



**Michigan
Technological
University**

**Rhetoric Theory and Culture
Graduate Handbook**

Fall 2018

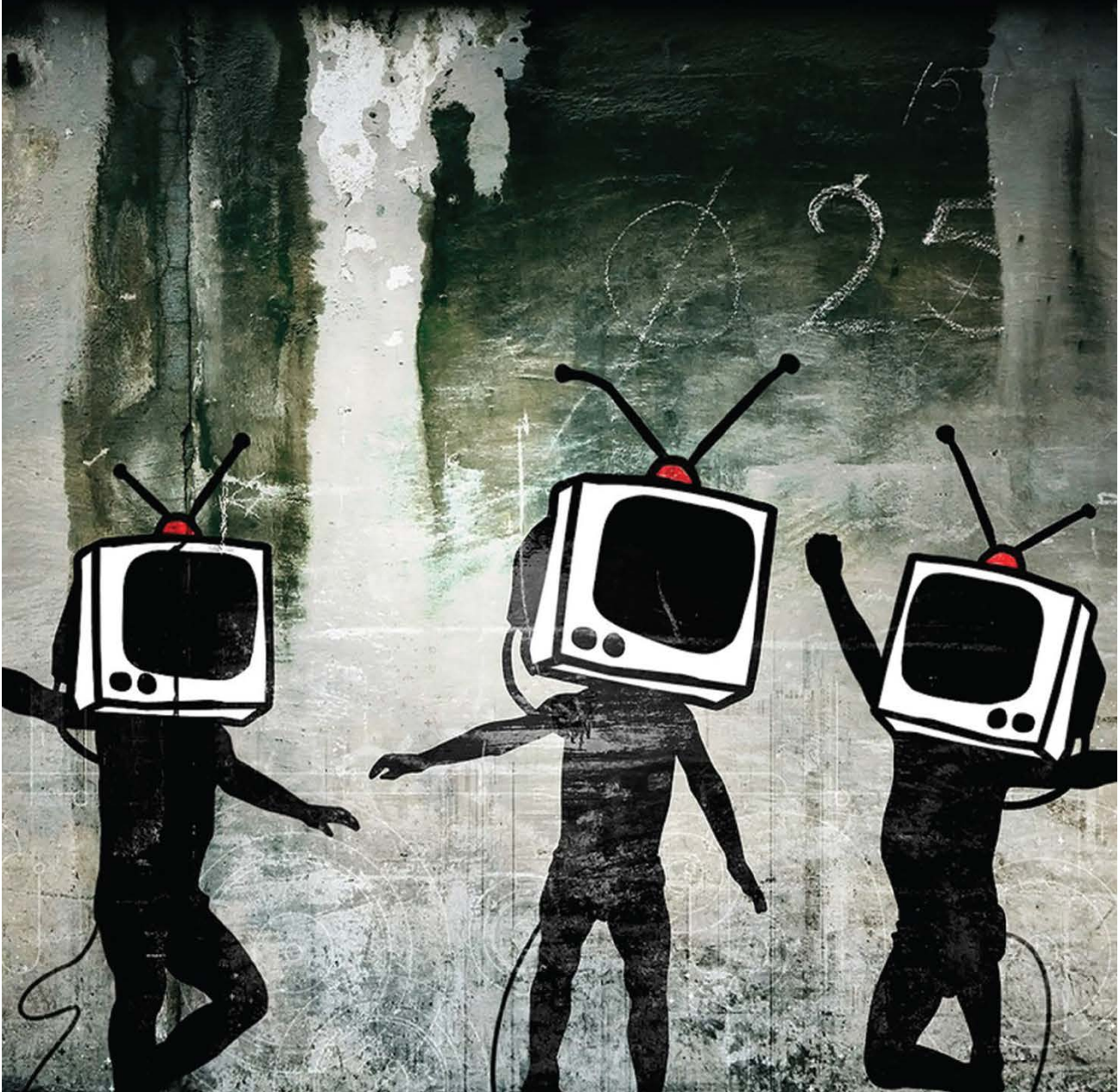


Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
1 Introduction to Program and Handbook	7
1.1 Degrees Offered	7
1.2 Handbook Contents and Structure	8
2 Common Requirements and Coursework for MS/PhD	9
2.1 Introduction to Graduate Studies.....	9
2.2 Composition Practicum (HU 5931)	9
2.3 Other Practica	9
Sample Practica Contents:	9
2.4 Groundwork Courses.....	10
2.5 Focus Courses:	10
2.6 Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR).....	11
2.7 Supplementary Coursework Options	11
2.8 Transfer Credits	12
3 Master’s Degree.....	13
3.1 Coursework Distribution Requirements for MS.....	13
3.2 Timeline.....	13
3.3 Master’s Advisory Committees.....	14
Initial Advisory Interview	14
Forming an Advisory Committee	14
Student-Initiated Committee Changes	15
Faculty-Initiated Changes.....	15
3.4 Masters Options for Fourth Semester.....	16
Thesis (proposal defense and public defense).....	16
Project (proposal defense and public defense).....	16
Coursework-Only Option	17
3.5 Master’s Final Examination	17
Advancing to the Final Exam	17

Exam Format.....	17
Evaluation of the Oral Examination.....	18
Passing.....	18
Passing with Revisions	18
Unsatisfactory Completion	18
Post-Evaluation Examination Procedures.....	18
University Graduation Requirements.....	19
4 Doctoral Degree	20
4.1 PhD Degree Requirements	20
Previous Coursework Preparation.....	20
Prior Master’s in Closely Related Fields from Another University.....	20
Prior Master’s in Other Fields.....	20
Prior Master’s in RTC at Michigan Tech	20
4.2 Coursework Distribution Requirements for the PhD.....	21
4.3 Additional PhD Requirements	22
Methodologies and Methods (M/M) Preparation.....	22
Required Second Language Competence	23
Required Global/Intercultural Course.....	24
4.4 PhD Third and Fourth Year Requirements	24
Qualifying Examination.....	24
Taking the Qualifying Examination	25
Proposal Defense	25
4.5 Doctoral Dissertation	26
Working on the Dissertation	26
Dissertation, the Oral Defense.....	27
Preparing for the Oral Defense–Student Responsibilities.....	28
Preparing for the Oral Defense–Committee Responsibilities.....	28
Procedures for the Oral Defense.....	28
Evaluating the Oral Defense	28

Post- Exam Procedures	29
University Graduation Requirements.....	30
4.6 PhD Advisory Committees	30
Initial Advisory Interview	30
Forming an Advisory Committee	31
Student-Initiated Committee Changes	32
Faculty-Initiated Changes.....	32
5 General Program Policies	34
5.1 Student Policies.....	34
Continuous Enrollment.....	34
Residency Requirements	35
5.2 Student Progress.....	35
Time and Funding Limits	35
Annual Student Progress Evaluation Forms.....	36
Grades	36
Student Standing.....	37
Academic Probation.....	38
Voluntary Withdrawal	38
Dismissal.....	39
Plagiarism.....	39
5.4 Accommodation Policies for Americans With Disabilities	39
5.5 Faculty Policies	40
Teaching Assignments.....	40
Syllabi.....	40
Assessment.....	40
Feedback on Required Student Work	40
5.6 Mentoring.....	40
Independent Studies and Directed Readings.....	40
Graduate Teaching Instructors (GTIs) Teaching New Courses	40

Dealing with Student Teaching Problems	41
5.7 Curricular Policies.....	41
Scheduling of Courses	41
Class Size	42
Research, Independent Studies, Directed Readings, And Internships	42
5.8 Grievance Procedures	43
Defining Grievance Cause.....	43
General Guidelines for Grievances.....	43
Student-Initiated Grievances.....	43
Faculty-Initiated Grievances.....	44
Title IX	44
5.9 Financial Support	45
Procedure and Schedule for Awarding Support.....	45
Funding Terms.....	45
5.10 Support Package.....	45
Tuition & Fee Waivers, Stipends.....	45
Workload.....	46
Summer Support.....	46
Department and Student Commitment to Contracts.....	46
5.11 Types of Support.....	47
Graduate Teaching.....	47
International Students.....	48
Graduate Administrative Assistants, Graduate Assistants	48
Finishing Fellowships.....	49
Other Funding	49
Enrollment Requirements for Students Receiving Assistance.....	49
Travel Money.....	50
6 Student Opportunities and Support Services	51
6.1 Graduate Student Opportunities.....	51

Committees.....	51
Graduate Student Government	51
Joint Authorship	51
Journals	51
Studying Abroad	51
Student Internships	51
6.2 Graduate Student Resources	52
The Graduate Student Programs Office	52
Graduate Student Mentors.....	52
Graduate Student Professional Development Seminars	52
Reading Groups, Dissertation Support Groups	53
Job Placement Assistance	53
Writing and Technology Resources at Walker.....	53
The J. R. Van Pelt and Opie Library.....	53

1 Introduction to Program and Handbook

The Rhetoric, Theory, and Culture program at Michigan Technological University offers both Master's and Doctoral degrees that engage faculty and students in interdisciplinary work across a range of fields.

The RTC program draws on the scholarly expertise of around twenty-five distinguished graduate faculty who do research and teach in across many fields in the Humanities. Faculty and graduate students in our program focus on the complex interactions among...

Technology – systems, objects, practices, usability, new media, visibility

Communication – composition, technical writing, rhetoric, language, discourses, gender, representation, and power

Globalization – intercultural communication, transnational flows, post-colonial critiques

What unites these areas of inquiry is our broad orientation, as a Humanities department, to the study of culture in all its dimensions.

Faculty in the program come from a variety of fields, including communication, composition, cultural studies, film studies, linguistics, literature, modern languages, media and visual studies, philosophy, rhetoric, postcolonial studies, and technical communication. Faculty work closely with students, encouraging them to think critically about substantive issues and problems within their areas of interest, incorporating a variety of approaches and appropriate methodologies. This gives our program a distinct interdisciplinary character.

1.1 Degrees Offered

The Department offers three advanced degrees in Rhetoric, Theory and Culture:

[Master's in Rhetoric, Theory and Culture](#) (MS)

[Doctorate in Rhetoric, Theory and Culture](#) (PhD)

[Peace Corp Master's International in Rhetoric, Theory, and Culture](#) (MS)

Additionally, graduate students may (some international students may be required to) take courses in the [Intensive English as a Second Language Program](#).

1.2 Handbook Contents and Structure

The pages that follow constitute the Graduate Handbook, a guide to requirements, policies and procedures for the MS and PhD degrees in Rhetoric, Theory and Culture (RTC) at Michigan Tech. This manual discusses the Master's and Doctoral degree requirements, advising structure and procedures, examinations, curricular policies, student and faculty policies, financial aid, grievance procedures, student support structures, and personal and professional opportunities.

The Graduate Handbook is organized into six sections: **Section 2** presents common policies for the Master's and Doctoral programs (i.e., the coursework phase of both programs); **Section 3** deals with requirements and procedures pertaining particularly to the Master's program; **Section 4** deals with the Doctoral program requirements; **Section 5** deals with general program policies, including financial support; **Section 6** discusses student opportunities and support services.

This document should serve as your guide, a reference that will help you navigate through the RTC program. As policies are revised, they will be distributed to students by e-mail and placed on the [departmental website](#). For any issues not addressed by this document or the website, use your judgment and seek administrative advice from your Advisor, the RTC Director of Graduate Studies, or the Graduate School as appropriate.

2 Common Requirements and Coursework for MS/PhD

2.1 Introduction to Graduate Studies

Taken in the student's first year

- Introduces students to the structure, processes, and timelines of the RTC program and to expectations and skills for graduate-level inquiry
- Introduces graduate faculty and their scholarly specializations
- Surveys methodologies/methods for interdisciplinary humanistic inquiry
- Assists students to identify a focus of interest, generate research ideas, and articulate a defensible research question

2.2 Composition Practicum (HU 5931)

3 credits in a student's first semester

This course is designed for GTIs teaching UN 1015 - Composition for the first time. Weekly readings and assignments, as well as ongoing mentorship and consultation are designed to support continuous improvement as a writing teacher/scholar.

2.3 Other Practica

Available by consent of instructor. Available practicum courses include Technical Communication (HU 5932), Modern Language Pedagogy (HU 5933), Communication (HU 5934).

These pedagogy courses are offered as needed in order to prepare graduate students for teaching a variety of courses other than the Composition course. Practica may be dedicated to teaching courses in Technical Communication, Modern Languages, Communication, or other subjects.

Sample Practica Contents:

- Read current research on best pedagogical practices within a specific academic field
- Observe undergraduate teaching by faculty and advanced graduate students
- Design syllabi and assignments
- Attend courses taught by graduate peers and reflect on practices
- Participate in group grade norming

2.4 Groundwork Courses

Graduate study in the RTC program includes groundwork courses organized within five clusters. These courses have been selected as critical to building common foundations for graduate students' future work in the program. Each program has its own requirements regarding the number and distribution of groundwork courses (see [MS](#) and [PHD](#) requirements for details). Within those requirements, students can select courses according to their areas of interest.

Writing, Literacy, and Technical Communication

Rhetoric and Composition HU 5002

Technical and Scientific Communication HU 5003

Philosophy and Rhetoric

Continental Philosophy HU 5006

History and Theory of Rhetoric HU 5070

Technology, Media, and Visual Studies

Theoretical Perspectives on Technology HU 5112

Visual Theory and Analysis HU 5114

Language, Literature, and Globalization

Critical Approaches to Literature and Culture HU 5008

Critical Perspectives on Globalization HU 5007

Communication and Culture

Communication Theory HU 5012

Cultural Theory HU 5004

2.5 Focus Courses:

Focus courses provide an opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of a specific topic, issue, or area of scholarly inquiry.

2.6 Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

The Graduate School requires all graduate students to complete two [Responsible Conduct of Research](#) courses. The [Basic RCR](#) course is offered during the new graduate student orientation prior to the start of classes each semester. The course is also offered online. The Advanced RCR requirement can be fulfilled by taking one of the courses offered by various departments. (All are 1 or 2 credits. There are 3-credit courses that have been authorized as Advanced RCR courses including [HU 5711 - Bioethics](#).) The department offers a Research Integrity Workshop each summer that fulfills this requirement. Learn more about available RCR training resources at <http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/resources/rcr/>.

2.7 Supplementary Coursework Options

Supplementary courses are in three categories: 4000-level courses (i.e., advanced undergraduate courses); cognate courses (i.e., graduate courses in MTU departments other than Humanities); one-on-one courses set up by arrangement with individual faculty (i.e., independent study/directed reading/internships). Students may apply a maximum of three (3) cognate course credits toward the 36-credit coursework portion of their degree. Note: students with a compelling reason for applying more than 3 credits of supplementary coursework toward the coursework portion of the degree (i.e., taking a particular cognate course would significantly assist the student in carrying out her/his research) may, with approval of the student's Advisor, submit a request for a waiver to the RTC Steering Committee using the [RTC Waiver Form](#).

- **4000-level courses:** MS and PhD students are limited to taking one 4000-level course, with the stipulation that they consult with the course professor on appropriate additional readings, papers, etc. This must be approved by the RTC Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student's Advisor.
- **Coursework outside RTC:** All coursework outside the RTC program must be approved by the RTC Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student's Advisor.
- **Independent Study/Directed Reading/Internship:** These one-on-one courses are typically arranged directly between a student and faculty member. A form ("[Independent Studies, Directed Reading, or Internships](#)") must be completed and signed by the student, the faculty member, and the RTC Director of Graduate Studies as part of the process of enrolling these credits.

2.8 Transfer Credits

Credits earned in other graduate programs but not applied to previous degrees may be considered for transfer to fulfill up to nine credits for graduate degrees in the RTC Program. The RTC Director of Graduate Studies reviews written requests for transfer credits and recommends to the Graduate School what transferred credits will and will not be accepted by the RTC Program. The student should complete the [RTC Waiver Form](#) and provide transcripts, course descriptions, and other relevant materials to document the request for transfer. (See also the Graduate School's website for the appropriate forms for submitting transfer credits: <http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/policies-procedures/transfer/>)

Although transfer credits are either officially approved or disapproved when Degree Schedule forms are filed, students must verify the status of these credits in advance with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies by submitting the [RTC Waiver Form](#).

3 Master's Degree

3.1 Coursework Distribution Requirements for MS

Masters students take 36 credits or 2 years of coursework. The final 9 credits may be taken as thesis credits, project credits, or coursework.

- 12 cr. 4 [Groundwork courses](#). These might be distributed as either one course in each of four areas or two courses in the student's area of concentration and one course each in two other areas.
- 3 cr. 1 Focus course in a selected area of concentration
- 3 cr. 1 Methodologies/Methods course (or alternative Methodologies/Methods preparation to be worked out in consultation with advisor(s))
- 3 cr. [Composition Practicum](#) (if applicable).
- 9 cr. Final option
 [Coursework option](#): 3 courses
 [Project option](#): 3-6 cr. HU5990 plus 1 course to equal 9 cr.
 [Thesis option](#): 9 cr. HU5990

3.2 Timeline

	Fall semester	Spring semester
Year 1	Intro to Graduate Studies [3 cr. Composition Practicum] 3 cr. course 3 cr. course	(Composition Practicum) 1 cr. Advanced RCR 3 cr. course 3 cr. course 3 cr. course
Year 2	3 cr. course 3 cr. course 3 cr. course Proposal defense	9 cr. courses Coursework option] 3-6 cr. HU5991 + 3-6 cr. courses [Project option] 9 cr. HU5990 [Thesis option]

3.3 Master's Advisory Committees

Initial Advisory Interview

When students first enter the RTC Program they meet with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies for an advisory interview early in their first semester of residence at Michigan Tech.

The initial advisory interview establishes how student interests match the scholarly orientations of the department and interests of individual faculty members, orients students, and offers suggestions regarding potential members of student Advisory Committees.

The following kinds of issues and questions may be explored in the initial advisory interview:

- Student questions about the RTC Program
- Past coursework and intellectual history
- Areas of interest and expertise
- Directions and goals for graduate work, including course selection if the student's Bachelor's degree is not a humanities-related degree
- Career goals
- Preliminary plans (including methods) for a Coursework Paper, Project, or Thesis
- Preferences for working with particular faculty

Forming an Advisory Committee

Prior to making requests for full Advisory Committees, it is suggested that students write a 250-word Preliminary Proposal describing their intended course of study. Students who choose to pursue the coursework option must have an advisor but are not required to form Advisory Committees (for students pursuing the coursework option the advisor will assist the student in selecting a course of study suitable to the student's plans and research interests). Master's Committees will normally consist of three faculty members from the Department of Humanities graduate faculty. If desired, one additional member may be graduate faculty from a department other than the Department of Humanities. Such a person must hold graduate faculty standing at Michigan Tech. (Please consult with the Director of Graduate Studies if you wish to have an additional non-Michigan Tech person serve on your committee.)

It is in the student's best interest to form a complete Advisory Committee before completing the first year of graduate studies. In order to complete the degree within the two-year funding period, Master's students should establish a plan of study as early as possible. Students must receive Advisory Committee approval regarding their research plans before beginning research for Theses or Projects.

Master's students may wish to discuss their research plans with potential committee members; however, requests for faculty members to be added to a committee must go through the RTC Director of Graduate Studies who will confirm each faculty member's willingness to participate. Faculty members are asked to respond to these requests in writing within two weeks. Once faculty members have indicated their willingness to serve on a committee, the RTC Director of Graduate Studies will prepare an [Advisor and Committee Recommendation Form](#). This form will be submitted to Graduate School on the student's behalf by the Graduate Program Office. Committees are not official until they have been confirmed in writing.

In general, students tend to work most closely with their Advisors. It is each Advisor's responsibility to work with students and the RTC Director of Graduate Studies to guide and monitor student progress and advise students accordingly. Student progress is formally reviewed on an annual basis by the student's committee chair and the RTC Steering Committee.

Student-Initiated Committee Changes

During the course of their graduate study, students may ask to change Advisory Committee members. Students may request that their committee be changed for the following reasons:

- Research interests change.
- Committee members become unavailable.
- Irreconcilable differences develop between a student and a committee member.

Students may discuss potential changes with any member of their Advisory Committee or with the Director of Graduate Studies. Students, however, must follow the same procedure when reconstituting their committee as when initially forming them (See "Forming an Advisory Committee"). Students who wish to reformulate their Advisory Committee more than once must petition to do so and have their request approved by the RTC Steering Committee.

When new committee members have accepted their invitations, the RTC Program Office will notify the student and the rest of the committee. When any changes are made to the membership of an Advisory Committee, the RTC Program Office will send the appropriate paperwork to the Graduate School.

Faculty-Initiated Changes

Faculty may also request that they be removed from Advisory Committees. Such requests are appropriate for the following reasons:

- Other commitments will not allow time to devote to the student (e.g. this may apply if faculty go on leave or take sabbaticals),

- The student's research develops in a direction that does not coincide with the committee member's areas of expertise or professional development
- Irreconcilable differences develop between faculty and student.

Faculty members should address any written requests for removal from Advisory Committees to the RTC Director of Graduate Studies.

3.4 Masters Options for Fourth Semester

Thesis (proposal defense and public defense)

A proposal defense with the full committee should be held at the end of the third semester or the beginning of the fourth semester. The proposal defense document should be no less than five pages + bibliography. This defense is not public but should include all committee members.

Fourth semester: 6-9 credits HU 5990 - Thesis (plus course work if necessary to equal 9 credits)

Work for the Thesis Option requires in-depth analyses of some issue or question in rhetoric, theory, and culture based on extensive research in the student's area of research. The scope of the research and writing should be appropriate to the time allotted for six to nine hours of research credit. The thesis should be 40 to 60 pages and must include a reference list.

Students must submit the departmental [Two Week Notification Form](#) at least 2 weeks prior to the proposal defense, and at least 2 weeks prior to the final defense.

Project (proposal defense and public defense)

A proposal defense with the full committee should be held at the end of the 3rd semester or the beginning of the 4th semester. Projects are generally of a more limited scope and result in some form of applied product. Examples might include an innovative curricular design or a website that makes academic research accessible to public audiences. The student's work should also include some explicit discussion of a theoretical framework, explaining how it informs the project, as well as a literature review that indicates the project's exigency. The scope of the project should be appropriate to the time allotted for 3-6 hours of research credit. The Project Report should be 25-30 pages and must include a reference list.

- Fourth semester: 3-6 credits [HU 5991 - Special Projects](#) + 3-6 credits of coursework to equal 9 credits

- After their project research work is completed and has been approved by their Advisory Committee, students then write Project Reports describing and analyzing their conclusions, and, where appropriate, their application of any relevant research methodologies. Prior to beginning Project Reports, students must meet with their Advisory Committee to discuss the format and structure of the report.
- Students should meet with their Advisory Committees to discuss their final Project Report at least three weeks before the final oral exam.

Students must submit the departmental [Two Week Notification Form](#) at least 2 weeks prior to the proposal defense, and at least 2 weeks prior to the final defense.

Coursework-Only Option

The RTC program also offers an all-coursework Master's option. Students complete 9 credits of coursework in their final semester. Students taking this option do not require a full committee, but work with an advisor to select courses appropriate to their interests. Completion of the degree will require satisfactory completion of these credits.

3.5 Master's Final Examination

Advancing to the Final Exam

When students and their Advisory Committee chairs judge it appropriate to proceed with the Final Oral Examination, the student should meet with the full Advisory Committee to discuss the exams (outlined below). (Generally, this stage is reached when students near the end of their Projects or Theses. Advisory Committees who believe that their students are *not* progressing satisfactorily in their research should report to the RTC Director of Graduate Studies, who will then meet with both the student and Advisory Committee to consider an appropriate course of action.

Exam Format

The Final Oral Examination consists of two parts: a public presentation and a closed examination. Students who have chosen the Thesis or Project Options develop presentations based on their research for part one of the Final Oral Examination, lasting approximately 25 minutes. For the next half hour, students answer questions from the audience, exclusive of committee members. The chair of the Advisory Committee (i.e., the Advisor) moderates this discussion to ensure an open dialogue.

During part two of the Final Oral Examination, committee members question students in a closed session for about 45 minutes. Committee members ask students to discuss the theoretical implications of their research conclusions and to draw on detailed knowledge of the theories, methods, and other materials most relevant to the arguments presented in their Theses or Reports.

Evaluation of the Oral Examination

After excusing the student from the room, Committee members deliberate about the quality of the student's work and performance during the exam. They base their decision on two criteria: quality of the argument in the Thesis or Project Report, and the quality of the thinking and knowledge demonstrated during the oral examination.

Passing

A student passes the Final Oral Examination when no more than one member of the Advisory Committee is in dissent about the quality of work demonstrated in the Project or Thesis, and in the Final Oral Examination. If a member of the Advisory Committee dissents, the student must address that member's dissenting comments prior to receiving final approval for passing the exam. The Advisor will then judge whether the student has satisfactorily addressed the dissenting reader's comments.

Passing with Revisions

If members of the Advisory Committee agree that the student's work needs revision, they may ask the student to revise the Thesis, Project Report, or Coursework Paper before certification of the Master's degree. The Advisory Committee chair will determine whether the student's revisions are satisfactory.

Unsatisfactory Completion

Students fail the Final Oral Examination when more than one member of the Advisory Committee is in dissent about the quality of the work demonstrated in the Thesis or Project Report, and in the Final Oral Examination.

Students who fail a Master's examination may petition the RTC Steering Committee to retake the examination once, no sooner than the next academic semester. A second failure of the Final Oral Examination provides sufficient grounds for dismissal from the RTC Program. The RTC Steering Committee determines the status of students who fail their Final Oral Examinations twice.

Post-Evaluation Examination Procedures

When the Advisory Committee has completed deliberations, it will reconvene to inform the student regarding passing or failing the Final Oral Examination. If the student is judged to have passed, their Committee will discuss any additional conditions or recommendations. If the student has failed, the Committee will discuss the reasons for that failure.

Upon successful completion of the Final Oral Examination, or after the second failure of this examination, the [Report of Final Oral Examination](#) (form M6), must be submitted by the chair of the Advisory Committee to the Graduate Office who will then forward it to the Graduate School. Details regarding this form and other required documentation are on the Graduate School webpage:

<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/forms-deadlines/>

University Graduation Requirements

Commencement information is mailed by the Graduate School Office to eligible students approximately three months prior to either the December or May ceremony. To participate in the graduation ceremony, Master's students must have a final defense scheduled or (for coursework students) must be on track to complete all required coursework as certified by the student's Advisor **at least 10 weeks** prior to the ceremony.

Students nearing completion should confirm their commencement plans with the Graduate School at the beginning of semester in which a defense is planned.

Students who have defenses scheduled prior to graduation may be eligible to walk at commencement, provided they fill out a [Commencement Application \(Walk\) Form](#) ten weeks prior to the ceremony. In addition, more information regarding graduation and degree certification can be found at

<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/>, which is updated frequently.

Note that the RTC program does not permit "early walks." Under no circumstances may students participate in graduation ceremonies prior to completing their Master's coursework or defending their project or thesis.

4 Doctoral Degree

4.1 PhD Degree Requirements

Previous Coursework Preparation

Upon admission, the RTC Director will determine each new student's background and preparation for study in the RTC Program. Coursework requirements may vary depending upon a student's prior experience with the content and context of rhetoric, theory and culture. The Program of Study generally requires 32 credits of coursework as well as the completion of a [Second Language requirement](#).

General scenarios for incoming students include:

Prior Master's in Closely Related Fields from Another University

Students with a Master's degree in a field closely related to RTC, but from another university, will undertake the program of study outlined below but should meet with the RTC Director to discuss how their previous preparation maps onto the courses offered by Michigan Tech, so as to avoid unnecessary overlap.

Prior Master's in Other Fields

For a student with a previous MA or MS degree in an area not central to the coursework of the RTC degree (either from Michigan Tech or elsewhere), the RTC Director may determine that the student needs to build a stronger background knowledge in RTC. This may require coursework in addition to the basic program of study outlined below before the student can move on to study for Qualifying Examinations. In some cases, the RTC Director may recommend completing a Master's degree in the RTC program before moving on to the PhD.

Prior Master's in RTC at Michigan Tech

Students who have completed an MS in the RTC program can count groundwork courses that match distribution requirements for the PhD, up to 12 credits. Thus, PhD students who have graduated from the RTC MS program would have to complete only one further groundwork course and a total of 24 coursework credits.¹

¹ As Master's students are only required to take four groundwork courses in 3 different clusters, and PhD students are required to cover 4 clusters, PhD students exercising the above option will have to take their one groundwork course in a fourth cluster (i.e., in one of the clusters they did not take a groundwork course in as a Master's student).

4.2 Coursework Distribution Requirements for the PhD

PhD students take 36 credits or 2 years of coursework before moving on to the Qualifying exams.

- 15 cr. 5 [Groundwork courses](#). Two of these should be in the student's area of concentration and one course each in three other areas.
- 6 cr. 2 Focus courses
- 3 cr. 1 [Global/Intercultural course](#). This can be taken as one of the Groundwork courses, a Focus course (depending on student's concentration area), or as an Elective
- 0-3 cr. [Composition Practicum](#), if applicable.
- 9-12 cr. Other courses and up to 3 credits of practica, including 1 course in Methodologies/Methods or certification by advisor(s) of methods preparation.

The coursework timeline is on the following page.

Timeline

	Fall semester	Spring semester
Year 1	Intro to Graduate Studies 3 cr. Composition Practicum 3 cr. course 3 cr. course	Composition Practicum 3 cr. course 3 cr. Course 3 cr. Course
Year 2	3 cr. course 3 cr. course 3 cr. course	3 cr. Course 3 cr. Course 3 cr. Course
Additional PhD requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate Second Language competence • Demonstrate research methods/methodologies competence • Complete Required Global/Intercultural Course • Complete Advanced Responsible Conduct of Research course 		
Year 3	Qualifying exams	Dissertation proposal and defense Research Only Mode Petition
Year 4	Dissertation research/writing (Research Only Mode)	Dissertation research/writing (continued funding depends on demonstrable progress)
Year 5	Dissertation writing and job search	Job search/complete and defend dissertation

Graduate school degree timeline at

<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/timeline/dissertation/>

4.3 Additional PhD Requirements

Methodologies and Methods (M/M) Preparation

Students must consult with their advisors during their coursework preparation in order to determine which M/M preparation would be most appropriate for their focus of study, and to be advised into appropriate means of preparing for their dissertations, theses, or projects.

Methodologies/Methods (M/M) Preparation is defined as relevant qualifications to conduct proposed research. Because of the wide variety of approaches to the generation of new knowledge in Rhetoric, Theory and Culture, means of adequate preparation should be determined by the student's Advisor in consultation with the student and the Advisory Committee. Depending on the nature of the project, appropriate M/M preparation may include dedicated methodology courses, courses with a designated M/M component, relevant prior research experience, or other special preparation approved by the student's committee.

PhD students should complete M/M preparation prior to the third year, and PhD advisors must indicate that this preparation has been completed in the [Annual Student Progress Evaluation Form](#) for the student's third year in the program.

Required Second Language Competence

PhD students are required to demonstrate reading proficiency in a language other than English by one of the following means:

- Demonstrating level IIB competence by taking an appropriate examination. Normally this will consist of an undergraduate third-year placement exam offered by the Michigan Tech Modern Language program,
- Successfully completing a level IIB language course (2nd term of second year of college), as shown by transcripts from within the last five years OR by completing one of the modern language courses of this level or higher offered in the humanities department
- Successfully completing college-level coursework delivered in a language other than English.
- Formally petitioning the RTC Director, in consultation with Modern Language faculty, for a waiver (for students whose native tongue is other than English).

This requirement will normally be completed before the student can begin the Qualifying Examinations. All PhD students must complete the [Required Second Language Competence Form](#) in order to certify that they have met this requirement. If a student has made plans to undertake language instruction in their third year of coursework, she or he may petition the RTC Director for an extension. Students must complete the language requirement before their proposal defense.

Required Global/Intercultural Course

The Global/Intercultural requirement can be met by completing one of the following courses:

- One of the Global/Intercultural courses designated on the RTC Course List
- A 4000-level Modern Language Seminar
- Another course with a significant global/intercultural component by petition to the RTC Director of Graduate Studies.

4.4 PhD Third and Fourth Year Requirements

Qualifying Examination

Qualifying Exams should be taken during the student's fifth semester (third year). Students should have their committees in place by the end of the fourth semester so they can begin the Qualifying Exam process. The committee consists of three faculty advisors from the Department of Humanities.

The student prepares two to three reading lists in consultation with the Advisory Committee (readings may overlap). The reading lists will draw upon the readings and preparation from the first two years of coursework, with a limited set of additional readings that the faculty and student agree are necessary to enable the student to articulate a general question and response and to demonstrate the following:

- Familiarity with the most important research in those areas
- Understanding of the primary issues and controversies in those areas
- Ability to articulate a position and argument within the context of those areas

Students and advisors will formulate two to three questions based on the reading lists. Each question should provide the student with a framework for making scholarly arguments about issues, theories, and/or traditions central to the area of study to which the question is directed. Students who are attending graduate school full time will undertake to complete all of this writing by the end of the first semester of the third year.

Advisors must collect the reading lists and questions from all committee members and send them to the RTC Director at least two weeks before the beginning of the exam accompanied by the RTC [Two Week Notification Form](#). These lists and questions will be distributed by the RTC Director to the committee members who will indicate their approval via email to the RTC Director. After the exam, copies of the reading lists will be kept as resources for future students and advisors.

The student will write the qualifying exams over the course of three weeks. The student should submit 35-45 pages total (about 8,750-12,500 words) including a works cited list.

Once the student submits responses, all responses will be distributed to all committee members by the Humanities office assistant. The committee will have one week before the scheduled date of the Oral Defense to review the answers and agree that the student can participate in a defense. At that time the Advisor will indicate to the RTC Director that the committee agrees to proceed with the defense.

Taking the Qualifying Examination

On the first day of the three-week exam period, the student must pick up the questions from the Humanities office assistant either in person during scheduled office hours or arrange to have them sent by email.

Students have three (3) weeks to complete exam answers. Once writing is completed, the student must email the answers to the humanities department office assistant, who will distribute the answers to committee members.

The committee has one (1) week to review the submitted answers and approve a defense. The student should have their defense date set up with the committee in advance and a room reserved for a two-hour oral defense. If the student is not approved to go forward, these arrangements must be cancelled.

Students should bring the [Graduate School form for reporting on Qualifying Exams](#) to their defense. The defense is not open to the public.

Upon successful completion of the Qualifying Exam, the student's Advisory Committee will be dissolved. The student will have 30 days to arrange a meeting with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies to discuss either retaining the original Advisory Committee or constituting a new one. If the student does not indicate any desired changes within this 30-day period, the original Advisory Committee will be reinstated.

Proposal Defense

After the student successfully completes the Qualifying Exam, the student then writes a dissertation proposal and defends it by the end of the 3rd year (6th semester). This may be a one-semester process, especially if the student needs to develop expertise in new areas (beyond course work and the qualifying examination).

The proposal should be 15-20 pages (3,750-5,000 words) plus works cited. These are guidelines for sections of the proposal, to be adjusted as appropriate for the diverse fields within the department:

Introduction - articulates an area of focus leading to a defensible question

Literature Review - situates the research question within the context of other current conversations and work in the field

Rationale for Study

Articulation of Research Question(s)

Methodologies/Methods - articulates an understanding of the appropriate means for undertaking the collection and analysis of data, or the articulation of appropriate rhetorical/hermeneutic approaches, as approved by the student's committee, that will lead the student to contribute productively to their area of interest

Chapter Outline - as presently projected

Significance of Study - projected contributions to the field

Reference List

All committee members should participate in the proposal defense.² Following a successful defense, the student must submit the [Graduate School's Report on Proposal Defense](#).

Upon successful defense of the proposal, the student may register for HU 6990 - Doctoral Research. Students are required to petition for Graduate School Research status by completing the Graduate School form [Petition to Enter Full-Time Research Mode](#). The semester following approval of this petition, the student must register for HU 6990 - Doctoral Research.

4.5 Doctoral Dissertation

The central doctoral degree requirement is completing a research project that leads to a Dissertation contributing to knowledge in the student's field. Dissertations reflect a variety of perspectives and methods in their form and content.

Although the creation of communication products such as manuals, videos, or computer-assisted instruction software may form a part of the doctoral research, such products cannot be submitted in place of Dissertations.

Working on the Dissertation

The student's Advisor is responsible for advising the student on the preparation of the dissertation proposal, advising the student on choosing additional committee members, meeting with the student to recommend further reading and to discuss ideas, reading all drafts of chapters and approving them to go to the rest of the committee, and helping the student stay on track to finish in a timely way. In cases where another member of the Advisory Committee has special expertise (on methodology, for example) not held by the Advisor, such committee members may also be asked to read early drafts.

²It is not required for students to have external members included in their committee at this point

Advisors have primary responsibility for assisting their advisees with the job search process. This includes providing feedback on draft vitae, cover letters, and teaching materials. Ideally such feedback should come the semester before the student is going to enter the job market.

Students should communicate regularly with their Advisor on their progress in completing the dissertation and submit chapters for review on a regular basis. Students are not advised to submit the entire dissertation at once for review by the Advisor. Students should check with faculty regarding availability to read dissertation chapters during the summer. Advisors must provide feedback on draft chapters in a timely manner but no later than one month after they have received them. Once all members of the committee have read the final draft dissertation and decided it is defensible, the Advisor should meet with the student to discuss the logistics of the oral defense. The oral defense is then scheduled to take place at least two weeks after the committee has agreed to go forward. If an [external member](#) was not appointed to the Advisory Committee prior to the proposal defense, then this process should be initiated not less than twelve (12) weeks prior to the Oral Defense.

Dissertation, the Oral Defense

Once the Advisory Committee agrees that the student may defend his or her Dissertation, the Final Oral Examination is scheduled. This agreement requires that committee members will have read the version of the dissertation that will be defended and have provided students any feedback they judge necessary to improve the dissertation.

The Final Oral Examination must be scheduled at least two weeks after this decision has been made. [The Two-Week Notification](#) form and accompanying documentation must be submitted to the RTC Office no later than two (2) weeks prior to the defense; the Final Oral Examination date must also be scheduled at least five weeks prior to the semester's end in which the degree will be awarded.³

Except under extraordinary circumstances, and then only with prior approval of all committee members, Final Oral Examinations are not administered during the Summer session.

³ Note that this is a Graduate School Requirement and that these requirements change from time to time. It is the student's responsibility to check the Graduate School's calendars, deadlines, and degree timelines pages to ensure that their requirements are met.

Preparing for the Oral Defense–Student Responsibilities

Students work in consultation with their Advisors to schedule the time and place of their examinations and to prepare the abstract of their Dissertation. At least two weeks prior to their examination, the student must submit the pre-examination version of their Dissertation along with the abstract to the RTC Programs Office and the final notification of the examination date along with [the two-week notification form](#).

Copies of pre-examination drafts of the Dissertation must be distributed to all members of the student’s Committee at least six weeks prior to the scheduled examination date. Copies of pre-examination drafts of Dissertations must also be made available in the Petersen Library to interested faculty and graduate students within this timeframe. Students should bring a photocopy of the Report on the Final Oral Examination form, which can be found on the Graduate School site:

<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/forms-deadlines/>.

Preparing for the Oral Defense–Committee Responsibilities

The Advisor should convene the full Dissertation Committee prior to the Final Oral Examination to discuss issues such as appropriate examination format and procedures. All such discussions should be finalized prior to the Final Oral Examination date.

Procedures for the Oral Defense

During part one of the examination, the student makes a brief, public presentation including an overview of the major conclusions of the Dissertation. The student then fields questions from the audience. This section of the examination period should run no longer than one hour.

During part two of the examination, the committee questions the student about the validity of the methods and conclusions contained in the Dissertation and about the significance of the student’s research in regard to the larger body of existing knowledge within the field.

Part two of the examination is closed to the public.

Evaluating the Oral Defense

After the Final Oral Examination, the Dissertation Committee asks the student to leave, allowing the committee the opportunity to deliberate in private about the quality of the student’s work and performance during the exam. Their decision will be based on two criteria:

- Quality of research represented in the Dissertation and in the examination;
- Knowledge and evidence of contribution to the field represented in the Dissertation and in the examination.

Passing

According to Graduate School regulations, students pass their Final Oral Examination when no more than one member of their Dissertation Committee is in dissent about the satisfactory quality of the work demonstrated in both the Dissertation and in the Final Oral Examination. If a member of the Dissertation Committee dissents, the student must address that member's dissenting comments prior to receiving final approval for passing. According to Graduate School regulations, the student's Advisor and the Graduate School will judge when the student has satisfactorily addressed the dissenting committee member's comments.

Passing with Revisions

If the Dissertation Committee agrees that the student's work needs revision, they may ask the student to revise his or her Dissertation before being certified for completing the requirements of the doctoral degree. Students may receive a provisional pass. This means that substantial changes that will take more than 2 weeks need to be made to the draft that has been defended. The student cannot proceed with submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School or with graduation until the Advisor approves these revisions.

Unsatisfactory Completion of the Final Oral Examination

According to Graduate School regulations, students fail their Final Oral Examinations when more than one member of the Dissertation Committee is in dissent about the satisfactory quality of the work demonstrated in the Dissertation and in the Final Oral Examination.

Students who fail their Final Oral Examination may petition the RTC Steering Committee to retake the examination once, no sooner than the next semester. A second failure of the Final Oral Examination provides sufficient grounds for dismissal from the RTC Program. The RTC Steering Committee determines the status of students who fail their Final Oral Examination twice.

Post- Exam Procedures

After the Dissertation Committee's deliberations are complete, they reconvene to inform the student that he or she has either passed or failed the Final Oral Examination. If the student has passed, the committee discusses any additional conditions to their evaluation. If the student has failed, the committee discusses the reasons for that failure.

Students who fail their exam may choose to reconstitute their Committees and retake the examination. However, students must wait at least one semester before proceeding with a second Final Oral Examination.

Upon successful completion of the Final Oral Examination or after the second failure of the Examination, the Report on Oral Examination form must be submitted by the Advisor to the RTC Programs Office. The form may be found on the Graduate School web page for [tracking forms](#).

Following the successful defense and revision of their Dissertations, students must submit an electronic copy to the Graduate School, along with other documents. Students should follow the [submission guidelines](#) posted by the Graduate School.

University Graduation Requirements

Commencement information is mailed by the Graduate School Office to eligible students approximately three months prior to either the December or May ceremony. To participate in the graduation ceremony, you must complete all degree requirements (including revisions and filing paperwork) **at least 10 weeks** prior to the ceremony.

Students nearing completion should confirm their commencement plans with the RTC Director of Graduate of Graduate Studies and with the Graduate School at the beginning of semester in which a defense is planned. According to RTC Program policy, PhD students may submit the [Commencement Application Form](#) only if they have a complete draft of their defense document and a scheduled defense date arranged with the program office at least 10 weeks prior to the ceremony. The date of the scheduled defense must be prior to the date of the ceremony. Again, the student's advisor must be willing to vouch for this timeline in writing. Students who have not successfully completed their final defenses by the date of the ceremony will not be permitted to walk.

More information regarding graduation and degree certification can be found at <http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/>, which is updated frequently.

Under no circumstances may PhD students participate in graduation ceremonies prior to completing all requirements for the degree (including submission of the final document and attending paperwork to the Graduate School).

4.6 PhD Advisory Committees

Initial Advisory Interview

When students first enter the RTC Program they meet with the Director of Graduate Studies for an advisory interview early in their first semester of residence at Michigan Technological University.

The initial advisory interview establishes how student interests match the scholarly orientations of the department and interests of individual faculty members, orients students, and offers suggestions regarding potential members of student Advisory Committees.

The following kinds of issues and questions may be explored in the initial advisory interview:

- Student questions about the RTC Program
- Past coursework and intellectual history
- Areas of interest and expertise
- Directions and goals for graduate work, including course selection if the student's Bachelor's degree is not a humanities-related degree
- Career goals
- Preliminary plans (including methods) for a Coursework Paper, Project, or Thesis
- Preferences for working with particular faculty

Forming an Advisory Committee

Prior to making requests for full Advisory Committees, it is suggested that students write a 250-word Preliminary Proposal describing their intended course of study. PhD Committees will normally consist of three faculty members from the Department of Humanities graduate faculty plus an "external" committee member. External committee members may be members of MTU graduate faculty from some department other than Humanities or may be a faculty-member from another University whose expertise in a particular area makes them a suitable addition to the committee. External members may be appointed at any point in the student's program of study but not later than twelve (12) weeks prior to the Final Oral Defense. (Please consult with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies if you wish to have a non-Michigan Tech person serve on your committee, and be sure to do it in plenty of time as the approval process can take some weeks.)

PhD students must form an Advisory Committee (not including external member) during the second year of graduate studies. Doctoral students should discuss their research plans with potential committee members; however, requests for faculty members to be added to a committee must go through the Director of Graduate Studies who will confirm each faculty member's willingness to participate. Faculty members are asked to respond to these requests in writing within two weeks. Once faculty members have indicated their willingness to serve on a committee, the RTC Director of Graduate Studies will prepare an [Advisor and Committee Recommendation Form](#). This form will be submitted to Graduate School on the student's behalf by the Graduate Program Office. Committees are not official until they have been confirmed in writing. All invitations are issued by the RTC Director of Graduate Studies; faculty members are asked to respond to invitations within two weeks.

In general, students tend to work most closely with their Advisors. It is each Advisor's responsibility to work with students and the RTC Director of Graduate Studies to guide and monitor student progress and advise students accordingly. Student progress is formally reviewed on an annual basis by the student's committee chair and the RTC Steering Committee.

Student-Initiated Committee Changes

During the course of their graduate study, students may ask to change Advisory Committee members. Students may request that their committee be changed for the following reasons:

- Research interests change.
- Committee members become unavailable.
- Irreconcilable differences develop between a student and a committee member.

Students may discuss potential changes with any member of their Advisory Committee or with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies. Students, however, must follow the same procedure when reconstituting their committee as when initially forming them (See "Forming an Advisory Committee"). Students who wish to reformulate their Advisory Committee more than once must petition to do so and have their request approved by the RTC Steering Committee.

When new committee members have accepted their invitations, the RTC Program Office will notify the student and the rest of the committee. When any changes are made to the membership of an Advisory Committee, the RTC Program Office will send the appropriate paperwork to the Graduate School.

Faculty-Initiated Changes

Faculty may also request that they be removed from Advisory Committees. Such requests are appropriate for the following reasons:

- Other commitments will not allow time to devote to the student (e.g. this may apply if faculty go on leave or take sabbaticals),
- The student's research develops in a direction that does not coincide with the committee member's areas of expertise or professional development
- Irreconcilable differences develop between faculty and student.

Faculty members should address any written requests for removal from Advisory Committees to the RTC Director of Graduate Studies. Faculty members may work in consultation with either of these advisors before notifying students of such requests.

Upon successful completion of the Qualifying Exam, the student's Advisory Committee will be dissolved. The student will have 30 days to arrange a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss either retaining the original Advisory Committee or constituting a new one. If the student does not indicate any desired changes within this 30-day period, the original Advisory Committee will be reinstated.

5 General Program Policies

5.1 Student Policies

Continuous Enrollment

See Graduate School Page ([“Registration, Enrollment and Full-Time Status”](#)).

Michigan Tech requires that all graduate students be continuously enrolled throughout their graduate careers; that is, students must be enrolled for Fall and Spring semesters in all years between initial admission and graduation. Students who receive support during the Summer semester must be enrolled for that term as well.

Students supported by Michigan Tech must maintain enrollment of at least 9 credits during Fall and Spring Semesters, and if supported during the Summer terms, must maintain enrollment for one credit of individualized study.

All students using university services (e.g., interaction with their Advisors, or library or health services) must be registered for at least one course each semester. This course may also be in the form of special courses such as HU5990 Thesis, HU6990 Doctoral Research, HU5900/6900 Independent Study, HU5901/6901 Directed Reading, or HU5902/6902 Internship, HU6903 Doctoral Comprehensive Exam, all of which may be taken for variable credit.

Students who are unable to maintain enrollment at the Michigan Tech campus may enroll in UN5953, a continuous enrollment course for 1.0 credit at the current tuition rate. Students requiring a leave of absence and who will not have access to their advisor’s time and campus facilities may enroll for UN5951 (Graduate Continuous Enrollment–Special Circumstances). There is no fee and no credit associated with UN5951 but Graduate School permission is required to enroll. Enrollment in UN5953 needs department approval. Students who do not enroll as required have to apply to be re-admitted and pay a re-admission fee.

The RTC Director of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate School must approve all waivers of continuous enrollment. Such waivers are approved only when it is necessary for students to interrupt their studies for some reason. Students conducting either on- or off- campus research or internships are considered to be using university services and thus must be enrolled for at least one credit each term. (See Chapter 5--Financial Support.)

Residency Requirements

Master's

A minimum of two-thirds of the required non-research course work credits required for the degree must be taken through Michigan Tech. Research credits used to satisfy degree requirements must be taken through Michigan Tech and must be supervised by a member of Michigan Tech's graduate faculty.

PhD

The Graduate School Currently requires that a minimum of two-thirds of the required non-research course work credits required for the degree must be taken through Michigan Tech. PhD students must take at least 20 credits beyond the masters or 50 credits beyond the bachelors through Michigan Tech.

Research credits used to satisfy degree requirements must be taken through Michigan Tech and must be supervised by a member of Michigan Tech's graduate faculty.

Courses which meet the "through Michigan Tech" requirement are defined as courses listed in the Michigan Tech course catalog and taught by Michigan Tech faculty.

5.2 Student Progress

Time and Funding Limits

According to Graduate School requirements, all work required for the Master's degree must be completed within five years from the first semester of enrollment (<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/requirements/ms/>). However, the normal RTC funding limit for Master's students is two years.

Doctoral students (both those who enter with a Bachelor's degree and those who enter with a Master's degree) must complete their Comprehensive Examinations within five years and must complete all requirements within eight years from their first enrollment in the RTC Program (<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/requirements/phd/>). However, the funding limit for RTC doctoral students is four years with the possibility of extension contingent on satisfactory progress ([See Section 5.4– "Financial Support"](#)).

Annual Student Progress Evaluation Forms

The [Annual Student Progress Evaluation Form](#) verifies that students are making timely progress toward degree completion and provide students with guidance and feedback from their committees. Annual Student Progress Evaluation Forms are also a factor in determining students' future funding in the program. With the exception of certain students on leave, any student not making satisfactory progress toward the degree will not be considered in good standing and could lose funding. Satisfactory Progress will be indicated on the form by a designation of "Satisfactory" from the RTC Steering Committee. A designation of "Needs Improvement" or "Serious Concerns" will be accompanied by an explanation of any actions the students must undertake in order to return to satisfactory status (the student's status will then be reviewed again the Fall semester). The Annual Progress Evaluation process will normally take place in March/April and will include consultations between students and their Advisors as well as one-on-one meetings between students and the RTC Director of Graduate Studies.

Grades

In the RTC Program, grades generally reflect progress as described in the following table.

Grades in the RTC Program

Grade	Level of Progress
A	Excellent and good graduate work
A/B	Acceptable graduate work
B	Marginally acceptable graduate work
B/C	Unacceptable graduate work
C	Unacceptable graduate work (all requirements completed)
F	Unacceptable graduate work (all requirements not completed)

An I (incomplete) grade not computed in GPA calculation, appropriate when

- the student has a legitimate extenuating circumstance prohibiting the completion of the course;

- the student has the ability to complete the course requirements without re-enrolling in the course;
- the student currently has a passing grade in the course.

A P (progress)—may be used for 5000 or 6000 series research courses and approved 3000 or 4000 level project courses where projects carry over for more than one semester.

A Q (inadequate progress)—may be used for 5000 or 6000 series research courses and approved 3000 or 4000 level project courses where projects carry over for more than one semester.

Faculty may opt to distinguish between excellent and good graduate work and inform students of those distinctions. For a complete list of grades at MTU, you may visit the following page: <https://www.mtu.edu/registrar/faculty-staff/grades/>

According to the Graduate School, graduate students must maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative grade-point average in the courses required for a graduate degree. No credit is given for courses in which students receive B/C, C or F grades (<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/policies-procedures/good-standing/>). Exceptions include credits taken in cognate departments that may carry a B/C or C, if approved by the chair of the major department.

Students who receive a B/C, C, or an F in required courses must retake the courses to fulfill the requirements. Students who receive a B/C, C, or an F in other courses selected to fulfill requirements may elect to take a different course to fulfill the requirement.

Student Standing

Master's Students

To be in good standing, Master's students must receive grades of A, A/B, or B in all courses and make reasonable progress toward the degree. Students receiving B/Cs, Cs, or Fs must meet with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies to discuss their status in the program. A grade of B/C, C, or F in a course may be grounds for probation; two B/Cs, Cs, or one F may be grounds for withdrawal or dismissal from the program (See "[Academic Probation](#)" below). Students must also receive a designation of "Satisfactory" on their Annual Student Progress Evaluation Forms.

Doctoral Students

Doctoral students are expected to receive more As or A/Bs than Bs to be in good academic standing. Doctoral students' grades are reviewed yearly, and if they have received more Bs than As or A/Bs, they must meet with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies to discuss their status in the program. Students who receive B/Cs, Cs, or Fs must also meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss their status in the program. A grade of B/C, C or F in a course may be grounds for probation; two Cs or one F may be grounds for withdrawal or dismissal from the program (see "Academic Probation" below). Students must also receive a designation of "Satisfactory" on their Annual Student Progress Evaluation Forms.

Academic Probation

Students receiving B/C, C, or F grades in any course must meet with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies during the following semester to review their status. The RTC Director consults with the RTC Steering Committee, and with their approval, may place a student on probation or may recommend a student's withdrawal or dismissal from the RTC Program.

Students receiving anything less than a designation of "Satisfactory" on their [Annual Student Progress Evaluation Forms](#) must also discuss required actions to remediate their status with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies. Failure to take appropriate steps by the end of subsequent semester may result in a student's being placed on probation or in a recommendation of withdrawal or dismissal.

During academic probation, students are expected to enroll full-time, registering for at least one required or otherwise approved course, and one other class per semester.

Probationary status is reviewed at the end of each semester by the RTC Director in consultation with the RTC Steering Committee in order to determine whether the student should be removed from or remain on academic probation or be asked to withdraw from the program.

Voluntary Withdrawal

In consultation with the RTC Steering Committee, the RTC Director of Graduate Studies may suggest that an individual student on academic probation or making unsatisfactory progress withdraw from the RTC Program. If the student does not voluntarily withdraw from the program, the RTC Steering Committee may advise the Director of Graduate Studies to begin dismissal proceedings.

Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the program if any one of the following events occurs:

- Student fails to maintain good academic standing or does not make satisfactory progress in their work toward a degree.
- Student fails the Master's Final Oral Examination.
- Student fails the doctoral Comprehensive Examinations twice.
- Student fails the doctoral Final Oral Examination.

The dismissal procedure is described at:

<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/policies-procedures/good-standing/>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the use of others' ideas, words, or images without proper citation or acknowledgment. Plagiarism is a serious matter and may result in a student's dismissal from Michigan Tech. Faculty suspecting that a student has committed plagiarism ought to first discuss the matter with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies. If the suspicion can be substantiated, the Director informs the RTC Steering Committee and the Department Chair. The Director also advises the faculty member to bring the matter to the attention of the Dean of Students for resolution according to Michigan Tech procedures.

Faculty should not attempt to resolve questions of plagiarism on their own.

5.4 Accommodation Policies for Americans With Disabilities

Michigan Tech complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) (<http://www.mtu.edu/equity/access-disability/ada/>). If any student has a disability and needs a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office, Coordinator for Student Disability Services (7-1494). For other concerns about discrimination, contact one's advisor, department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (x7- 3310).

5.5 Faculty Policies

Teaching Assignments

The RTC Steering Committee maintains a schedule of courses two-years ahead in order to allow students to plan their full coursework schedule while ensuring that they meet the program's curricular requirements. The committee invites faculty to submit requests for course assignments each year for the second year ahead. Proposals should include a description of the course that may be suitable for distribution to students as well as an indication of whether the course is a Groundwork Course, a course with a significant content concerning Globalization, or a course with strong Methodology content.

Syllabi

Faculty are expected to write and distribute syllabi for all graduate courses. One copy of each syllabus should be sent to the Department of Humanities office by the end of the third week of the semester. Copies of syllabi for all past courses are on file in the main office for reference by faculty and students.

Assessment

Faculty involved in Proposal Defenses, Qualifying Exams, Final Defenses (MS or PhD), or teaching graduate courses, are expected to fill out the Graduate Learning Objectives online assessment forms. Links to these forms will be sent via email upon completion of the defense/exam or, in the case of courses, during the exam week at the end of the semester. Completion of these forms is essential to ongoing program assessment as required by the Graduate School.

Feedback on Required Student Work

Faculty are expected to provide students feedback on required work in a timely fashion. Students who receive no feedback on required work should request it of the instructor. If they still receive no feedback, they should appeal to the RTC Director of Graduate Studies.

5.6 Mentoring

Independent Studies and Directed Readings

In order to maintain sufficient enrollments in graduate classes, RTC faculty members should not offer Independent Studies or Directed Readings in those areas covered by regular course offerings.

Graduate Teaching Instructors (GTIs) Teaching New Courses

Graduate Teaching Instructors work closely with the Director of Composition, and other course coordinators, in a mentoring relationship. Students needing mentoring outside of the above areas should consult with the appropriate faculty or the Department Chair, who then makes arrangements for an appropriately experienced faculty member to mentor.

Faculty members taking on mentoring assignments may assist GTIs by engaging in the following activities:

- Working with GTIs before the term begins to identify and articulate the instructional goals associated with a course
- Reviewing syllabus and/or policy statements, suggesting revisions to these documents if necessary
- Modeling strategies for making assignments appropriate to the course
- Guiding GTIs responses to student assignments (e.g., papers, drafts, oral presentations, and tests)
- Discussing productive strategies for grading, evaluating, and conferencing
- Observing each GTI during the semester, making written observational notes during these visits
- Helping each GTI evaluate the class and his or her teaching by reflecting systematically on instructional goals, assignments, and class activities
- Suggesting readings that will help the GTI connect theoretical perspectives on course content with practical pedagogical approaches to class activities
- Drafting a memo to the appropriate teaching supervisor about each GTI's teaching progress at the end of the semester.

Dealing with Student Teaching Problems

Faculty mentors whose mentees have problems with teaching should discuss the problem with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies in order to develop a plan to enhance the mentoring effort. If this effort does not seem to be having any effect, the Director will bring the matter to the attention of the Chair of the Department and the RTC Steering Committee. A possible outcome might be changing mentors or changing the course the student is assigned to teach. If it is determined that no satisfactory solution to the problem has been found within three terms, other solutions will be sought that take into consideration the best interests of the graduate student, the students they teach, and the graduate program.

5.7 Curricular Policies

Scheduling of Courses

The number of graduate courses scheduled per year depends on the number of students enrolled in the RTC Program and the faculty available. Approximately 12 graduate seminars are scheduled every year. The RTC Steering Committee schedules courses for two-year periods, taking into consideration all of the following factors:

- Ensuring that all ten Groundwork Courses are offered in any given two-year cycle.
- Ensuring that the Groundwork Courses are appropriately distributed so that students will have maximum flexibility in making their selections.

- Ensuring that the topic of focus courses in any given year reflect the five Core Areas of the program curriculum.
- Matching faculty and student areas of interest and research.
- Equitable distribution of courses among graduate faculty.

Class Size

Graduate classes are limited to 12 students (except for Teaching Practica, e.g., HU5931). Graduate classes may be cancelled if they do not reach certain enrollment minimums, as determined by the Chair of the Department, in consultation with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies.

Research, Independent Studies, Directed Readings, And Internships

The RTC Program offers a variety of courses for students who want to pursue individual scholarship under the supervision of a faculty member. Note that while such independent work may be a valuable part of graduate work, it must be considered in the context of other departmental needs, such that it does not detract from students' enrollment or progress in regularly scheduled classes, nor pose undue burdens on faculty. Thus, the RTC Steering Committee recommends that such independent work be reserved for advanced students (second year and beyond), that is, students who have completed a significant portion of their coursework. Independent work in general is not intended to substitute for the regularly scheduled classes. Students will normally only be permitted to apply three (3) credits total of Independent Studies, Directed Reading, or Internship credits toward the coursework requirements for their degree (see "[Supplementary Coursework Options](#)").

Independent work is a natural part of a student's final stages of work: MS students working on theses or projects should register for HU5990, HU5991 respectively; they must meet with their advisors before registering. PhD students preparing for their Qualifying Exams should register HU6903 during the semesters immediately before and during the taking of their Qualifying Exams. All and only those PhD students working on dissertations after passing their Qualifying Exams should enroll for HU6990 Dissertation Research credits.

During summer semesters, students receiving Michigan Tech support must register for one credit of independent study. (Students who are not supported by Michigan Tech are not required to register, though they may have other obligations for loans, etc.) All students should consult with their advisors before registering for summer, and no student will be allowed to sign up for independent work without prior written approval of the faculty and grad advisor ([Independent Study Form](#)).

5.8 Grievance Procedures

Defining Grievance Cause

Faculty or students with concerns or complaints about the behavior of other faculty or students in professional situations or in interpersonal relationships should follow the grievance procedures described below. Note that questions of plagiarism should be taken to the Dean of Students, and sexual discrimination and sexual harassment issues should be taken to the University Title IX Coordinator (<http://www.mtu.edu/equity/title-ix/overview/>).

These procedures are designed to protect the rights and privacy of both faculty and students and to equitably adjudicate conflicts among faculty and students.

General Guidelines for Grievances

Faculty and students should avoid discussing their complaints with colleagues. Faculty or students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination based on sex or sexual harassment, suspect that an unfounded discrimination complaint may be filed against them, or have been threatened with the filing of such a complaint should notify the [Affirmative Action Officer](#) as soon as possible. (For more information on grievances and grievance procedures, as well as issue pertaining to discrimination, see the "[Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Handbook](#)."

Student-Initiated Grievances

Students have the right to fair and equal treatment by administrators and to expect professional behavior from other faculty and students. Professional behavior includes such matters as a respect for expertise, individual beliefs, and personal privacy.

Students should be aware that the campus provides an ombudsperson. One of the functions of the ombudsperson is to process student complaints (<http://www.mtu.edu/ombuds/>). Students who have complaints about administrators, faculty, or other students should first discuss their complaints with the person concerned, if possible. If the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, they should discuss the complaint with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies. The Director then consults with the RTC Steering Committee (unless this is considered inappropriate), discusses the complaint with the administrator, faculty member, or student in question, attempts to resolve the problem, and reports to the Humanities Chair and the RTC Steering Committee. If resolution is not possible at this level, the complaint will be referred to the Humanities Chair. If the complaint concerns the RTC Director of Graduate Studies, it should be referred to the Humanities Chair. If the complaint concerns the Chair and resolution is not possible within the department, the complaint should be referred to the Dean.

Faculty-Initiated Grievances

Faculty members have the right to fair and equal treatment by administrators and to expect professional behavior from other faculty and students. Professional behavior includes such matters as a respect for expertise, individual beliefs, and personal privacy.

Faculty with complaints about administrators or other faculty should first discuss their complaints with the person concerned, if possible. If the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, faculty should discuss the complaint with the Chair of the Department of Humanities or the Dean of the College of Sciences and Arts; or, if that is not possible or resolution cannot be attained, the ombudsperson should be contacted.

Faculty with complaints about graduate students should first discuss their complaints with the person concerned, if possible. If the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, they should discuss the complaint with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies, who will consult with the RTC Steering Committee, discuss the complaint with the student, attempt to resolve the problem, and report to the Chair. If resolution is not possible at this level, the complaint will be referred to the Chair.

Faculty members should be aware that the campus provides an ombudsperson. One of the functions of the ombudsperson is to investigate faculty complaints.

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a Federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities that receive Federal funds. It states:

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Under Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex can include gender discrimination, pregnant and parenting discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual violence, such as rape, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

To officially report an incident of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault/violence, you may contact the Title IX Coordinator, Beth Lunde at titleix@mtu.edu, 906-487-3310, 306 Administration Building or [Public Safety and Police Services](#) at 906-487-2216. If you are a student, you may also choose to report to [the Office of Academic and Community Conduct](#).

5.9 Financial Support

Procedure and Schedule for Awarding Support

The RTC Program endeavors to support all students needing financial support, using a combination of external and internal funding. The RTC Steering Committee makes support recommendations after decisions on admission have been made.

Decisions on financial support and contract offers for the coming academic year are made every spring semester. However, some funding opportunities may become available at other times during the year.

Students serve primarily as GTIs "[Graduate Teaching Instructors \(of record\)](#)."

Reappointments to GTI positions are subject to review by the RTC Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the RTC Steering Committee, the Director of Composition, GTI Coordinators, and faculty mentors.

Other students may be appointed as graduate administrative assistants (GADAs), graduate research assistants to faculty (GAs), or as assistants in the Michigan Tech Multiliteracies Center (MTMC) as part of their work assignment. Applications for administrative positions are evaluated by the RTC Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the RTC Steering Committee and supervising faculty.

Funding Terms

Our goal is to provide at least two years of funding for every Master's student and four years of funding (with a possibility of extension to a fifth year) for every PhD student who requests support in their application for admission.

Funding decisions are competitive and always contingent upon budgetary decision-making at state and university levels. The RTC Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the RTC Steering Committee and the Director of Composition, makes all funding decisions as part of the admissions process.

As indicated in each student's contract letter, continued funding is based on successful job performance and satisfactory academic progress.

5.10 Support Package

Tuition & Fee Waivers, Stipends

During the regular academic year (Fall and Spring semesters), all supported students receive tuition waivers for up to 9 credits and computer-lab fee waivers. All supported students are required to maintain a minimum of 9 credits of enrollment during each of those semesters. (See "[Enrollment Requirements](#).")

Workload

The graduate workload consists of a total of three academic year assignments (courses or their equivalents) over the fall and spring semesters. Each course (or equivalent appointment) counts for approximately 10 hours per week. Thus, a student may carry an unbalanced load of 1-2 or 2-1 assignments, but the total workload is expected to average out to 20 hours per week over the course of the term. Administrative assignments continue over Fall and Spring Semesters.

The teaching load is usually arranged so that new Graduate Teaching Instructors teach one course the first term and two the second. Advanced students may receive 1-2 or 2-1 loads, or receive administrative or other assignments spread out over the year; this depends on factors such as the availability and timing of particular courses or other administrative assignments as well as students' own plans for defending MS or PhD papers or examinations, etc.

Summer Support

Summer support is limited and is offered first to PhD students (based on the number of years in the program) followed by Master's students (based on number of years in the program). Summer teaching appointments may also be determined on the basis of the student's experience and preparedness to teach a particular course (e.g., if the student has prior experience teaching the course, or has completed the training or practicum associated with a particular course). The work is usually considered equivalent to a semester's half-time load, consisting of teaching one 3-credit course (or its equivalent in other administrative assignments) for one 7-week summer session, or serving as an administrative or research assistant for the summer. (A very limited number of full-time assignments are sometimes available.) Support consists of a tuition waiver for one research credit, plus computer fees, and half of the usual semester stipend. Notices of available summer assignments are sent to all graduate students at the beginning of the Spring Semester.

Department and Student Commitment to Contracts

Contracts for graduate assistants commit the Department of Humanities to offering training and fiscal support to students and likewise commit students to professional behavior with regard to their teaching and employment. In order to meet our teaching and administrative commitments, it is important that the RTC Program staff classes and administrative positions with qualified assistants.

Students who find they must resign their positions during the year should make every effort to inform the Director of Graduate Studies and the appropriate supervisor as soon as possible, but not less than two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Students who are scheduled to teach in summer sessions should inform the Director of Graduate Studies and the appropriate teaching supervisor no later than five weeks prior to summer semester if they must relinquish their assignment.

5.11 Types of Support

Graduate Teaching

GTIs may be assigned to teach lower division University General Education or Humanities courses, or to assist regular faculty in other Humanities or general education courses. Generally, GTIs in their first year are not assigned more than one teaching preparation per semester nor more than two preparations per year.

The most common form of funding offered by the Department of Humanities is as Graduate Teaching Instructors of record (GTIs) for general education courses, primarily the UN1015 course in written, oral, and visual communication, or as teaching assistants for faculty teaching the large lecture courses. Other teaching opportunities are available to advanced graduate students, after completion of the practicum (e.g., HU 5932 - Practicum in Teaching Technical Communication, or HU 5934 - Practicum in Communication Pedagogy) or mentorship in teaching a particular Humanities course. Notice of these opportunities will be circulated as they become available. Students are encouraged to make the department aware of their interest in such work assignments by completing the [Appointment Request Form](#) and submitting it to the Program Office.

Teaching assignments occasionally available to advanced students:

- HU 3120 Technical and Professional Communication
- HU 2130 Introduction to Rhetoric
- HU 2324 Introduction to Film
- HU 2633 Fundamentals of Digital Imaging
- HU 2642 Introduction to Digital Media
- HU 2820 Communication and Culture
- HU 2830 Public Speaking and Multimedia
- HU 2910 Language and Mind
- Modern Language (if fluent and trained to teach Spanish, French, German)

Training and Mentoring

GTIs assigned to teach courses are required to enroll for HU5931 during the first term of their employment. All new GTIs are also required to attend the eight-day intensive training session prior to the Fall term in which they begin their employment. Those GTIs who have fulfilled their HU 5931 requirement but who are appointed to teach new courses will be assigned to work with faculty mentors who have relevant expertise. Note that some teaching appointments require students to have completed a particular 1-credit teaching practicum as training (e.g., new teachers of HU 3120 [Technical and Professional Communication] are required to complete HU 5932 [Practicum in Teaching Technical Communication]). Enrollment in these practica are by permission of the Instructor.

GTI Duties

GTIs are required to:

- Design courses and prepare a syllabus for each class
- Meet their classes on a regular basis
- Design and evaluate assignments
- Hold at least two office hours per week per course
- Keep accurate records and report grades
- Conduct student evaluations of at least one course section per quarter

GTIs are also expected to attend staff meetings and to meet regularly with their faculty mentors.

International Students

Because a majority of RTC graduate funding, especially for new students, comes via teaching, international students must show clear evidence of experience and excellence in speaking and writing English. International students who are native speakers of languages other than English must have a minimum TOEFL score of 600 or its equivalent to be admitted to the RTC program and must pass the SPEAK test for comprehension and production of spoken English upon arrival at Michigan Tech before funding awards can be confirmed.

Graduate Administrative Assistants, Graduate Assistants

Graduate Administrative Assistants (GADAs) and Graduate Assistants (GAs) perform administrative support duties or research activities under the direction of RTC faculty or faculty from other departments. Such assignments are usually awarded only to advanced students, may require previous internships or training, and are frequently mixed with teaching assignments. GADAs and GAs receive the same financial support as GTIs. Administrative Assistant positions are always dependent upon available resources. Students are encouraged to communicate their interest in one of these positions by filling out an [Appointment Request Form](#) and submitting it to the Program Office.

Finishing Fellowships

The Graduate School offers a limited number of competitive [Finishing Fellowships](#) for one or two semesters to PhD students in residence who are close to finishing their dissertations.

Other Funding

King/Chavez/Parks Fellowship

The [Michigan King/Chavez/Parks Fellowship](#) programs provides grants to support graduate education for students from under-represented groups.

Research Grants (NSF, etc.)

Faculty in the Humanities Department, or from across campus, may secure research funding that contains employment opportunities for qualified graduate students, e.g., "piggyback" NSF grants (for public outreach) or web-page design. Students are encouraged to seek outside support and funding, as long as the work or research entailed is consistent with and supportive of a student's progress towards completion of the MS or PhD degree.

Fellowships (University, National)

A number of competitively awarded fellowships are available for research and dissertation completion. Securing prestigious awards provides time for concentration on one's research and writing. See a partial list of available awards at the Graduate School website:

<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/admissions/financial/>.

Summer Funding (Outside the RTC Program)

Summer Youth Programs: Students may find employment as counselors or instructors in various summer youth/outreach programs offered by the university. See the web page at <http://youthprograms.mtu.edu/> or contact the Educational Opportunity Office on campus for more information.

Enrollment Requirements for Students Receiving Assistance

All students funded by the RTC Program must be enrolled full-time (a minimum of nine credits) during the Fall and Spring semesters, unless the funding source carries other requirements for determining eligibility. Students receiving support during the Summer quarter must also be enrolled for one research credit, if appropriate, or one course (approved by their Advisor).

First year students who are funded by the RTC program enroll in two (2) regular Humanities graduate courses plus HU 5931 (Practicum in Teaching Composition) for a total of nine (9) credits.

Fall/Spring GTIs

	Minimum	Maximum
Half-Time (~10 hours/week) GTIs	9	9
Full-Time (~20 hours/week) GTIs	9	9

Summer GTIs

All Supported Assistants, including fellowship students	1 research credit or 1 course	9
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Graduate students supported by GTI or GADA appointments or by fellowships may not drop below the required number of credit hours.

Travel Money

Students presenting papers at conferences can request partial assistance for travel expenses from the Graduate Student Government and from the Department of Humanities.

The Graduate Student Government holds a lottery at each semester's start to determine who will receive [travel grants](#). Students must be presenting papers during that academic semester to be eligible for support (although they may apply for funds any time after receiving a letter of acceptance). Students are only eligible for one grant per year but may reapply if not selected. Grants of \$200 are generally awarded.

The Department of Humanities also sets aside some funds (subject to budget considerations) to support student conference travel. There are usually two deadlines per academic year (in mid-Fall and mid-Spring). [Forms](#) are available from the Department of Humanities Office or from the Graduate Program Assistant.

6 Student Opportunities and Support Services

6.1 Graduate Student Opportunities

Committees

Graduate students serve on a variety of Department committees, including the RTC Steering Committee. Committee positions are filled either by an election process or by invitation and appointment. Students who are interested in serving on committees should talk to the RTC Director of Graduate Studies, or their HU-Grad and GSG representatives.

Graduate Student Government

The [Graduate Student Government \(GSG\)](#) of Michigan Tech represents the professional, intellectual, and academic concerns of graduate students to the various governing bodies of the university and acts as advocate for graduate students. Representation on the Graduate Student Government is proportionate to the size of the program; the RTC Program currently is allotted two representatives elected by the RTC students.

Joint Authorship

Graduate students may work closely with faculty on articles, books, and other research projects. Graduate students who contribute substantially to research projects leading to publication should be listed as joint authors.

Journals

The Department of Humanities provides editing support for the international academic journal [Women and Language](#), which is edited by Dr. Patricia Sotirin. Various types of editing experience, either through internship credit or paid administrative assistantships, are occasionally available to RTC graduate students.

Studying Abroad

Michigan Tech participates in foreign exchange programs at the graduate level, with financing available through scholarships or employment arrangements. These programs will be announced as they become available.

Student Internships

Student exchanges may be possible with other universities with similar or related programs. We are also developing internships with corporations. If you are interested in teaching or studying with faculty at another institution, or in internships, consult with the Director of Graduate Studies.

6.2 Graduate Student Resources

The Graduate Student Programs Office

The Programs Office manages records and paperwork for the RTC, STC, and Liberal Arts Programs and its students, and for the UN1015 Program. The Programs Office also manages records and paperwork for *Women and Language*. The Programs Office is also source for information regarding the university, the local community and area, and housing. Questions about MS and PhD registration, forms, contracts, financial support, grades, student records, committees, and offices should be addressed to the Programs Office.

Graduate Student Mentors

Established Graduate Students voluntarily serve as informal mentors for newly admitted graduate students. Assignments are made in consultation with the RTC Director of Graduate Studies the semester before new students begin their studies. Mentors contact the new students before they begin the program to make introductions, ascertain what types of information and support new students will find useful, and determine how frequently to meet with new students during their first year of study. Mentors share their knowledge about practical and everyday resources available in the larger community; the cultures of the department, campus, and community; program expectations and guidelines; strategies for problem-solving and success as a graduate student; and knowledge about faculty research interests. Mentors are encouraged as a group to plan a social and informational gathering for the mentor-mentee cohort early during its first semester to promote a sense of community, knowledge of academic interests, and the wider availability of resources and information.

Graduate Student Professional Development Seminars

The RTC program provides especially strong professional mentoring assistance to new and advanced graduate students by hosting a series of seminars aimed at Graduate Professional Development. Such seminars have included a wide range of professional development advice and discussions, including such topics as surviving and thriving in graduate school, the formatting and content of vitae and résumés, practice sessions for job interviews, the working conditions at a variety of academic institutions, on-campus and off-campus extra-curricular professional development opportunities, job searching on the web, web-portfolios, etc. If you have a particular topic you would like addressed, contact the RTC Director of Graduate Studies.

Reading Groups, Dissertation Support Groups

Students frequently form reading groups, with or without faculty, around special interests of topics. Particularly useful are dissertation support groups, in which students in the final stages of the PhD program join together to read drafts and offer each other support. If you are interested in forming a group around a certain topic, send an e-mail to hugrad-soliciting participation.

The [Michigan Tech Multiliteracies Center](#) also offers graduate writing groups. In these groups, coaches studying at the masters or doctorate level lead dynamic writing discussions designed to meet the varying needs of graduate students of all levels and disciplines. Graduate writing groups can help graduate students develop, polish, organize, and complete written work, as well as offer platforms for presentation practice and refinement. For more information on how to join a graduate writing group, visit the MTMC (Walker 107).

Job Placement Assistance

The Department of Humanities assists students in assembling and mailing confidential dossiers to prospective employers. Please see the Director of Graduate Studies for the current policies.

Writing and Technology Resources at Walker

113 Walker: The Humanities Department Media Zone ([HDMZ](#))

107 Walker: The Michigan Tech Multiliteracies Center ([MTMC](#))

The J. R. Van Pelt and Opie Library

Along with a growing collection of textual and electronic resources, the [J. R. Van Pelt and Opie Library](#) is connected to [MELCAT & ILLIAD](#), so that students may retrieve sources from other institutions. The library also provides research and instructional [support](#) for all students.

This modern and well-lit library has several [group study rooms](#), computers, printing and photocopying areas, a buzzing café, [University Archives and Historic records](#), and other [amenities](#).



Humanities

**Walker Arts and Humanities Center, 1400 Townsend Drive
Houghton, Michigan 49931-1295**

Ph: 906-487-2540 | Fax: 906-487-3559

mtu.edu/humanities

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