



**College of Humanities and Social
Sciences**

CHSS Official Graduate Handbook

2018-2019

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and

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WELCOME!

Welcome to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) at the University of Houston – Downtown (UHD). CHSS is home to three graduate degree programs: the Master of Science in Technical Communication (MSTC), the Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Composition (MARC), and the Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management (MANPM). Also, CHSS offers two graduate certificate programs in Composition Studies and History. This Handbook is intended to serve as a resource for all active graduate students in CHSS, by clarifying program-specific procedures.

CHSS Administration:

DoVeanna S. Fulton, PhD, Dean

David B. Ryden, PhD, Associate Dean
S1015, 713-221-2767

Crystal Guillory, MA, Assistant Dean
S1086, 713-221-5316

Stephanie M. Allen, MPA, Assistant Director of Graduate Studies
S1011, 713-226-5554

CHSS GRADUATE PROCEDURES

Admission Process

Graduate Admissions procedures are summarized in UHD Policy 03.A.24 (Admissions of Students). All candidates must submit an official transcript from institutions which awarded a degree. Programs may require additional information such as test scores (GRE, GMAT, etc.).

The Admissions Committee for each program will evaluate candidates using a matrix based on required application materials. A committee of faculty will use the results of this evaluation to determine if an applicant is admitted. The Program Director or Assistant Director of Graduate Studies of the respective graduate program will notify prospective students, in writing, of the committee's decision. Students may be admitted conditionally at the discretion of the program's admissions committee. Conditionally admitted students will be advised as to the specific stipulations of this status and the conditions necessary to remove the "conditionally admitted" classification. To be admitted to UHD as a graduate student, an applicant must be accepted into a specific graduate program (PS 03.A.24, sections 3.3 & 3.3.1).

NON-U.S. resident students holding a visa should complete the Application for International Admission. International students should contact the International Students Office at 713-221-8522 for additional information: <https://www.uhd.edu/admissions/international/Pages/default.aspx>

Transferring Credit from Other Programs

For degree granting programs, students may transfer from another university no more than six semester credit hours (SCHs) of coursework and only with the approval of the graduate program's Graduate Director. Students enrolled in a certificate program may transfer from another university no more than three semester credit hours of coursework and only with the approval of the program's Graduate Director. All transferred coursework must be at the graduate level, from a regionally accredited university, and awarded a "B" grade or above. Students who would like to apply previously earned credit to a CHSS graduate program must make the request, to the relevant director, prior to matriculating. If a student wishes to take coursework at another university *after* matriculating must get approval *before* registering for the intended coursework at another university. Applying for transfer credit approval will require the submission of a syllabus and description of the course as well as an explanation as to why the course qualifies for transfer in the particular program.

Residency Information

Prospective students born outside the United States will need to present, in person, immigration documentation, passport, or citizenship certificate in order to determine residency for tuition purposes. Students born outside of Texas may need to provide information regarding employment in the state in order to determine qualification for in-state tuition.

Orientation

Applicants admitted to a graduate program should attend an Orientation and meet with the Graduate Director.

Advising

CHSS graduate students are encouraged to meet with their program's Graduate Director or the Assistant Director of Graduate Studies before registering for classes or before beginning their first semester of coursework. The Graduate Director will be available to help discuss academic goals and complete a degree plan. The Assistant Director of Graduate Studies also assists and advises students.

It is recommended that all graduate students meet with the Graduate Director or the Assistant Director of Graduate Studies at least once per academic year to review degree progress.

Registration

Upon admission, students are expected to enroll in at least one course in the acceptance semester. New students will be able to register for classes in person or online. Prior to each semester, graduate students must inform the Graduate Director of their class choices. The Director or Assistant Director of Graduate Studies will enter the necessary approvals in the registration system so that the student can register either online or in person.

To register online:

- Go to: <https://global.dt.uh.edu/eservices/>
- Select "Class Schedule" to review classes **or** "My Registration & Schedule" to register (be sure to select "Graduate Only" under "Course Level").
- To register online or by telephone, students will need a User ID (9-digit Student ID) and a password.

Students should not hesitate to contact their Director or Assistant Director of Graduate Studies with any difficulties registering for classes.

Enrollment

Full-time enrollment for CHSS graduate programs for the fall and spring semesters is 9 SCHs. International students are required to take 9 SCHs. Part-time enrollment is 3-6 SCHs. CHSS graduate programs will take 2 years to complete for full-time students. It takes approximately 4-6 years for part-time students to complete a master's degree. Most financial aid programs require graduate students to finish their studies in 6 years.

Minimum Grade Point Average for Enrolled Graduate Students

According to University policy (PS 03.A.04) and conventional wisdom, "Graduate programs are professional degrees that require a sustained level of high-quality academic achievement. Consequently, students who matriculate in graduate programs are held to higher standards than students in undergraduate programs." Thus, while enrolled in any CHSS graduate program, students must maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to remain in good standing. An enrolled student whose graduate-degree program GPA falls below 3.0 is placed on initial academic probation (PS 03B07 §3.1.1)

The SCHs for courses in which an “A” or “B” grade has been earned will be counted toward graduation. The SCHs for courses in which a “C” or lower grade was earned will not be counted towards graduation (PS 03B07 §3.3.1). Two course grades of “C” or lower are cause for dismissal from any CHSS degree program. Below average work (grades of “D” or “F”) is not acceptable and constitutes grounds for dismissal from any CHSS degree program.

While SCHs associated with a "C" or lower grade will not be counted towards graduation, these grades will nonetheless be applied to the student's GPA, which "is used in determining academic standing" (see PS 03.A.04 § 4.8).

To be awarded a graduate certificate, students must have a program GPA of 3.0. Students whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 are placed on probation. Three course grades of “C” or lower are cause for dismissal from any CHSS certificate program. Below average work (grades of “D” or “F”) is not acceptable and constitutes grounds for dismissal from a graduate certificate program.

Any graduate student who is on probation and does not achieve a “3.0 term GPA” may be suspended. A graduate student who is suspended may apply for reinstatement after one year of non-enrollment. Reinstatement is not automatic, but will be considered in light evidence presented by the student attesting to his/her commitment to successfully completing the program. The graduate program director, in consultation with the admissions committee, determine whether the student is readmitted into the program. Any reinstated student will return with the same academic probation status that resulted in the original suspension and be subject to the same rules for maintaining a GPA.

Appeals Process

In cases where a student or applicant wishes to appeal probation or suspension, the Graduate Director or ranking officer will hear the appeal, as noted in PS 03B07 §3.3.2.

A student appeal of a grade should follow as closely as possible sections 4.5 through 4.8 of the Grading System policy (PS 03.A.04). According to section 4.5.4, if a course is taught in a department that does not house the student's graduate program, as may occur in interdisciplinary programs, the grade appeal should be directed to the Chair of the Department offering the course, and if necessary to the Dean or Dean’s representative of the College that offers the course. Students who appeal must provide clear, compelling case demonstrating their potential for academic success.

Appeals or complaints on matters *other* than grades or probation status should be directed to the Graduate Director or the Assistant Director of Graduate Studies. A student should furnish the relevant graduate officer with a written request for an appeal that identifies (1) the specific decision that is being appealed, (2) the details of the situation (as concise as possible), and (3) a proposed rectification. Appeals should be filed within the semester of the incident.

Students are allowed to apply to another graduate program if they withdraw or are dismissed from a CHSS graduate program. Grades conferred from the previous graduate program will not be counted in the GPA of the program from which the student is graduating, but these grades do remain on the UHD transcript.

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete course grade ("I") is given only when an unforeseen emergency prevents a student from completing the course work and only with the instructor's approval. According to the Grading System policy (PS 03A04 §3.4 to 3.4.3), "I" grades are given when the majority of the coursework is completed. A grade of "I" will be changed to a passing grade if the missing work is completed satisfactorily by the deadline set by the instructor, but no later than the end of the long semester immediately following the term in which the "I" grade was received. An incomplete grade that is not removed by this deadline becomes an "F," thereby constituting immediate grounds for expulsion from the program.

Note: In graduate programs, in-progress grades ("IP") may be assigned to thesis, capstone, or directed study courses.

Leaves of Absence

Leaves of absence may be granted by the Dean's office for extenuating circumstances. Leaves of absence shall be granted for specific periods of time (e.g. one semester, one year, etc.) and may contain requirements for readmission into the program. A student who requests an extension of a current leave of absence shall have that request considered as a new request.

Students who take a leave of absence will be required to complete a readmission form <http://www.uhd.edu/admissions/documents/grad_app_readmit.pdf> and pay a readmission fee. If a student does not enroll for two consecutive semesters, s/he must also contact the relevant Graduate Director and Assistant Director of Graduate Studies, immediately, to be fully reinstated into the program.

For military deployment or reserved duty, standard rules and Federal regulations for readmission apply. Contact the registrar for the appropriate procedures and forms.

Courses are on a set rotation of offerings, so please be aware of how a leave of absence will affect one's ability to take the necessary classes and prerequisites in an expeditious fashion.

Academic Honesty

The Academic Honesty Code is embraced by all members of the UHD community and is an essential element of the institution's academic credibility. The Honesty Code states "We will be honest in all our academic activities and will not tolerate dishonesty." The purpose of the Academic Honesty Policy is to deal with alleged violations of the Honesty Code in a fair and consistent manner. It is each student's responsibility to read and understand the Academic Honesty Policy (PS 03.A.19).

Post-Baccalaureate Students

Students who wish to take courses at the graduate level without pursuing a graduate degree at UHD will need to apply as a post-baccalaureate student at the undergraduate level. Anyone who plans to enroll as a post-bac student must contact the Graduate Director or Assistant Director of Graduate Studies for admission and approval.

UHD defines post-bac students as those who are:

- Seeking a master's degree at another university (transient student) and come to UHD to take courses that will transfer to their home institution.

- Taking courses and do not want to pursue a graduate degree at UHD or elsewhere.

Required admission materials for post-bacs:

- *Application form:* The undergraduate application form includes post-bac admission option.
- *Application fee.*
- *Official transcript* from the institution where bachelor's degree or equivalent was awarded.

International post-bac admissions:

- International admission requirements apply.

Advising and registration of post-bacs:

- Post-bac students are advised by University College.
- Post-bac students who are interested in registering in graduate courses will need to contact the Graduate Director to determine if there are seats available. Graduate students admitted to respective graduate programs have priority in the registration process.

Post-bac regulations:

- If s/he meets prerequisite requirements and is approved by the graduate program director, a post-bac student may register for up to nine graduate semester SCHs without being admitted to any CHSS graduate program.
- A post-bac student may take undergraduate courses along with graduate courses. Undergraduate courses are not subject to the nine semester credit hour graduate maximum.
- A post-bac student taking graduate courses will have the same privileges as a post-bac student taking undergraduate courses.
- A post-bac student is expected to complete the same work and be evaluated according to the same standards as a graduate student.
- *Transferring post-bac course credit to CHSS graduate programs:* Students may petition to insert UHD post-bac graduate coursework, where a grade of "B" or better was earned, for graduate credit in a particular degree granting program. The Graduate Director, considering each petition individually, will determine if the graduate coursework taken by a post-bac student may be transferred to the program in question.
- To be considered for transfer credit, the student's petition must demonstrate that a course from another institution was:
 - Relevant to the focus of the degree in question.
 - Completed at the graduate level with a grade of "B" or better from a regionally accredited college or university (official transcript, if transferred from another university).
 - Not previously applied toward an undergraduate or graduate degree.
 - Completed no later than six years from the date of graduation.

If the courses are from another graduate program, the petitioning student may need to provide course descriptions, syllabi, or readings lists.

- *Admission of post-bac students to a graduate program:* Permission to enroll in

UHD graduate courses as a post-baccalaureate student does not guarantee acceptance into a graduate program. UHD Post-bac and former post-bac students interested in pursuing a master's degree in CHSS must apply to the graduate program for admission and meet all the admissions requirements. If denied admission to a graduate program, students who have not taken more than 9 graduate SCHs at UHD may be allowed to continue as a post-bac student and may be allowed to continue taking graduate courses (see restrictions noted above).

Applying for Graduation

Students intending to graduate in a particular semester must be sure to (1) complete a graduation application form via Apply for Graduation link on the MyUHD webpage; (2) adhere to all deadlines; and (3) inform their Graduate Director one week before the first day of record.

Financial Aid

The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid

Suite 330-South, 713-221-8041

The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OSFA) assists students with the financial planning and financing for their education. Financial aid consists of grants, scholarships, loans, and work study. Most aid, except for scholarships, is based upon individual need and eligibility. Aid is available to students who are enrolled part-time or full-time, have satisfactory academic progress, and demonstrate financial need. Students not enrolled in a graduate degree program are not eligible for financial aid.

To be considered for aid, the candidate will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). A paper application can be picked up at the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid or the application can be filled out online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. **The UHD school code is 003612.**

Students will also need to complete the [UHD Financial Aid Application](#) and the [Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#) and return them to the OSFA. Both the application and the SAPP can be downloaded from the financial aid website at <https://www.uhd.edu/financial/apply/Pages/financial-apply.aspx>.

Emergency Tuition and Book Loans

A limited amount of money is available to make emergency loans to students. The eligibility guidelines and the instructions can be viewed at <https://www.uhd.edu/student-resources/cashiers/Pages/cashiers-deferment-plan.aspx>. These loans require an application and funds are disbursed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Estimated Costs

Tuition and fee costs are posted at:

<https://www.uhd.edu/student-resources/cashiers/Pages/cashiers-tuition-fees.aspx>

Graduate Student Appointments

CHSS endeavors to conform, when possible, to the guidelines set by other UHS campuses when awarding Graduate Appointments. To this end, CHSS identifies three types of graduate student appointments available to the individual programs:

- Teaching Assistants (TAs) are graduate students who have direct student contact in a formal instructional setting, but who do not have primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit; they perform under the instructor's direct supervision and provide general assistance to the instructional process. TAs may not be listed as instructor of record though they may lecture.
- Instruction Assistants (IA) are graduate students who do not have direct instructional duties, but assist employing departments with academic courses, programs, projects, or other activities in support of the instructional process.
- Graduate Assistantships (GA) are held by graduate students whose responsibilities may be administrative in nature or consist of other activities that do not generally fit within the TA or IA job responsibilities. A Graduate Teaching Assistantship is classified under the GA category.

To be eligible for any CHSS graduate appointment, students must have an undergraduate degree or its equivalent, be admitted to a graduate program in CHSS, and be prepared to devote full-time efforts toward the degree. In order to be hold a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (as opposed to a standard Graduate Assistanship) , the student must have completed 18 graduate semester credit hours in the program. Qualified students who are interested in a graduate assistantship will find the application form on the CHSS website. Any conditions of appointment beyond those stipulated above will be specified by the appropriate departmental office.

All Graduate Assistantships appointments in CHSS are normally for the full academic year (Fall and Spring semesters), although a one-semester appointment is possible. Summer appointments are not guaranteed and will be based on departmental needs.

The minimum stipend for graduate assistantships is \$9,600 for the academic year and is disbursed monthly.

Priority for reappointment will be given to those graduate student assistants making satisfactory progress toward completion of their degree and is based on the quality of performance of assigned duties. The criteria to be used in making reappointments are to include, but not be limited to:

1. A 3.00 minimum cumulative grade point average.
2. The report of the graduate advisor or coordinator.

3. The length of time in an assistantship position.
4. The length of time in the degree program. Reappointments are not automatic for assistants; final decisions will be based on departmental needs and availability.

Any individual who teaches a course for academic credit is engaged in “student contact.” In addition, any individual who carries out the following within a formal instructional setting – talks extensively with students about class, course, or lab materials, helps explain course material, leads discussion sections, or holds office hours as part of his/her assigned job duties – is engaged in student contact. Note that a graduate student employed in a position with student contact is required to meet the English Language proficiency requirement.

CHSS GRADUATE DEGREES & CERTIFICATES

Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management

Laila Sorurbakhsh, PhD, Graduate Director
SorurbakhshL@uhd.edu 713-221-8645

The Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management is a highly multidisciplinary program, designed to prepare recent college graduates as well as mid- and senior-level administrators for the management and leadership of nonprofit organizations of all types. The program focuses on strategic planning, development of entrepreneurial skills, leadership, team building, assessment, management, fundraising, and budgeting. Elective courses are also available that focus on grant writing, human resources, technology, social media and marketing, board development, negotiation, and ethics. This program was designed by the leadership of Houston area's most prominent nonprofit organizations and by faculty from multiple UHD programs, including Social Sciences, English, Arts and Humanities, Management, Marketing and Business Administration, Finance, Accounting, and Computer Information Systems.

Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates who earn a MA in Nonprofit Management will be able to:

- Evaluate a nonprofit organization's status on leadership and teambuilding, report their findings, and initiate effective interventions to alleviate shortcomings in those areas.
- Organize and articulate ways to improve productivity from that assessment.
- Articulate expected outcomes for an organization, create a strategic plan to assess those outcomes, implement the assessment, draw conclusions from the analysis, and make effective analysis based adjustments to significantly enhance efficiency in the organization.
- Create, implement, and plan data and research driven strategies for recruiting and fund raising.
- Apply and implement employment law, recruiting and hiring practices, diversity in the workplace goals, compensation and benefits, performance appraisal, and discipline.
- Analyze budgeting and accounting documents and make organizational decisions based on said documents.
- Effectively manage within a nonprofit organization.

Admission Overview

Admission to the Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management program is based on the applicant's experience and interest in the nonprofit sector, academic ability, and the personal qualities necessary to successfully complete the program. Further consideration is given to the applicant's ability to positively contribute to the nonprofit sector upon completion of the program.

Applicants to the program should meet the following criteria:

- Completion of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university.
- A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 for the last 60 semester hours of undergraduate or graduate study, or five years of full time experience in the nonprofit sector, is preferred.
- An English as a Foreign Language test-score minimum of 550 with section scores of 50 or higher if graduate of a university in which English is not the native language.
- Applicants that do not meet these criteria may be admitted conditionally if their application warrants special consideration.

Admission Checklist

Applicants must complete and submit the following documentation to the Office of Admissions prior to the admissions deadline for the semester they desire admission (UHD Office of Admissions - Graduate Admissions, One Main Street, Suite 325, Houston, TX 77002):

- A completed *Apply Texas* application form.
- Personal statement: In 1,000 words or less, describe your experiences with the nonprofit world and how those experiences have prepared you to work in the nonprofit world. Note that the personal statement is a very important introduction to the Graduate Admissions Committee. The central purpose of the statement is to give you an opportunity to demonstrate why you are a good candidate for admission to the program.
- Résumé detailing the applicant's work experience and submit official transcripts from the institution where your bachelor's degree or equivalent was awarded.
- Three letters of recommendation: The letters of recommendation must be from those individuals who have had personal and professional contact with you. Further, the writers should have had some authority over you either currently or in the past. Examples of these types of individuals would be college professors, supervisors, or community leaders. In their letters, the writers should address the following: how the writer is associated with you and the length of time of that association; their opinion regarding your potential for academic success, including skills you possess that they feel demonstrate this potential; and how your completion of a master's degree would benefit both you and the nonprofit sector.
- Optional Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). Students with a grade point average under 3.0 and students with less than five years of full time experience in the nonprofit sector may submit such scores as evidence of academic ability.
- TOEFL results as outlined above, submitted by the admissions deadline.
- Transcripts from all institutions of higher education pursued by the applicant.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management requires a minimum of 36 semester credit hours. All students complete a set of required core classes as well as their elective coursework. In addition, all students will complete a six semester credit hour internship, which will include a capstone project.

Internship sites must be approved by the Director. Internships may be partially done at a place of nonprofit employment, so long as the Graduate Director grants permission and the

organization agrees to comply with program requirements.

Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Strategic Planning

Stephanie M. Allen, MPA - Assistant Director of Graduate Studies

allens@uhd.edu; 713-226-5554

The Certificate in Leadership and Strategic Planning is for nonprofit professionals who want to offer their nonprofit organizations the 21st century leadership and strategic planning skills that are needed to survive in today's nonprofit economy. These skills will give certificate recipients the ability to positively transform their organizations and provide students with the knowledge and qualifications necessary to effectively lead and manage nonprofit organizations.

Overview

- Courses taught by accomplished faculty and industry experts
- 18 hours of graduate coursework (6 courses)
- Directly supports UH system goals by meeting the demands of students wishing to gain expertise in the area, as well as the demands of the large number of nonprofit organizations in the area that need professional management.
- Provides core level training in leadership and strategic planning and give the students flexibility to focus on the area of nonprofit management that will best fit their future plans.

Required Courses (3 hours each):

- POLS 6310 Leadership in Non-Profit Organizations
- POLS 6618 Management in the Public and Nonprofit Sector
- BUS 6331 Strategic Planning in Non-Profit Sector

Electives (Choose 3):

- HUM 6301 Principles of Nonprofit Marketing
- HUM 6302 Principles of Nonprofit Finance
- POLS 6312 Resourcing the Nonprofit Organization
- POLS 6313 Governance, the Volunteer Board, and Organizational Behavior
- POLS 6314 Leadership Trends/Topics in Nonprofit Organizations
- POLS 6315 Law and Advocacy in Nonprofit Management

Application Process and Materials

Deadlines: Fall = July 15; Spring = November 15

- Complete the Apply Texas general application form (www.applytexas.org)

- Prepare a personal statement of 500-750 words to describe your experiences in the nonprofit sector and explain how those experiences have prepared you to succeed in nonprofit management.
- Submit all official college transcripts from degree granting institutions (applicants seeking admission to this program must hold a BA, BS or an equivalent degree from an accredited college or university in the US or overseas)
- Two (2) letters of recommendation

Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Composition

Adam Ellwanger, PhD, Graduate Director
ellwanera@uhd.edu 1041 S, 713-226-5577

The Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Composition (MARC) program trains future teachers of college-level writing and English Studies courses. The curriculum places a special emphasis on preparing teachers for the multicultural character of the 21st century college classroom. Students receive advanced training in rhetorical theory, composition pedagogy, rhetorical history, composition theory, argumentative strategy, and textual analysis. In addition, students may elect to take graduate level courses in the study of literature. After completing 18 SCHs, students in good standing can compete for paid Graduate Teaching Assistantship in the English department at UHD.

The program is valuable for a range of candidates:

- Future teachers of college English courses at community colleges or four-year universities nationwide.
- Local teachers seeking credentials to teach dual-credit English courses in Houston-area high schools.
- Students pursuing an academic career by seeking a foundation for a doctorate in rhetoric, composition, or English studies.

Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates who earn a MA in Rhetoric and Composition will be able to:

- Use rhetorical theory in the analysis and production of written communication.
- Identify and prepare strategies for teaching writing in a variety of environments: for example, online classes, large groups, and tutoring sessions.
- Identify and prepare strategies that are essential for teaching writing to today's students: people with different cultural orientations, varying degrees of English language competence, and different levels of preparedness.
- Analyze discrete elements of written communication.
- Design and execute their own research projects in the fields of rhetoric and/or composition.

Admission Overview

Admission is competitive and selective. Applicants must demonstrate that they possess the

abilities, interests, and qualities necessary to successfully complete the program and the potential to contribute to the fields of rhetoric and composition pedagogy.

Admission Checklist

Applicants seeking admission will provide the following application materials for review by the Graduate Curriculum Committee:

- A completed *Apply Texas* application form.
- Submit a 500-word statement of purpose that addresses the following questions in detail. Support your views with reasons and examples drawn from such areas as your reading, experience, observations, or academic studies. Be sure to develop your ideas fully and organize them coherently:
 - Why do you want to study rhetoric and composition?
 - What topics or issues in our field might you want to study further and why?
 - What qualifies you to embark upon this field of study?
 - What experience do you have in this field?
 - How do you plan to use your degree?
- Official transcripts from all degree-granting institutions.
- Official transcripts showing GPA from all colleges or universities previously attended. (As admission to the degree program is competitive, candidates with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher will be preferred).
- A 10-15 page sample of the author's academic writing (no co-authored pieces will be accepted).
- Two letters of recommendation from individuals acquainted with the applicant's work and academic potential (Visit www.uhd.edu/marc for optional recommendation forms).
- Test of English as a Foreign Language scores if applicant graduated from a university at which English is not the native language (minimum score of 550 with section scores of 50 or higher).

The Graduate Curriculum Committee will not review a candidate's application until the file contains all of the items listed above.

Admission Process Overview

The Graduate Curriculum Committee will evaluate applications using a matrix based on GPA, GRE score, relevant coursework or experience, recommendations, and other written materials in the applicant's file. The Graduate Curriculum Committee will use the results of this evaluation to determine if an applicant is admitted. The Graduate Director or the Assistant Director of Graduate Studies will notify students, in writing, of the committee's decision.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Composition requires a minimum of thirty-three hours.

If a student elects to write a master's thesis, six of the student's elective semester credit hours will go towards the preparation and composition of this document. If the student elects not to write a thesis, then the student must replace the six thesis semester credit hours with two elective courses. The student must meet with the Graduate Director before registering for these courses to announce the intention to take them as an alternative to the master's thesis. Upon approval,

the student will be expected to produce a seminar paper of 25 pages for each course taken for the non-thesis option.

In order to hold a Teaching Assistantship in UHD's English department, the student must be in good academic standing with at least 18 semester credit hours completed in the program. Eligible students must also pass English 5327 (MARC Practicum) with a grade of B or higher prior to holding a Teaching Assistantship.

9 hours	(Required Courses)
18 hours	(Elective Courses)
6 hours	(Thesis – See details about non-thesis option above)

33 hours	Required for the MARC
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Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (TAs) are graduate students in good standing who hold a graduate student appointment requiring the performance of duties such as classroom instruction, grading papers and examinations, and course planning and supervision. Students who hold a Graduate Teaching Assistantship are required to hold regular office hours during the semester. Typically, the English department will provide those holding a Graduate Teaching Assistantship with a syllabus for each course taught.

Teaching Assistantships should be considered as a reward for advanced graduate students in good academic standing. Assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis. A student is awarded the Graduate Teaching Assistantship for a single semester. After completion of the first term of appointment, a student may apply for another term. Successful service in a Graduate Teaching Assistantship position does not guarantee re-appointment.

In order to apply for a Teaching Assistantship, the student must visit the Graduate Director to fill out the application form. To be selected as a TA, one must meet all of the following requirements. The best candidates will have qualifications that exceed the minimum standards, enumerated below:

- 1) Completion of baccalaureate degree requirements at a regionally accredited U.S. institution or an institution in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, or the United Kingdom at which English is the medium of instruction.
- 2) Regular enrollment in at least 2 courses per semester that count toward the MARC degree.
- 3) A cumulative graduate GPA of at least 3.5.
- 4) Successful completion of English 5327 (MARC Practicum) prior to holding a Graduate Teaching Assistantship.
- 5) Completion of 18 semester credit hours toward the MARC degree prior to holding a Graduate Teaching Assistantship..

Students holding a Graduate Teaching Assistantship are required to attend mandatory training sessions at the start of the semester. They will also be required to attend occasional scheduled meetings with the Graduate Director. Students holding a Graduate Teaching Assistantship serve at the discretion of the UHD Department of English and will be regularly observed by the faculty of the MARC degree and are expected to conform to department standards for the administration of courses and to affirmatively respond to faculty suggestions and feedback.

Graduate Certificate in Composition Studies

Adam Ellwanger, PhD, Graduate Director
ellwanera@uhd.edu 1041 S, 713-226-5577

In combination with a master's degree in any field or as a non-degree seeking student, this certificate can provide credentials needed to teach dual credit courses in Texas high schools or lower-division writing courses at local universities and community colleges.*

Overview

- Courses taught by faculty with extensive experience teaching composition and writing courses
- 18 hours of graduate coursework (6 courses)
- All evening courses during Fall/Spring that meet 1x/week; Summer session times vary
- Part-time or full-time options available: full-time can complete in as little as 2 semesters (Fall and Spring); part-time can combine Fall, Spring, and Summer options
- Required courses are relevant to the challenges of teaching college writing in Texas – teaching that must negotiate different levels of academic preparation, language differences, and cultural differences by incorporating diverse pedagogical strategies

Required Courses (3 hours each):

- English 5301 – Contemporary Composition Theory
- English 5302 – Multicultural Composition Pedagogy
- English 5317 – Rhetorical Theory and Criticism
- English 5327 – Teaching College Writing Practicum (students with documented English teaching experience, at the college level, may petition the MARC committee to waive this required course. In the event that the waiver is granted, the student will need to take an additional elective 3 SCH course).
- 2 electives (6 hours total) from selected courses in the MARC program such as: Theories of Developmental Writing and Reading, Strategies for Writing Assessment, Studies in Literacy, etc.

Application Process and Materials

Deadlines: Fall = July 15; Spring = November 15; Summer = April 20

- Complete the Apply Texas general application form (www.applytexas.org)
(For applicants not pursuing the full MA and only the Certificate, please ensure to specifically select the Certificate in Composition Studies option in the drop-down portion under the program).
- Prepare a personal statement of 500-750 words (prompt in the Apply Texas portal)
- Submit all official college transcripts (applicants seeking admission to this program must hold a BA, BS or an equivalent degree from an accredited college or university in the US or overseas)
- Submit a writing sample of 10-15 pages
If you don't already have one, we ask that you compose a researched argument-driven academic essay of 10-15 pages on a topic of general interest using a generally recognized academic style sheet for references (MLA, APA, or Chicago).

Contacts

Adam Ellwanger, PhD - Program Director: ellwanger@uhd.edu, 713-226-5577

Stephanie Allen, MPA - Assistant Director of Graduate Studies: allens@uhd.edu, 713-226-5554

* Each institution establishes its own interpretations for SACSCOC credentials for its faculty; we encourage you to check with your institution before choosing courses in the program in consultation with the Program Director.

Master of Science in Technical Communication

Godwin Agboka, PhD, Graduate Director

AgbokaG@uhd.edu S1065, 713-223-7920

The Master of Science in Technical Communication, an outgrowth of our well-established undergraduate program in Professional Writing, provides graduates with writing, design, and management skills based on rhetorical principles. Students will gain publication and production skills, study project management and the ethical and global implications of professional communication, participate in research, conduct audience analyses and usability tests, and create web sites and online help.

This program is valuable for a range of candidates:

- Professional writers, public relations and communications specialists, or corporate training professionals seeking promotion to managerial positions or interested in teaching technical writing in high schools or community colleges
- Practitioners in science, technology, energy, public health, and other specialized fields with the goal of expanding employment options
- Undergraduates interested in an applied master's level degree, either to increase their employability or to pursue a doctoral degree in technical communication

Program Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with an MS in Technical Communication will demonstrate professional level skills or knowledge in the following areas:

- **Documentation production and project management:** Write and edit communication management related documents in print and electronic genres.
- **Rhetorical analysis:** Apply rhetorical principles to evaluate and produce documents.
- **Global awareness:** Analyze multicultural implications of professional communication.
- **Research methodologies:** Conduct and report research in communication management using appropriate methods and/or critical theories.
- **Technological aptitude:** Use current technology to produce effective documents.

Admission Overview

Admission is competitive and selective. Candidates must demonstrate that they possess the abilities, interests, and qualities necessary to successfully complete the program and the potential to contribute to the fields of professional writing or technical communication.

Admission Checklist

If seeking admission to the MSTC program, candidates will need to provide the following application materials for review by the Graduate Advisory Committee. All materials should be submitted to the UHD Graduate Admissions Office: www.uhd.edu/admissions/graduate.html

- A completed *Apply Texas* application form.
- 1000-word essay that addresses the following questions in detail. Support your views with reasons and examples drawn from your reading, experience, observations, or academic studies.
 - Why do you want to study professional writing and technical communication?
 - What topics or issues in the field might you want to study further and why?
 - What qualifies you to embark upon this field of study? What experience do you have in this field?
 - How do you plan to use your degree
- Official transcripts from all degree-granting institutions.
- Résumé detailing the applicant’s work experience and education and demonstrating his/her document design and organizational skills.
- Two letters of recommendation and recommendation forms from individuals acquainted with the applicant’s work and academic potential.
- For students with a GPA lower than 3.0, standard GRE scores on the Verbal, Quantitative, and Writing sections.
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score, if the applicant is a graduate of a university where English is not the primary language of instruction (preferred TOEFL scores are as follows: an internet-based score of 86, a computer-based score of 250, or a paper-based score of 600).

MSTC Admission Process

The Graduate Advisory Committee will:

- Review complete applications files (see above).
- Evaluate applications using a matrix based on GPA, GRE score, relevant course work or experience, recommendations, and other written materials in the applicant’s file.
- Use the results of this evaluation to determine if the candidate is accepted into the program or not.
- Notify the candidates, in writing, of the committee’s decision.

Application Fee

- A non-refundable application fee of \$35.00 must be submitted with the application.
- Applicants mailing in the application should include a check or money order.
- Applicants submitting the application in person should pay the fee at the Cashier’s Office before going to Admissions.
- The application, documents, and fee will be valid for one year.

Official Transcripts

Have official transcripts sent to the Office of Admissions from all colleges or universities previously attended. A transcript is official when it is indicated as such by the issuing institution and sent directly from that institution to UHD. Non-U.S. transcripts must be evaluated by an evaluation service recognized by UHD. Please refer to the UHD web site www.uhd.edu/admissions/naces.htm for a list of suggested credential evaluation services.

Test Scores

If a candidate's cumulative undergraduate GPA is below 3.0 or the candidate's baccalaureate degree is from an institution that is not regionally accredited, s/he is required to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Official scores must be sent to the Office of Admissions. Scores are valid only for tests taken within the last five years. To have GRE scores reported to UHD, use **R6922** as the graduate institution code (found in the GRE booklet). You may register for the GRE on-line at www.gre.org

Letters of Reference and Recommendation Forms

The required written references must come from two individuals who know the candidate and his/her work well. It is expected that they will comment objectively on the applicant's qualifications. The candidate should supply each evaluator with the recommendation form and a self-addressed envelope. The evaluator is expected to enclose the completed recommendation form and a signed typed letter of support. The envelope should be sealed with the recommender's signature across the seal. The candidate then submits the unopened envelope along with all other application materials to the Office of Admissions. Recommendation forms are available in the Office of Admissions or online at:

https://www.uhd.edu/academics/humanities/graduate-programs/master-science-technical-communication/Documents/GradApp_MSPWTC_RECOMMEND.pdf

Graduate Certificate in Plain Language

Godwin Agboka, PhD, Graduate Director
AgbokaG@uhd.edu S1065, 713-223-7920

Plain language is a set of guidelines used to simplify and clarify communications addressed to the general public. The guidelines include the use of simpler vocabulary, shorter sentences, lists, active voice, and shorter paragraphs, to name a few.

The Plain Writing Act of 2010 and the Executive Order 13263 in 2011 mandated clear communication in plain writing from all federal government agencies. However, plain language is an approach that is effectively used in many other areas, fields, and sectors besides federal government including

- Medical and health communication
- Web design and web writing
- Public relations and marketing
- Nonprofits

- Business communication
- Science and engineering
- Law
- State and local government offices, in addition to federal government

The Graduate Certificate in Plain Language is the first and only program in an institution of higher education in the nation. This graduate certificate will enhance your writing, design, and organization skills which can increase your employability and/or help you reach new heights in your career.

UHD is the first and only institution of higher education in the country that offers such a certificate program. If you are a professional working for an organization that distributes information to the general public, you need plain language skills.

Certificate Admission Process

The application deadlines are as follows:

Fall semester: July 15

Spring semester: December 1

To apply, complete the following steps:

- Complete Apply Texas application form.
 - Create a new Graduate School Admission application.
 - Choose "Technical Communication" as your major.
 - On Page 2, Educational Background,
 - under Question 3, Initial degree and Ultimate degree, choose "Certificate."
 - under Question 4, choose "Graduate Certificate in Plain Language."
 - Pay \$35 application fee
- Send your official transcript confirming your undergraduate (or graduate) degree to Graduate Admissions. If you are a UHD student, you can submit your transcript electronically through your online account.
- Email the following to the MSTC Degree Director:
 - a short statement (200-300 words) explaining why you are interested in the certificate and how you will use your newly acquired knowledge and skills in a given setting
 - your résumé detailing your work experience and education

NOTE: In the subject line, please specify "Plain Language Certificate Application."

The MSTC Graduate Advisory Committee will evaluate your application using a matrix based on the materials that are required for admission. The MSTC Degree Director will notify you, in writing, of the committee's decision.

Graduate Certificate in History

Gene Preuss, PhD, Graduate Certificate Director
Preussg@uhd.edu 1041 S, 713-226-5577

Graduate Certificate in History

Gene Preuss, PhD, Graduate Certificate Director
Preussg@uhd.edu 1041 S, 713-226-5577

This online certificate program is designed to provide 18 graduate semester credit hours in history, a necessary credential in Texas for teaching dual credit (high school/college credit) and lower-level college courses in U.S. History. To be enrolled in this program, students must either hold a master's degree or be simultaneously enrolled in the MAT program with "History" selected as his/her "area of specialization."

The program's curriculum requires students to complete a course in historical research methods, which has a U.S. content focus; four graduate courses in U.S. History; and one graduate course in non-U.S. history. The courses are taught by nationally recognized scholars who regularly teach the U.S. history surveys as well as advanced seminars in their respective specialties. This program is tailored for high school history teachers in its coverage of (1) the breadth of U.S. history content; (2) the major debates that engage American historians; and (3) the advanced research skills used by the modern historian.

Course Offerings (3 hours each):

- HIST 5302 – The Historian's Craft
- HIST 5304 – From Colonization to Revolution, 1607 – ca. 1800
- HIST 5310 – Nazi Germany
- HIST 5311 – Studies in the History of American Education
- HIST 5321 – Studies in Mexican-American History
- HIST 5331 – History and Nostalgia: Historical Interpretation and the Culture Wars
- HIST 6301 – Seminar in Modern European History
- HIST 6302 – Seminar in U.S. History
- HIST 6303 – Seminar in Texas History
- HIST 6304 – Slavery and Freedom in the United States
- HIST 6320 – Slavery in the Americas Proseminar

ADMISSION INFORMATION - Master's Degree Holders

The application process varies depending upon whether the prospective student already holds a master's degree or only a bachelor's degree. The information below pertains to those who currently hold a Master's degree. Please visit our website for further information for Non-Master's Degree Holders at: www.uhd.edu/academics/humanities/graduate-programs/Pages/Graduate-Certificate-in-History.aspx

Application Requirements for Master's Degree Holders

A master's degree in any field from a regionally accredited university or college.

A single-authored, research-oriented writing sample of approximately 2,000 words in length.

Foreign students whose transcripts reflect courses taught in a language other than English are required to submit TOEFL/ILTS scores.

Application Process for Master’s Degree Holders

Prospective graduate students who already hold a master’s degree will submit their application via Apply Texas. Once in the Apply Texas system, the appropriate application form can be found by selecting UHD-->Graduate Programs-->History Graduate Certificate.

The research paper sample must be submitted electronically to grtadmissions@uhd.edu.

TOEFL/ILTS scores and official transcripts from all post-secondary, regionally accredited institutions attended must be sent from the issuing agency to the Office of Admissions— Graduate Admissions; University of Houston-Downtown; One Main Street, Suite GSB 308; Houston, Texas 77002-1001 or to gradadmissions@uhd.edu. If students intends to submit an official hardcopy version, the documents must be in their original sealed envelope from the issuing agency.

Note: each institution (High School or Community College) establishes its own interpretations for SACSCOC credentials for its faculty. We encourage you to check with your institution before choosing courses in the program in consultation with the Program Director.

Contact

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact:

Stephanie M. Allen, MPA

Assistant Director of Graduate Studies

allens@uhd.edu

Suite S1011, 713-226-5554