the College of Arts and Letters

OFFICE: Storm Hall 141
TELEPHONE: 619-594-6515 / FAX: 619-594-6530

Faculty

Glen McClish, Ph.D., Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, Chair of Department
Suzanne Bordelon, Ph.D., Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
Cezar M. Ornatowski, Ph.D., Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
Linn K. Bekins, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, Professional Writing Program Director
Richard B. Boyd, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
Ellen Quandahl, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, Graduate Program Director
Christopher Werry, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, Lower Division Writing Director
Paul A. Minifie, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies

Associateships

Graduate teaching associateships (GTA) in rhetoric and writing studies are available to a limited number of qualified graduate students. Teaching associates must have completed Rhetoric and Writing Studies 609, attend Rhetoric and Writing Studies 796A during the first semester of their associateship, and have the consent of the RWS GTA program director. Application forms and additional information are available from the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies.

General Information

The Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, in the College of Arts and Letters, offers graduate study leading to the Master of Arts degree in rhetoric and writing studies. Rhetoric and composition is a field of theory, research, and teaching concerned broadly with literacy and written discourse. It emphasizes the centrality of discourse (primarily written discourse) to all processes of learning, knowledge formation, socialization into disciplinary and cultural communities, and professional work. The program builds on the diverse interests of faculty in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies to bring together rhetorical theory, history of rhetoric, composition studies, literacy, writing pedagogy, discourse theory, professional writing, and writing in the disciplines to provide a coherent platform for inquiry into the diverse ways in which literacy and writing are used in academic, professional, and cultural contexts. The graduate program can prepare students for a teaching career.

The Master of Arts degree in rhetoric and writing studies is a 30-unit program that provides preparation for students wanting to pursue doctoral-level study in the area of rhetoric and writing studies or in related disciplines or for students who plan to terminate their studies at the M.A. level. In addition to a general program, the curriculum offers specializations in the teaching of writing and in professional writing.

The specialization in the teaching of writing prepares students to teach writing in colleges and further the professional development of secondary school teachers. The specialization in professional writing prepares students for careers as professional writers in business, industry, public agencies, and government within the broader disciplinary context of rhetoric and writing studies, as well as to teach technical and professional writing at colleges or in specific training settings.

The program includes a teaching internship for students in the teaching of writing specialization and a technical writing internship for students in the technical and professional writing specialization and, where appropriate, special study based on work experience.
Specific Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree
(Major Code: 15013)

In addition to meeting the requirements for classified graduate standing and the basic requirements for the master's degree as described in Part Four of this bulletin, a student must complete a program of study approved by the department's graduate adviser. The program must consist of at least 30 units, with at least 18 units of 600- and 700-level courses.

General Program
(SIMS Code: 112201)

Required courses (15 units):
- RWS 600 Reading and Writing Rhetorically (3)
- RWS 601A History of Rhetoric I (3)
- RWS 602 Modern Rhetoric and Composition Studies (3)
- RWS 640 Research Methods in Rhetoric and Writing Studies (3)
- RWS 790 M. A. Examination Preparation (3) Cr/NC

or

- RWS 799A Thesis or Project (3) Cr/NC/RP

Electives (15 units)
Fifteen units of thematically focused electives selected with the approval of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies graduate adviser.

Specialization in the Teaching of Writing
(SIMS Code: 112202)

Required courses (21 units):
- RWS 600 Reading and Writing Rhetorically (3)
- RWS 601A History of Rhetoric I (3)
- RWS 602 Modern Rhetoric and Composition Studies (3)
- RWS 609 Theory and Practice of Teaching Composition (3)
- RWS 640 Research Methods in Rhetoric and Writing Studies (3)
- RWS 796A Teaching Internship (3) Cr/NC

or

- RWS 798 Special Study (based on work experience, where appropriate and with the approval of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies graduate adviser) (3) Cr/NC/RP
- RWS 790 M. A. Examination Preparation (3) Cr/NC

or

- RWS 799A Thesis or Project (3) Cr/NC/RP

Electives (9 units)
Nine units of thematically focused electives selected with the approval of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies graduate adviser.

Specialization in Professional Writing
(SIMS Code: 112203)

Required courses (24 units):
- RWS 500W Advanced Professional Writing (3)
- RWS 505 Writing Project Management (3)
- RWS 600 Reading and Writing Rhetorically (3)
- RWS 601A History of Rhetoric I (3)
- RWS 602 Modern Rhetoric and Composition Studies (3)
- RWS 640 Research Methods in Rhetoric and Writing Studies (3)
- RWS 796B Writing Internship (3)

or

- RWS 798 Special Study (Based on work experience, where appropriate and with the approval of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies graduate adviser) (3) Cr/NC/RP

or

- RWS 790 M. A. Examination Preparation (3) Cr/NC

or

- RWS 799A Thesis or Project (3) Cr/NC/RP

Electives (6 units)
Six units of thematically focused electives selected with the approval of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies graduate adviser.

Advanced Certificate in the Teaching of Writing
(Certificate Code: 90101) (SIMS Code: 112299)

Offered by the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies, the Advanced Certificate in the Teaching of Writing provides opportunities for teachers, scholars, and other professionals to expand their knowledge of rhetoric, expository texts, and composition instruction. Applicants to the program must have completed a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.

Students in the program must complete 12 units of coursework. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 or better must be maintained in certificate coursework, with no less than a C grade in any course.

Required courses (6 units):
- RWS 600 Reading and Writing Rhetorically (3)
- RWS 509 Teaching Composition in Secondary Schools (3)

or

- RWS 609 Theory and Practice of Teaching Composition (3)

Electives (6 units)
Three units selected from:
- LING 590 English Grammar (3)
- LING 550 Theory and Practice of English as a Second Language (3)
- LING 652 Second Language Acquisition (3)
- LING 653 ESL Reading and Writing (3)

Courses Acceptable on Master's Degree Program in Rhetoric and Writing Studies (RWS)

Refer to Courses and Curricula and Regulations of the Division of Graduate Affairs sections of this bulletin for explanation of the course numbering system, unit or credit hour, prerequisites, and related information.

UPPER DIVISION COURSES

RWS 500W. Advanced Writing Strategies (3)
Prerequisites: Satisfies Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement for students who have completed 60 units; completed Writing Placement Assessment with a score of B or higher (or earned a C or higher in RWS 280, 281, or LING 281 if score on WPA was 7 or lower); and completed General Education requirements in Composition and Critical Thinking. Proof of completion of prerequisites required: Test scores or verification of exemption; copy of transcript.

Advanced writing course focusing on how meaning is negotiated and claims are argued in academic and public discourse.

RWS 501. Editing (3)
Prerequisite: Rhetoric and Writing Studies 305W or 500W.

RWS 503W. Professional Writing (3)
Prerequisite: Rhetoric and Writing Studies 305W or 500W.
Principles and practices of professional writing, including clear and concise style and rhetorical strategies of designing effective workplace documents. Practice composing memos, reports, proposals.
RWS 504. Advanced Professional Writing (3)  
Prerequisite: Rhetoric and Writing Studies 503W. Recommended: Graphics or drawing course.  
Advanced principles in professional writing, including user and task analysis for interface design; document design and typography; collaboration and interpersonal communication; ethical and cultural issues; usability testing; and small group management.

RWS 505. Writing Project Management (3)  
Prerequisite: Rhetoric and Writing Studies 504.  
Managing technical documentation projects. Collaborative writing. Managing writing teams. Conducting task analysis, estimating cost and schedule, preparing document plans, gathering information, testing documents, and managing project documentation.

RWS 506. Writing Internship (3) Cr/NC  
Prerequisites: Rhetoric and Writing Studies 504 and Rhetoric and Writing Studies 503W or 508W.  
Intensive experience in writing and editing documents while student is under the joint supervision of an academic instructor and a professional coordinator.

RWS 507. Professional Communication in Nonprofit Organizations (3)  
Prerequisite: Rhetoric and Writing Studies 503W.  
Developing specific technical communication skills for nonprofit organizations. Learning nonprofit documentation: proposals, mission statements, advertising, member surveys, capital campaigns. Promoting volunteerism. Interacting with nonprofit boards. Adhering to requisite state and federal regulations.

RWS 508W. Scientific Writing (3)  
Prerequisites: Satisfies Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement for students who have completed 60 units; completed Writing Placement Assessment with a score of 8 or higher (or earned a C or higher in RWS 280, 281, or LING 281 if score on WPA was 7 or lower); and completed General Education requirements in Composition and Critical Thinking. Proof of completion of prerequisites required: Test scores or verification of exemption; copy of transcript.  
Scientific writing in academic and research settings to include clear and concise writing style, rhetorical strategies, and writing of research reports, proposals, conference presentations, and articles. (Formerly numbered Rhetoric and Writing Studies 508.)

RWS 509. Teaching Composition in Secondary Schools (3)  
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor based on writing sample and/or test.  
Theory and practice of teaching and assessing composition in secondary schools and comparable contexts.

RWS 510. Rhetoric and Culture (3)  
Interplay of rhetoric, writing, and culture, including race/ethnicity, gender, class, and other cultural considerations. Role of texts in shaping and shifting community knowledge, identity, norms, and values.

RWS 512. Writing Tutor Theory and Practice (3)  
Prerequisite: Satisfaction of Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement.  
Theory, practice, and methods of tutoring written composition in post-secondary settings, to include various approaches to one-on-one student conferencing and responding to student writing. Maximum credit six units.

RWS 596. Special Topics in Rhetoric and Writing Studies (1-3)  
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.  
Selected topics in rhetoric and writing studies. May be repeated with new content and consent of instructor. See Class Schedule for specific content. Limit of nine units of any combination of 296, 496, 596 courses applicable to a bachelor's degree. Credit for 596 and 696 applicable to a master's degree with approval of the graduate adviser.

RWS 599. Special Study (1-3) Cr/NC  
Directed individual study. Maximum credit six units.
RWS 790. M.A. Examination Preparation (3) Cr/NC
Prerequisites: Twenty-four units of graduate coursework that counts toward the M.A. degree in rhetoric and writing studies. Student must be in final semester of study for master's degree.
Survey of selected essays, articles, and texts in rhetoric, composition studies, and professional and technical writing included in the M.A. examination. Emphasis on rhetorical analysis of texts and contexts (historical, social, professional, and technical). Strongly recommended for students taking the M.A. examination.

RWS 796A. Teaching Internship (3) Cr/NC
Prerequisites: Completion of Rhetoric and Writing Studies 609 and consent of graduate adviser.
Teaching experience while student is under joint supervision of college-level teacher and academic instructor. Maximum credit three units.

RWS 796B. Writing Internship (3) Cr/NC
Prerequisites: Rhetoric and Writing Studies 501, 504, 600, 601A, 602, and consent of graduate director.
Intensive experience in writing and editing documents while student is under joint supervision of an academic instructor and a professional coordinator. Maximum credit three units applicable to a master's degree.

RWS 798. Special Study (1-3) Cr/NC/RP
Prerequisite: Consent of staff; to be arranged with department chair and instructor.
Individual study. Maximum credit six units applicable to a master's degree.

RWS 799A. Thesis or Project (3) Cr/NC/RP
Prerequisites: An officially appointed thesis committee and advancement to candidacy.
Preparation of a project or thesis for the master's degree.

RWS 799B. Thesis or Project Extension (0) Cr/NC
Prerequisite: Prior registration in Thesis 799A with an assigned grade symbol of RP.
Registration required in any semester or term following assignment of RP in Course 799A in which the student expects to use the facilities and resources of the university; also student must be registered in the course when the completed thesis is granted final approval.

RWS 799C. Comprehensive Examination Extension (0) Cr/NC
Prerequisite: Completion or concurrent enrollment in degree program courses.
Registration required of students whose only requirement is completion of the comprehensive examination for the master's degree. Registration in 799C limited to two semesters.