



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

# Graduate Program Handbook - 2024/25

*English Master of Arts*

*Technical Communication Track*

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*Reference this handbook to learn about the unique policies, requirements, procedures, resources, and norms for graduate students in the English MA Technical Communication.*

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[Terry Thaxton • May 21, 2024 • Department of English]





Last updated: May 21, 2024

# Letter of Welcome

Welcome to the Technical Communication track in the Master of Arts in English. Our program is completely online and provides students with both theoretical and applied skills in such areas as technical writing and editing, visual design, usability, ethics, stylistics, computer documentation, and international communication.

Students in this program come from a variety of educational backgrounds such as psychology, computer science, business, and English. The program's faculty members are well published in the field and have considerable experience in teaching online courses.

Our graduates hold a variety of jobs in the central Florida region; they have found work as technical writers, technical editors, information designers, web designers, corporate trainers, consultants, information developers, educators, instructional designers, documentation specialists, or have other communication-related jobs.

Overall, you will learn how to apply technical communication theory to projects that allow you to enhance your intellectual ability to analyze and solve problems on a rhetorical level. Also, these projects will serve as the material of a strong portfolio that will help you when you seek employment in the field.

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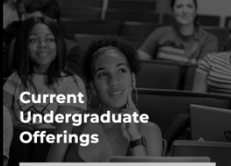
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# Navigating Policy and Resources at the University of Central Florida

This handbook is one of many sources to consult as you become familiar with the policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms of graduate education at the University of Central Florida.


## ACADEMIC CATALOGS

These online catalogs can help you quickly locate and save details about our undergraduate and graduate programs. Whether you are a prospective student or already enrolled, you can easily see what the University of Central Florida has to offer!




Current Undergraduate Offerings

VISIT CATALOG




Latest Graduate Programs

VISIT CATALOG



Prior Years' Catalogs

VISIT ARCHIVES



## THE GOLDEN RULE STUDENT HANDBOOK

## STUDENT LIFE

ORLANDO, FL | 73°F

### Student Handbook

### Knight Life at UCF

Don't just go to college — get the most out of it. At UCF, you'll have many ways to get involved inside and outside of the classroom. From application to graduation, you'll be inspired to do amazing things. So whether you prefer academics and research or campus activities and athletics, we'll provide you with the tools and support you need to find your place and foster your purpose.

Discover your next adventure at UCF.

### GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

[Student Handbook Intro](#)  
[Financial Matters](#)  
[Role of the College of...](#)

### Understanding Your Graduate Experience

## UCF Regulations

HOME NOTICE ARCHIVES SUBSCRIBE TO NOTIFICATIONS UCF POLICIES

## Pathways to Success

Personal and Professional Development Opportunities

## Chapter 5: Students



## How to Use This Handbook

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) - Open to all graduate students at no cost
- [Plagiarism](#)

## Who to Contact for Questions

Many of your questions about how to meet expectations and thrive as a graduate student will be answered by the various sources of policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms listed in this document. Several key positions in this department and on campus are ready to answer your remaining questions:

Email: [englishgrad@ucf.edu](mailto:englishgrad@ucf.edu)

### **Graduate Program Staff**

The Graduate Admissions Specialist for English Department Graduate Programs serves as a point person for program policy and procedures. The Graduate Admissions Specialist is well versed in most elements of graduate education that extend beyond academic instruction in your program and will likely be your first stop for questions related to anything in this handbook. Contact [englishgrad@ucf.edu](mailto:englishgrad@ucf.edu) for any questions.

### **Director of Graduate Studies**

The Graduate Program Director in English is a faculty member designated to administer and direct the educational vision and structure of the program.

Names and contact information of your Graduate Program Director and Staff can be found on your program's page in the [Graduate Catalog](#). Simply navigate to the Programs tab in the catalog and then navigate to the program name. Contact [englishgrad@ucf.edu](mailto:englishgrad@ucf.edu).

### **Graduate School Services**

For general graduate inquiries and graduate student services from the Graduate School, please review the [College of Graduate Studies](#) website as an additional resource.

## Introduction/Overview Section

### Complete Name of Degree

Master of Arts in English, Technical Communication

### College

College of Arts & Humanities

### Department

Department of English

### Program Type

Master's Degree in Technical Communication

### Program Website

<https://cah.ucf.edu/english/graduate-tech-comm/>

### Program Overview Narrative

The Technical Communication track in the Master of Arts in English program is completely online and provides students with both theoretical and applied skills in such areas as technical writing and editing, visual design, usability, ethics, stylistics, computer documentation, and international communication.

Students in this program come from a variety of educational backgrounds such as psychology, computer science, business, and English. The program's faculty members are well published in the field and have considerable experience in teaching online courses.

### Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies

Our graduates hold a variety of jobs in the central Florida region; they have found work as technical writers, technical editors, information designers, web designers, corporate

trainers, consultants, information developers, educators, instructional designers, documentation specialists, or have other communication-related jobs.

Overall, you will learn how to apply technical communication theory to projects that allow you to enhance your intellectual ability to analyze and solve problems on a rhetorical level. Also, these projects will serve as the material of a strong portfolio that will help you when you seek employment in the field.

There are some additional benefits that come from getting the UCF MA degree in Technical Communication:

- It could give you an edge on the job market. People who are hiring technical communicators will note on your résumé that you have a master's degree and this will most likely stand out.
- Prepare you for a job interview because of what you have learned in the coursework.
- May be useful for a promotion or an increase in salary.
- Lets you teach at 2-year colleges.
- Can lead on to a Ph.D. program and can help you know whether you want to get a Ph.D.

You should also consider potential costs and trade-offs:

- Some employers will pay for your master's degree while you work for them. If not, you will have to pay tuition (though financial aid may be available, just as it is for undergraduate degrees).
- Being a student may mean having a reduced salary during school and possible student loans due after you graduate.
- It's a time commitment and you should think about how this might alter your work-life balance. Do you want to go back to school for a few years? Many students work full time while getting their MAs, but working and also going to grad school might keep you from doing other things in your life.

We recommend that you seek advice from others:

- Talk to a faculty member or mentor! Everyone's situation is unique, and every job in technical communication is a bit different from all the other jobs in the field.
- If you have any questions about technical communication as a career, you can talk to some members of the local Central Florida chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

### **Strengths of the Program**

- A long-standing connection to the Orlando Central Florida Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC)
- A close working relationship with local companies and industries

- A location that provides students with access to a diverse array of industries
- A faculty with wide-ranging research interests and experience in teaching technical communication

## Student Expectations

### Preparation & Participation

Graduate courses are quite different from undergraduate courses. As an undergraduate, it is often possible to earn an A by speaking up occasionally, showing up most of the time, and completing most of the reading and writing assignments. Not so in graduate school, where self-motivation, avid intellectual curiosity, and devotion to your own growth as a writer are expected.

### Independence & Balance

An academic career rewards self-motivation and diligence. Everyone has a life outside of graduate school, which may include a job and/or family responsibilities, but those other commitments won't exempt you from your academic responsibilities. The English MA Technical Communication Program is about further developing your skills as a technical writer to succeed in the industry or to further your academic career. To make the most of your time in the MA, take charge of your own progress, and yet balance your academic, family, and work lives.

### Work Ethic

An academic career is not a nine-to-five job. Whether or not you plan to pursue a career in academia or in the technical writing industry, while you are in the program, you should plan on devoting at least some of your nights and weekends to graduate work.

### Grades

A reality for graduate students is that expectations are higher for them than for undergraduates. Whereas a "B" in undergraduate courses might have meant an "above average" performance, in graduate courses getting "B" or "B+" is an indication that you need to work harder.

### Support

The program has high expectations of you, and you have many new responsibilities as a graduate student. But the director, faculty, and staff are here to help you. Don't hesitate to ask for support or guidance.

## Program Professional Conduct/Ethics Statement

As a community of writers and researchers, we recognize that the freedom of inquiry essential to academic work carries with it the responsibilities of professional conduct. Students are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations as stipulated by the University of Central Florida and this handbook.

First, our teaching and writing must be respectful. Members of our community actively demonstrate respect for others. We also do not exploit or discriminate against others on grounds including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious creed, age, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability; we do not sexually harass students, colleagues, or staff members; and we do not use language that is prejudicial or gratuitously derogatory. All members of the community are expected to behave in a respectful and courteous manner to others, avoiding threatening or bullying behaviors such as stalking, dishonesty, or disrespect for others' personal space or misuse of shared spaces. We demonstrate respect for knowledge and creativity by avoiding capricious or arbitrary decisions regarding professional status or academic freedom, the misuse of confidential or private information, and the practice of deceit or fraud of the academic community or the public. We will value this respect in our own conduct and will actively admonish failures of respect in the action of others.

Second, professional conduct in the online classroom requires accepting that the classroom is a unique place. The kinds of conversations we have in the classroom are different from the conversations we have elsewhere.

Third, our community rests upon the fundamental assumptions of ethical authorship within the responsible conduct of the academic and professional landscape. Graduate students must not plagiarize the work of others. In addition, submitting the same work to fulfill more than one requirement will be considered self-plagiarism unless there is a substantial revision or addition to the first work and the resubmission takes place with full knowledge and approval of the faculty member to whom the work is being submitted.

Fourth, our community upholds these professional standards in all areas including in our interactions with others, in our engagements with cultural knowledges, in identifying and managing conflicts of interest, in managing material, in using English Department and UCF resources, in mentoring and training, and in collaboration.

Enacting these responsibilities upholds the research activity and academic integrity of our community and the personal integrity of its members. In the assessment of professionalism, instructors and program administrators will consider each student's conduct; the quality of interactions; and meaningful engagement in all aspects of the program.

Students who are in violation of these behaviors will be counseled according to the procedures below and reminded of UCF/English MA expectations. If, after such counseling, the faculty or program administrators conclude that the student is not able or willing to demonstrate an acceptable standard of professionalism, or if there is repeated disregard or violation of standards of professionalism, such behavior will lead to dismissal from the program.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

[UCF Graduate Student Handbook](#)

[UCF Graduate Student Handbook: Academic Integrity](#)

[UCF Graduate Student Handbook: Standards of Conduct & Responsibilities](#)

## Professional Development

Students have the opportunity to become active in the local chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. The Orlando Central Florida chapter holds monthly meetings; at these meetings students will have opportunities for pursuing professional development and networking.

- [Society for Technical Communication](#)
- [Orlando Central Florida Chapter](#)

Graduates of the program are extremely successful in finding jobs in the field. Graduates have been hired by a number of major corporations including the following:

- Lockheed Martin
- Intel
- Amazon
- Google
- Harris Corporation
- Siemens Corporation
- Walt Disney World Company

Students are also employed by small software and engineering firms and by universities and nonprofit organizations.

The work for these graduates includes providing corporate training through e-learning, writing and designing online help systems, project management, communication and writing support for engineers, proposal writing, and consulting.

In addition the College of Graduate Studies offers the [Pathways to Success](#) program which many students find helpful.

## Advising/Mentoring

Your academic advisor is the **English Department Graduate Studies Director**.

Advising relationships are a central part of academia, important to both the experience and development of students and faculty members alike.

Your advisor's role includes tracking your progress in completing your degree, assisting with course selection, and planning your academic path, and helping you identify possible research mentors, committee members, and research opportunities.

Your advisor assists you in acquiring the highest possible level of knowledge and competence in the field and determines whether you have performed at an acceptable level in each of your degree milestones. Your advisor also tracks your progress in completing your degree, assists with course selection and planning your academic path, and helps you identify possible research mentors, committee members, and research opportunities.

Both the student and advisor are responsible for making their expectations clear to each other. Be sure to discuss this with your advisor.

## How to Get Involved

As a graduate student at UCF, you have opportunities to become involved in your academic discipline. This involvement often enhances your academic, professional, and personal growth through developing advanced leadership, communication, and collaboration skills. It also provides opportunities for professional networking.



# Curriculum Section

## Admission Requirements

### Application Deadlines

Please Note: The GRE is not required for admission.

**November 1 for the following Spring Admission**

**March 1 for the following Fall Admission**

## Overview

For information on general UCF graduate admissions requirements that apply to all prospective students, please visit the [admissions](#) section of the Graduate Catalog. Our application requirements are also detailed in the [graduate catalog program entry](#), midway down the page.

Applicants must [apply online](#).

## Application Materials

In addition to the [general UCF graduate application requirements](#), applicants to the English MA program must provide:

- **An Official Transcript** (in a sealed envelope or sent directly by your former institution to UCF via one of the [approved electronic delivery methods](#)) from each college/university attended.
- **Two Letters of Recommendation**, preferably from current or former college professors. The letters should testify to your ability to complete a graduate program, which involves extensive reading, writing, and scholarly research. It is helpful if the recommender has an advanced degree, and we prefer at least one of the letters be from a professor who knows your work as an undergraduate. However, any person able to describe your writing ability, work ethic, and maturity in a professional setting will be helpful. Please do not ask for recommendation letters from your friends, family, or coworkers (other than supervisors).
- **A Statement of Background and Goals of 600-1000 words.**  
The goal statement should provide a narrative of your progress and describe how a MA in Technical Communication could fit into your trajectory. We encourage you to use the following as guiding questions to shape your response:

1. Why are you interested in Technical Communication? What led you to wanting to pursue a graduate degree in Technical Communication? What does Technical Communication mean to you?
  2. What background do you have in Technical Communication or in rhetoric, writing, literature, and/or related fields?
  3. What experiences do you have with conducting scholarly research and writing academic genres (types of writing) that have prepared you for this program?
  4. What experiences do you have with writing technical and/or workplace documentation that have prepared you for this program?
  5. Which courses in our program interest you the most? If you were to write an MA thesis, which professor(s) might you want to direct it?
  6. How might earning this degree help your career or shape your academic journey? Consider the possible industry, nonprofit, government, educational, medical, or scientific organizations that you see yourself working in some day as well as other educational experiences that you might pursue.
- **Résumé or CV**, if applying for an assistantship by the Priority deadline. We encourage you to emphasize any experiences that you have with teaching, conducting research, writing professional or academic documents, and creating digital publications.
  - **A Writing Sample** of approximately 10 pages total. This needs to accomplish two tasks. First, it functions as a sample of your ability to communicate well in prose. Second, it should demonstrate a capacity to think logically and to translate this thought into well-organized language. In many cases, the writing sample will have originally been created for an undergraduate class, but this is not a requirement. The writing sample can also be a professional document. As such, your writing sample should include:
    - 1. Introduction: 1-2 paragraphs introducing your writing sample and explaining why you selected this piece or several pieces as a representation of your work
    - 2. About 10 pages of writing that demonstrate your ability to do the following:
      - make a clear and compelling argument
      - analyze literature, data, online materials, or other sources and puts two or more works in conversation
      - cite outside sources correctly in a format appropriate to the work (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago, AP Style)
  - 
  - 
  - 
  -

You might use all or part of a carefully edited undergraduate research paper for your writing sample. Alternatively, you might choose all or part of a proposal, report, review, or another

workplace document. Writing samples composed independently are preferred; however, collaboratively produced work is acceptable. Be sure to note any documents that were composed collaboratively and clarify your role in the research, writing, and/or production process. Detail which sections or pages you composed directly or edited.

Please note that we will not accept any AI generated writing samples.

Your application and materials must be submitted through the [UCF College of Graduate Studies online admission system](#).

### **We have no GRE requirement.**

You must meet the minimum UCF admission criteria, but this does not guarantee program admission. Final admission is based on evaluation of your abilities, past performance, recommendations, match of this program and faculty expertise to your career/academic goals, and your potential for completing the degree.

We welcome applications from students with undergraduate degrees in areas other than English.

The UCF Graduate School limits the number of admitted students in any graduate program with an undergraduate GPA of less than 3.0.

For more information contact [EnglishGrad@ucf.edu](mailto:EnglishGrad@ucf.edu).

## Degree Requirements

### Required Courses

15 Total Credits

- Complete all of the following
  - Complete the following:
    - [ENC6217](#) - Technical Editing (3)
    - [ENC6261](#) - Technical Writing, Theory and Practice (3)
    - [ENG5009](#) - Methods of Bibliography and Research (3)

Choose one of the following:

- Complete at least 1 of the following:
  - [ENC6338](#) - The Rhetorics of Public Debate (3)
  - [LIT6435](#) - Rhetoric of Science (3)
- Complete the following:
  - [ENC6951](#) - Technical Communication Capstone (3)

## Elective Courses

15 Total Credits

- Complete all of the following

Restricted - 9 Hours

- Complete at least 3 of the following:
  - [ENC6257](#) - Visual Technical Communication (3)
  - [ENC6306](#) - Persuasive Writing (3)
  - [ENC6247](#) - Proposal Writing (3)
  - [ENC6292](#) - Project Management for Technical Writers. (3)
  - [ENC6296](#) - Interactive Design in Technical Communication (3)
  - [ENC6338](#) - The Rhetorics of Public Debate (3)
  - [ENC6425](#) - Hypertext Theory and Design (3)
  - [ENC6335](#) - Rhetorical Traditions (3)
  - [LIN5675](#) - English Grammar and Usage (3)
  - [LIT6435](#) - Rhetoric of Science (3)
  - [ENC6225](#) - User-Centered Design for Technical Communication (3)
  - [ENC6931](#) - Topics in Technical Communication (3)
  - [ENC6297](#) - Production and Publication Methods (3)
  - ENC5137 – Linguistics (3)

Unrestricted - 6 Hours

- Earn at least 6 credits from the following types of courses:

Students will select 6 credit hours of 6000-level electives. Courses from these prefixes may be used with permission from the Program Director: ENC, LIN, LIT, CRW, ENG, DIG. This requirement encourages students to choose two graduate-level courses or independent research or study best suited to develop their academic and professional goals.

## Thesis/Nonthesis Options

3Total Credits

- Complete 1 of the following

Thesis Option

- Earn at least 3 credits from the following types of courses:

Students complete a formal thesis written in consultation with an advisory committee and will meet both departmental and university requirements for the thesis. ENC 6971 Thesis (3 credit hours)

#### Nonthesis Option

- Earn at least 3 credits from the following types of courses:
  - Students will complete 3 additional hours with a 6000-level Technical Communication course or conduct independent study using this option. Courses with the following prefix are permitted: ENC, ENG, LIT.

Grand Total Credits: **33**

## Capstone Experience

The capstone course will support you in creating a digital portfolio, with the overarching goal to produce and articulate a professional identity based in reflective, collaborative practices bolstered by rigorous theoretical framing. Your portfolio will contain a set of artifacts (documents you have produced) for specific audiences and purposes in alignment with your professional identity and the M.A. program in Technical Communication.

## Additional Course Requirements

If your undergraduate degree is in a subject other than English, the Graduate Studies Director may require you to take additional courses that will not be part of your plan of study.

If you lack one year of undergraduate study in a foreign language, you will be required to complete that requirement to earn your degree. The foreign language requirement may be fulfilled at an accredited institution other than UCF. You can also meet the requirement by taking a CLEP test. Contact the University Testing Center for more information on the test ([utc.sdes.ucf.edu/](http://utc.sdes.ucf.edu/)). If you have completed the equivalent of one year of undergraduate study in a language for which there is no CLEP test, contact the Graduate Studies Director for more information about whether your accomplishment satisfies the foreign language requirement.

If you are interested in teaching first-year composition courses, you must take ENC 5705: Theory and Practice in Composition in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric. This course is most often offered during the spring term. It is recommended that you take the course during your first eighteen hours of graduate study. Taking the course does not guarantee that you will be awarded a graduate teaching assistantship.

A maximum of three courses may be taken as independent study, for a total of no more than six semester hours. To obtain approval to enroll in an independent study course, students must propose a topic, related readings, and set of assignments to a faculty member. The proposal (with faculty approval) must be submitted to the department's Graduate Studies Director no later than one week prior to the last day of classes in the term before you will enroll in the independent study. Faculty members are under no obligation to teach independent study courses, but many will do so if the topic supports their own teaching and research responsibilities. If the faculty member agrees to teach the independent study course, contact the Graduate Studies Director to determine whether it will meet the requirements in your plan of study. Independent studies may not duplicate courses in the catalog, whether that course is scheduled for a given semester. Independent studies will not count toward a graduate certificate.

Directed Research does not count toward your plan of study, but it can count toward your full-time enrollment. Technical Communication students who are studying for the comprehensive exams may enroll in one hour of directed research during the semester the exam will be taken. The chief requirement of the directed research course is that you take the exam that semester. If you enroll in directed research and then do not take the exam, you will receive a "U" for those hours. You may only enroll in this "comprehensive exam research" one time.

Workshop classes in the Creative Writing MFA program (CRW 6920, 6921, 6922, and 6923) are generally available only to those students who have been accepted into the MFA program or who have received instructor permission. If you plan to seek instructor permission to take these courses, be prepared to submit a portfolio of your creative work to that instructor.

## Plan of Study

The MA in Technical Communication requires at least 33 hours of course work with a three-hour thesis or a non-thesis option that requires a classroom or industry-based research project, or an additional 6000-level course.

At least 50 percent of the coursework must be taken at the 6000-level. In exceptional cases, up to six hours of 4000-level coursework may be applied to the MA degree, provided that those same courses were not credited toward an undergraduate degree. Additionally, 4000-level courses may only be used if the student has completed 30 hours of 5000-level or 6000-level coursework, of which 50 percent is 6000-level. Permission to use a 4000-level class in your MA coursework must be granted by the Graduate Studies Director prior to registration. For these courses to count toward your degree, you must present a compelling case that they are vital to your individual program goals and that they are not available on the graduate level. Courses taken to "bring you up to speed" or otherwise prepare you for graduate study will not count toward your degree.

Enrollment for graduate courses is managed by the English Department prior to electronic registration. To protect space in the courses for our students, the department marks all graduate courses in the online class schedule as “Closed”: this does not mean that the courses are full. To register, you will need to obtain a permission number from the Program Assistant, either in person, by phone, or via e-mail.

The courses you must take are outlined by the plan of study.

We recommend you take the core (i.e., required) courses as soon as possible. You should not ordinarily register for thesis hours until all your coursework has been completed. In both tracks, students may take one 6000-level class rather than three credits of thesis. Students who intend to pursue a doctoral degree are generally advised to write a thesis.

## Timeline for Completion

If you take classes full time (nine hours per spring and fall term, six hours in summer term), you should be able to complete your MA within two years, depending on course availability. Many students take longer because of thesis or research projects. Students must complete the Capstone Course after having completed 18 hours of coursework.

Several possible timelines for completing the MA follow. While these timelines indicate actual paths that real students took to earn their degrees, please note that your own best plan depends on your individual situation. Please consult the Graduate Studies Director for help in figuring out your individual plan of study.

### **Less than Two Year Timeline—Thesis Option**

First Fall Semester

Complete 9 hours of coursework

First Spring Semester

Complete 9 hours of coursework

Thesis Option: Complete Thesis Proposal

Form Thesis Committee by end of term

First Summer Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Thesis Option: Draft thesis proposal

Form thesis committee

Second Fall Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Complete 3 hours of thesis

### **Less than Two Year Timeline—Non-Thesis Option**

First Fall Semester  
    Complete 9 hours of coursework  
First Spring Semester  
    Complete 9 hours of coursework  
First Summer Semester  
    Complete 6 hours of coursework  
Second Fall Semester  
    Complete 9 hours of coursework  
    Take Capstone course

### **Two Year Timeline—Thesis Option**

First Fall Semester  
    Complete 9 hours of coursework  
First Spring Semester  
    Complete 9 hours of coursework  
    Thesis Option: Complete Thesis Proposal  
    Form Thesis Committee by end of term  
First Summer Semester  
    Complete 3-6 hours of coursework  
    Thesis Option: Draft thesis proposal  
    Form thesis committee  
Second Fall Semester  
    Complete 6 hours of coursework  
    Take Capstone course  
Second Spring Semester  
    Complete 3-9 hours of coursework  
    Finish writing thesis; defend thesis

### **Two Year Timeline—Thesis Option**

First Fall Semester  
    Complete 9 hours of coursework  
First Spring Semester  
    Complete 9 hours of coursework  
First Summer Semester  
    Complete 3-6 hours of coursework  
Second Fall Semester  
    Complete 6 hours of coursework  
    Take Capstone course  
Second Spring Semester  
    Complete 6 hours of coursework



### **Three Year Timeline—Thesis Option**

First Fall Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

First Spring Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Second Fall Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Draft thesis proposal

Form thesis committee

Second Spring Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Third Fall Semester

Complete 3 hours of coursework

Complete 3 hours of thesis

Third Spring Semester

Complete 3 hours of coursework

Complete 3 hours of thesis and defend thesis

### **Three Year Timeline—Non-Thesis Option**

First Fall Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

First Spring Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Second Fall Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Second Spring Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Third Fall Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

Third Spring Semester

Complete 6 hours of coursework

## **Statement of Graduate Research**

UCF has three fundamental responsibilities about graduate student research. They are to (1) support an academic environment that stimulates the spirit of inquiry, (2) develop the intellectual property stemming from research, and (3) disseminate the intellectual property to the public. Students are responsible for being informed of rules, regulations

and policies pertaining to research. Below are some general policies and resources.

Research Policies and Ethics Information: UCF's Office of Research and Commercialization ensures the UCF community complies with local, state and federal regulations that relate to research. For polices including required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval when conducting research involving human subjects (e.g. surveys), animal research, conflict of interest and general responsible conduct of research, please see their website: [research.ucf.edu/](http://research.ucf.edu/) > Compliance.

UCF's Patent and Invention Policy: In most cases, UCF owns the intellectual property developed using university resources. The graduate student as inventor will according to this policy share in the proceeds of the invention. Please see the current UCF Graduate Catalog for details: [graduatecatalog.ucf.edu](http://graduatecatalog.ucf.edu) > Policies > General Graduate

## Thesis Section

### Master's Thesis Option - Overview

The Technical Communication program offers both a [Thesis Option](#) and non-thesis option for completion of the M.A. degree; the non-thesis option can consist of either a final research project or an additional 6000-level technical communication class. Students do not need to decide which option they use at the beginning of their program of study. Students should aim to decide whether they are writing a thesis by the half-way point of their program, or at about fifteen hours (five classes).

The thesis is an in-depth study of an issue in technical communication. The thesis should be 50–75 pages in length.

The non-thesis option is the easier of the two and the one that the majority of our students take. The thesis requires much more work than a single 6000-level class, and it runs the risk of slowing the student's degree completion time.

Why, then, would a student want to write a thesis? First, if you have a topic in mind that truly interests you and the restricted elective topics offered during your program of study haven't allowed you to explore it, the thesis will give you the opportunity to do so. Second, a thesis will give you the opportunity to develop a specialization. The M.A. remains a generalist degree, but a thesis allows an in-depth exploration of a limited topic. Lastly, the thesis provides an opportunity for sustained, self-directed research and thus provides preparation for writing a dissertation as part of a doctoral program.

It is widely assumed that writing a thesis gives students a better chance of getting into a PhD program and of getting an assistantship when admitted. However, this is anecdote rather than fact: many of our M.A. students have been admitted into PhD programs without writing a thesis. Nonetheless, the thesis option is good choice for students who are considering further graduate study because the thesis develops the research skills necessary to succeed in a doctoral program.

The research project non-thesis option usually consists of a real-world deliverable product, such as a user manual or a substantial web site, that does not fit the parameters of a traditional academic thesis. It may be an actual document that will be used by an employer or a non-profit. The basic structure of the thesis remains intact: there is still a committee, a proposal, and a defense, but the document does not need to be filed with the UCF Graduate College.

To receive a Master of Arts in English degree, you must either complete a thesis or a final project, after your coursework has been completed, or you may elect to take one extra 6000-level course in lieu of a thesis/project. A major project such as a thesis cannot be proposed, researched, written, revised, and defended in a single semester;

therefore, you must plan carefully and work in concert with your thesis director. Preparations for a thesis or project are usually begun at least one calendar year before completing this final requirement.

All MA students engaging in thesis research must be continuously enrolled every term until they finish their thesis.

## Thesis Process

- Review [University Thesis Requirements](#)
- Choose a Topic Area
- Choose a Thesis Director (Must be a graduate faculty member in the MA Technical Communication program.)
- Choose a Thesis Committee
- Submit the [Thesis Advisory Committee \(TAC\) dynamic form](#)
- Register for Thesis Hours (see below) for thesis hours credit
- Write a Thesis Proposal
- Write the Thesis
- Defend the Thesis

## Choosing a Topic Area

When writing your thesis or special project, the topic you choose should represent an area of sustainable interest for you. It is also essential that you choose a topic for which your coursework has prepared you, and a topic in which a member of the UCF English faculty has expertise. When you have identified the general area you would like to pursue, you should start the process of choosing a thesis director. Your thesis director will help you narrow your area of interest into a workable topic. Your thesis director will also help you figure out whether your topic is best pursued in a thesis or an alternate research project.

## Choosing a Thesis Director

Make an appointment with a UCF English faculty member whose area of expertise complements your area of interest. Ideally, you should meet with such a faculty member to begin the process of selecting a topic at least a calendar year before you intend to graduate. A list of faculty appears in the [UCF Graduate Catalog](#); faculty research interests are listed on the [department homepage](#). Be prepared to explain how your interest developed and how it relates to your previous coursework and your professional goals. Together, you and your thesis director will narrow your area of interest into a workable topic. You will also work together to choose the rest of your thesis committee. Your thesis director must be a graduate faculty in the English MA Technical Communication program.

## Thesis Committees

Your thesis director and you will agree upon two other readers with expertise in your topic to compose the required three-person thesis committee. One of these two readers must be a UCF English faculty member; the second reader may be a faculty member from another department. If you plan to have two professors co-direct your thesis, both must be UCF English faculty members.

If no faculty member in the Department of English agrees to direct your project or if you are unable to identify two other experts to form your committee, you must select a different topic.

Your thesis committee must be approved before you can enroll in thesis hours. You may obtain a Thesis Committee Approval Form from the department's Graduate Program Assistant.

## Writing and Submitting a Proposal

During your first semester of thesis hours, you will write a proposal and obtain formal approval of that proposal from your committee. A copy of this proposal, along with the signed approval form, is filed with the Graduate Studies Director. If an approved proposal is not filed with the Graduate Studies director before the end of your first semester of thesis hours, you will ordinarily receive a "U" for those hours.

Proposal, whether for a thesis or an alternate project, are at least four to six pages long and must contain these elements:

- A working title that clearly states the proposed idea, hypothesis, or central questions that guide the project
- A statement of purpose and scope that provides context for the project
- An outline of the proposed chapters (or methodology for special research project)
- A preliminary bibliography
- A committee section (described below)
- A timeline for completing the project
- a brief discussion of the place of the particular writer(s), text(s), or topic within literary or cultural history
- a brief review of the pertinent scholarship, framing crucial theories or critical disagreements
- a tentative outline of the plan or organization
- a brief (two-page) working annotated bibliography

A more extensive list of Works Cited and Works Consulted (neither annotated) will become part of your final completed thesis.

The thesis can take a variety of forms, though generally a thesis is a scholarly treatment of a theme or issue in the literary works in one or more writers in a particular period. The thesis, which involves the use of both primary and secondary sources, should be 60 pages or more in length. Final drafts of your thesis must be available to all committee members no less than three weeks before the defense.

The committee section of the proposal outlines the role of each member of the committee, including how each member's specialty helps to form a coherent committee, and for which particular concerns or sections of the thesis each committee member will be consulted. The section also outlines the involvement of the readers in the thesis, addressing such questions as when the readers will see drafts of chapters. (e.g., Will the two readers on the committee read chapters at the same time as the director of the committee? Or will they read each chapter only after the director has reviewed each chapter?)

No more than two weeks after you have submitted your proposal, your committee will either approve or disapprove it. However, your proposal may go through a series of revisions until both you and the director find it acceptable. Be sure to plan carefully and communicate effectively with your committee so that you have time to complete an approved proposal before the end of your first semester of thesis hours. Do not begin writing your thesis until your proposal has been approved by all three committee members and the Graduate Studies Director.

If your committee rejects your proposal despite all your revisions, you must select a different topic and/or a different committee.

## Thesis Defense

You will defend your thesis at a public meeting lasting at least one hour. Your committee members will attend along with any other interested members of the general public, including faculty members, graduate students, and your friends and family.

This defense must be scheduled at least six weeks ahead of time, and a public announcement of the defense must be posted at least two weeks ahead of time. At the defense, faculty members will ask questions that call on you to discuss the theoretical, methodological, and substantive aspects of your research.

To schedule your defense, establish a mutually convenient date and time for you and your committee. After conferring with the committee members, you will need to contact the Program Assistant in order to schedule a room. Notify your committee and the Graduate Studies Director of the place, date and time. If you are doing a project, notify the Graduate Studies Director at least two weeks in advance of the date and place of your defense.

While you may schedule a defense in the summer, many faculty members are not available for extensive thesis work from April 1 to September 1. Faculty who do not teach in the summer and therefore are not under contract during the summer may not direct a summer defense.

Please plan carefully and consult frequently with your thesis or project director about schedules and deadlines.

No later than three weeks before your defense (or earlier, if called for in your thesis proposal), submit four copies of the final draft of your thesis: one for your director, one for each committee member, and one for the Graduate Studies Director. These copies will be shared with other faculty members who may wish to attend the defense.

In addition to copies of your thesis, you'll need to prepare two documents:

- A thesis announcement, which is emailed to the Graduate Program Assistant for distribution. Contact the Graduate Program Assistant for examples.
- Refer to **Module 4: Defense** in the [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#) for instructions on submitting your release option information and printing your Thesis Approval Form.

(These documents may not be required for non-thesis projects. If you are working on a non-thesis project, contact the Graduate Studies Director to determine which documents are needed.) Follow all requirements specified by [UCF Graduate Studies](#). The Thesis Approval form will be signed by your thesis committee at the end of the defense, assuming that your thesis was successfully defended. You are responsible for securing all other program and College of Arts and Humanities representative signatures and submitting all required documents, electronic and paper, to the College of Graduate Studies office.

Your thesis must be submitted by your thesis director to [iThenticate.com](http://iThenticate.com). Before a student can submit a final version of the thesis to the University, the thesis chair must indicate that the Review for Original Work through iThenticate was performed by signing the Thesis Approval Form.

Your director can and should refrain from signing the final forms until all revisions called for by the committee have been accomplished.

When you submit your final e-document to the university for graduation, you must also submit a copy to the department Graduate Program Assistant.

## University Thesis Requirements

Master's thesis students must be enrolled continuously (including summers). Exceptions to the continuous enrollment policy may be appealed to Graduate Studies. Graduate

policy states students have seven years from beginning the program to complete the degree.

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for thesis formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more.

All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Consult with graduate director or advisor for potential earlier deadlines.

**The following requirements must be met by thesis students in their final term:**

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final thesis document by final submission deadline

Students must format their thesis according to the standards outlined in Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation Workshops each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures.

The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at [editor@ucf.edu](mailto:editor@ucf.edu).

## Special Project

This project is an in-depth study of a topic in technical communication presented in a format other than that of a traditional thesis. The topic is not limited to, but may focus on, emerging technologies and their significance and application for technical communicators.

A special project may encompass a demonstration of the use of technology to present and manipulate information electronically. The project is grounded in the same in-depth research as a traditional thesis, but may include the development of software, tutorials, and other electronic means of disseminating information. The special project option also requires a three-member committee.



You must complete your project no later than one calendar year after your proposal is submitted and approved.

## Program and Institutional Policies

### Absences

Students who anticipate that they may not be able to enroll continuously due to external circumstances should apply for [Special Leave of Absence](#). Specifically, students who are taking courses should apply for a Special Leave of Absence when they cannot enroll in more than two consecutive semesters. Students who are in thesis/dissertation hours should apply for a Special Leave of Absence when they cannot enroll in every semester (including summer).

To qualify for a Special Leave of Absence, the student must demonstrate good cause (e.g., illness, family issues, financial difficulties, personal circumstances, recent maternity/paternity, employment issues). The specific reason for the Leave of Absence request must be indicated by the student on the [Leave of Absence Form](#). Due to current U.S. government regulations, international students must be enrolled every fall and spring semester. For students in this category, a Special Leave of Absence is only available for documented medical reasons.

### Academic Standards/Conduct/Integrity

In addition to UCF's [Golden Rule](#), our program upholds these academic standards as well as all those listed in this Handbook under Program Professional Conduct (see Table of Contents):

Our community rests upon the fundamental assumptions of ethical authorship within the responsible conduct of the literary landscape. Graduate students must not plagiarize the work of others. In addition, submitting the same work to fulfill more than one requirement will be considered self-plagiarism unless there is a substantial revision or addition to the first work and the resubmission takes place with full knowledge and approval of the faculty member to whom the work is being submitted.

Our community upholds these professional standards in all areas including in our interactions with others, in our engagements with cultural knowledges, in identifying and managing conflicts of interest, in managing material, in using department and UCF resources, in mentoring and training, and in collaboration.

### Accommodations

UCF admits a diverse graduate student population. Some of those students may need an (or a variety) of accommodations to help them be successful in the program. Students in the program will be provided information related to how the program approaches accommodations for its students. This link to Student Accessibility Services can also be included in your statement here: <https://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/accommodations/>

## First-Year Review

All English MA students receive a first-year review of their progress in the program. The effort of this requirement is to make sure students are being successful in graduate school as it relates to programmatic course work and milestones. The other element of the review is to assess how students are progressing academically. Is your performance in classes indicative of the type of academic competencies needed to successfully complete the degree? Are you showing the professional, and/or research competencies necessary to be successful in the program and beyond. Where deficiencies exist, the review is to address these as early as possible so appropriate remedies can be provided. The Graduate Studies Director sends requests to each faculty member you've taken a class from during your first two semesters, requesting feedback on these and other areas to determine if you're performing above, at, or below academic standards.

## Appeals/Grievances

There will be instances where students will not agree with an assessment related to their development or progress in a program. In these instances, it is essential that students understand the proper course of action to come to a resolution. Programs should provide their students with the step-by-step details of how to handle this at both the program level as well as the institutional level should it arise. Please see the [Academic Grievance](#) section under General Graduate Policies in the graduate catalog.

## Communication

The English Department Graduate Studies Office communicates to all Creative Writing MFA students through a listserv. You'll receive important emails that include (but are not limited to the following). Please read each email carefully to adhere to deadlines required for progress in the program.

### **LISTSERV**

- Important deadlines for thesis work, graduation, Program of Study, etc.
- Requests for recent publications, readings, conference attendance, etc.

## **Classroom Challenges**

If you are having difficulty in your classes, your first point of contact is the instructor of that class. Please attempt to resolve any issues with the instructor first. If you have issues that interfere with completing your semester or you're not able to resolve an issue with your instructor, you may contact the MFA Program Director (or the English Department Graduate Studies Director).

## **Email Protocol**

When communicating with faculty, staff, and program director, please adhere to professional protocols. Our faculty, staff, and program director are here to help you meet the requirements of your program. As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to seek out information through the various resources provided by UCF, the College of Graduate Studies, and your program. Sometimes, a simple internet search using "UCF" and "graduate" followed by your question will give you an answer.

## **Student Responsibility for University Communication**

UCF uses email as the official means of notifying students of important university business and academic information concerning registration, deadlines, financial assistance, scholarships, student accounts (including tuition and fees), academic progress and problems, and many other critical items for satisfactory completion of a UCF degree program. The university sends all business-related and academic messages to a student's UCF Email address to ensure that there is one repository for that information. Every student must register for and maintain a UCF Email account and check it regularly to avoid missing important and critical information from the university. Any difficulty with establishing an account or with accessing an established account must be resolved through the [UCF Computer Services Service Desk](#) so that a student receives all important messages.

Additionally, each student must have an up-to-date emergency e-mail address and cell phone number by which to be reached in case of a crisis on campus. This emergency contact information will be used only for emergency purposes. Also, both permanent and local mailing addresses must be on the record, so that any physical documents that must be mailed can be delivered.

It is critical that students maintain and regularly check their UCF Email account for official announcements and notifications. Communications sent to the UCF Email address on record will be deemed adequate notice for all university communication, include issues related to academics, finances, registration, parking, and all other matters. The University does not accept responsibility if official communication fails to

reach a student who has not registered for, or maintained and checked on a regular basis, their UCF Email account. Please ensure that this information is current and that any changes in contact information are made online through the myUCF portal at <https://my.ucf.edu/>.

## Continuous Enrollment

All graduate students are required to enroll in at least one class over the span of the Academic year. Failure to enroll in 3 consecutive terms results in dismissal from the program. After candidacy exam is passed for doctoral students, they are required to enroll in dissertation hours every semester until graduation. The institutional policy from the graduate catalog around continuous enrollment is in this section. [Continuous Enrollment](#) and [Continuous Enrollment and Active Students](#).

## Disability Statement

### **ACCESS matters.**

**Purpose:** We envision UCF to be a fully accessible campus and inclusive environment for people with disabilities. We do this by:

- **Acknowledging** disability as an aspect of human diversity;
- **Cultivating** awareness of the environment's disabling barriers;
- **Collaborating** on and proactively facilitating accessible environments and experiences;
- **Educating** faculty and staff to create and maintain access in their spheres of influence;
- **Shifting** to an inclusive-minded attitude;
- **Supplementing** with reasonable accommodations as a last resort measure to ensure access.

## Dismissal/Discipline

It is a reality that some students will not be able to remain in good academic standing or will not be able to meet the standards of internships, clinical, or practicum experiences. Some students may also not be able to meet program level professional/behavior standards. This could result in the necessary avenue to either formally discipline students or dismiss students from the program. Explaining these details is essential for students in graduate programs at UCF.

## Diversity Statement

The University of Central Florida considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. UCF expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events. Dimensions of diversity can include sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, intellectual and physical ability, sexual orientation, income, faith and non-faith perspectives, socio-economic class, political ideology, education, primary language, family status, military experience, cognitive style, and communication style. The individual intersection of these experiences and characteristics must be valued in our community.

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at <https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu> and <http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/>.

If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please notify the instructor as soon as possible and/or contact [Student Accessibility Services](#).

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE <http://oie.ucf.edu/> & [askanadvocate@ucf.edu](mailto:askanadvocate@ucf.edu)
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> & [sas@ucf.edu](mailto:sas@ucf.edu)
- Diversity and Inclusion Training and Events – [www.diversity.ucf.edu](http://www.diversity.ucf.edu)
- Student Bias Grievances – Just Knights response team – <http://jkrt.sdes.ucf.edu/>
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – <http://compliance.ucf.edu/> & [complianceandethics@ucf.edu](mailto:complianceandethics@ucf.edu)
- Ombuds Office – <http://www.ombuds.ucf.edu>

## Enrollment in Thesis Option

Students who choose the thesis option for the English MA, must take a minimum of 3 credit hours of thesis hours. Once a student begins thesis hours, they must be enrolled in at least 1 thesis hours in succeeding semester until the thesis has been successfully defended. Students who need to interrupt their thesis work for extenuating circumstances must submit a [Leave of Absence Form](#) to the College of Graduate Studies. Submission and approval of the form must be obtained prior to the first day of classes for the term of non-enrollment.

## Full-time and Part-time Requirements

You may be enrolled full-time or part-time during any given semester. We generally do not offer summer courses, but in fall and spring semesters, you may take 3, 6, or 9 credits. Taking fewer than 9 in fall and spring semesters will result in you taking more than two years to complete the program.

## Golden Rule

The Golden Rule is the university's policy regarding non-academic discipline of students and limited academic grievance procedures for graduate (grade appeals in individual courses, not including thesis and dissertation courses) and undergraduate students. Information concerning The Golden Rule can be found at [www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/](http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/). Section 11, Student Academic Behavior, addresses appeals of graduate program actions or decisions.

## Grading and Grading Procedures

Review the [Grade System](#) section within General Graduate Policies of the graduate catalog as well as the Incomplete Grades Section within Academic Progress and Performance Policy under General Graduate Policies.

## Harassment

The University of Central Florida values diversity in the campus community. Accordingly, discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, parental status, veterans status, sexual orientation, or genetic information is prohibited.

Sexual harassment, a form of sex discrimination, is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including any of these three situations.

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or enrollment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or enrollment decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or enrollment, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. Occurrences will be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines above and university rules. Employees, students, or applicants for

employment or admission may obtain further information on this policy, including grievance procedures, from the OIE Coordinator. The Director of the Office of Institutional Equity Programs is the campus Equity Coordinator responsible for concerns in all areas of discrimination. The office is located on the main campus, in Barbara Ying CMMS Building 81, Suite 101. The phone number is (407) 823-1336. Policies and guidelines are available online at <http://www.eeo.ucf.edu>.

## International Students

We welcome international students. There are certain realities associated with having them in graduate programs at UCF. For information about the types of employment available to international students, and the requirements and restrictions based on visa type, see the [UCF Global site](#) > International Scholars and Professionals > Employment.

## Plagiarism

Graduate students must not plagiarize the work of others. In addition, submitting the same work to fulfill more than one requirement will be considered self-plagiarism unless there is a substantial revision or addition to the first work and the resubmission takes place with full knowledge and approval of the faculty member to whom the work is being submitted.

Please see additional information at the College of Graduate Studies website <https://graduate.ucf.edu/plagiarism/>

You may also review the webcourse "[Pressures to Plagiarize](#)" This is offered through the Pathways to Success program.

## Probation

In order to earn a graduate degree at the University of Central Florida, students must have a minimum 3.0 Graduate Status GPA. To ensure that graduate students adhere to this requirement, the College of Graduate Studies conducts GPA audits at the end of each semester. Any student not achieving this mark will be placed on Academic Probationary Status. This is a formal designation. Students may also be placed on Academic Probation or Dismissed for S/U graded courses, but the College of Graduate Studies will not conduct audits of S/U grades. See Maximum Hours of Unsatisfactory Grades for these performance requirements and Review of Academic Performance and



Student Conduct for other grounds for probation or dismissal. For additional information, see the [Academic Progress and Performance](#) section from the Graduate Catalog.

## Satisfactory Progress

Satisfactory academic performance in a program includes maintaining at least a 3.0 graduate status GPA (defined below) in all graduate work taken since admission into the program. Satisfactory performance also involves maintaining the standards of academic progress and professional integrity expected in a particular discipline or program.

## Time Limits to Degree Completion

A student has seven years from the date of admission to the doctoral program to earn a doctoral degree. This is not affected by earning a master's degree along the way.

Extenuating circumstances may arise that hinder a student's progress towards program completion and the ability to maintain continuous enrollment. If such a need arises, the student may petition for a Special Leave of Absence. Leaves are considered for medical (e.g., illness, injury) or non-medical (e.g., family needs, military deployment).

Students should be proactive in maintaining accurate records with the university and petition for a Special Leave of Absence prior to the need. When this is not possible, students should do so promptly after the need arises. Students are required to complete and submit the Leave of Absence form with all relevant supporting documents. For additional information, see the [Time Limitation and Continuous Enrollment Policy](#) in the Graduate Catalog.

## Transfer Credit

We will consider up to 9 credits from an accredited university English program toward your program of study. To request transfer credit, the student should submit a Plan of Study (POS) during their first semester of enrollment (i.e., their admit term). Requests must be received by the end of the semester following their admit term. Transfer credit requests are made to the Graduate Program Director, who will review the student's transcript and the associated syllabi to decide if the transfer course(s) are equivalent to the course(s) required by the graduate program. Some syllabi may require an additional review by faculty with relevant expertise to determine equivalency. The POS must then be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies for review and approval.

For more information, see the Transfer of Credit Policy in the graduate catalog:  
[Transfer Credit](#)

## iThenticate

The university requires all students submitting a thesis or dissertation as part of their graduate degree requirements to first have their electronic documents submitted through iThenticate for advisement purposes and for review of originality. The thesis or dissertation chair is responsible for scheduling this submission to iThenticate and for reviewing the results from iThenticate with the student's advisory committee. The advisory committee uses the results appropriately to assist the student in the preparation of their dissertation.

Before the student may be approved for final submission to the university, the dissertation chair must indicate completion of the Review for Original Work through iThenticate by signing the [Dissertation Approval Form](#).

## Additional Program Details

### Financial Aid Funding

The [College of Graduate Studies Funding Website](#) provides financial aid information in a larger and more broad sense. In addition, the English MA program has the following opportunities:

### Graduate Teaching Assistantships

All admitted applicants who apply for fall matriculation are considered for a GTA position. There is no separate application. Assistantships are given on an academic-year basis; they are generally not available beginning in spring semesters. We offer three to five Graduate Teaching Assistantships, which are competitive and generally offered only to our most qualified applicants to each incoming cohort.

To be considered for a GTA position, your enrollment status may not be in the English MA Technical Communication online only program.

GTA support is offered in exchange for the student's intellectual labor. An assistantship is a job, and it waives all tuition costs (but not fees), provides \$10,000 per nine-month academic year as a stipend, and health insurance. First-year assistantships in the English Department usually involve helping a professor to grade in larger undergraduate classes. First-year assistants typically do not teach their own courses.

A student who fulfills all their assignments well in their first year will generally receive a second-year assistantship. In their second year, each GTA typically teaches two sections of the introductory multi-genre creative writing course. The program provides mentoring and support throughout the year of teaching.

A student on assistantship must maintain a full-time course load of nine hours per semester.

For more information and requirements for GTAs, see [Graduate Assistantships](#).

### Graduate Assistant

Many of our students secure Graduate Assistant positions in other departments or programs around campus. Once a student is admitted to the program and accepts our offer of admission, the College of Graduate Studies sends emails about other GA positions on campus. A GA position includes a stipend or salary, full tuition waiver, and health insurance.

In addition to receiving such notifications from the College of Graduate Studies, the MFA office notifies students of any GA positions that are received.

First-year and second-year students are eligible to apply to any of these positions that become available.

### **Second-Year GTA Position in Composition**

SACS accreditation rules prevent graduate assistants from working as teachers of record until they have accrued 18 hours in their graduate programs.

Many of our second-year students teach composition as a GTA in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric and receive full-tuition waiver (student pays fees), \$10K stipend for the academic year, and health insurance. To be eligible to be considered, students must take ENC 5705 (Theory and Practice in Composition), offered each spring semester, which counts toward the requisite 18 hours.

The opportunity to teach one's own class is an extremely important part of graduate school. Likewise, experience in teaching composition makes a student more qualified to apply to doctoral programs and to teach in the Florida state college system.

## **Graduation Requirements**

The English Department Graduate Admissions Specialist sends emails each semester with details about graduation requirements. It is your responsibility to know what is required by the department and the College of Graduate Studies. You must complete the following to graduate:

- File Intent to Graduate inside myUCF.
- Notify the English Department Graduate Program Office that you are graduating.
- Ensure that your GPOS (Graduate Plan of Study) inside myUCF is current and accurate.
- Follow all deadlines and requirements for the thesis defense semester.
- Complete and file all requested and required forms.
- Prepare for commencement if you're going to attend.
  - Students in the Creative Writing MFA Program graduate with the College of Arts & Humanities commencement.
  - Please review the [UCF commencement information](#) for information about cap and gown, transcripts, diplomas, etc.

## **Job Search and Career Pathways**

Graduates of the program are extremely successful finding jobs in the field. Graduates have been hired by a number of major corporations including

- Lockheed Martin
- Intel
- Amazon
- Google
- Harris Corporation
- Siemens Corporation
- Walt Disney World Company

Students are also employed by small software and engineering firms and by universities and nonprofit organizations.

The work for these graduates includes providing corporate training through e-learning, writing and designing online help systems, project management, communication and writing support for engineers, proposal writing, and consulting.

Information on [UCF's Pathways to Success Program](#)

## Student Associations

Engagement with your program and UCF is so important to retaining graduate students. There are many ways to be involved and integrated.

English MA Technical Communication students are encouraged to join the Orlando Central Florida Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

Each spring, the students in the English MA Literary, Cultural and Textual Studies program organize and host the English Department Symposium. All English graduate students are encouraged to propose a presentation and participate.

Students have the opportunity to become active in the local chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. The Orlando Central Florida chapter holds monthly meetings; at these meetings students will have opportunities for pursuing professional development and networking.

- [Society for Technical Communication](#)
- [Orlando Central Florida Chapter](#)

Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society has a Zeta Xi Chapter at UCF. The club is dedicated to the success of its members—as students and as people.

To this end, Zeta Xi strives to provide its members resources for fellowship, scholarship, and service <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~sigmatau/>.

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational and professional experience. To learn more or get involved, please visit the [GSA Facebook page](#)

Please see the [Student Involvement](#) site.

## Graduate Student Center

UCF is fortunate to have its own Graduate Student Center. We are fortunate that it is our building—Trevor Colbourn Hall (TCH). It is a great place to relax, practice a presentation in one of our conference rooms, have your lunch, and to meet other graduate students. A brief description of the Grad Student Center can be provided in this section. The following link can be provided: [Graduate Student Center](#)

## Student Research Week/Student Scholar Symposium

Many of the graduate students who come to UCF will be involved in research and creative activities. The College of Graduate Studies hosts an annual Student Scholar Symposium to provide a conference setting for our own students to showcase their work either with poster presentations or a face-to-face presentation. This section can be used to describe this to students in your program. The following link can be provided: [Student Research Week](#).

## 3 Minute Thesis (3MT)

Three Minute Thesis (3MT) features master's and doctoral students communicating their research in just three minutes with only one PowerPoint slide. Participants are judged on the ability to effectively convey the importance of their research in an engaging way to a non-specialist audience. For more information, see [3MT](#)

## Forms

[Restricted Registration](#) form

[Thesis Advisory Committee](#) form (completed when your thesis committee is formed or revised)

Thesis Defense Approval form is located inside ETD Services  
Other forms you may need such as Special Leave of Absense, etc, can be found here  
[Forms.](#)

## Useful Links/Resources

There are a variety of events, resources, and field of study information you want your students to be aware of. This field can be used to provide that information. The following are a few examples:

- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Parking Services](#)
- [Shuttles](#)
- [Recreation Center](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)

## Graduate Faculty

J.D. Applen

*Associate Professor*

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[View Personal Website](#)

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*Assistant Professor of English, Core Faculty, Texts and Technology Ph.D. Program*

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Veronica Joyner

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Rudy McDaniel

*Professor*

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[View CV](#)

Sara Raffel

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Campus Location: [TCH358M](#)

Sarah Singer

*Assistant Professor*

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Office Hours: T/Th 1:00pm-2:45pm; W 7:00pm-8:00pm (online only); by appointment

Campus Location: [TCH253E](#)

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Sonia H. Stephens

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## Description of Core Courses

The five core M.A. courses provide a strong foundation in rhetorical theory, communication theory, design theory, and other theories informing our discipline. The focus in these courses is to use practical projects that allow students to apply the theories they study in a variety of professional contexts.

Additional restricted electives offer students options for more specialized study:

- Writing and Designing Online Help Systems
- Topics in Technical Communication
- Proposal Writing
- Project Management
- International Technical Communication