The Center for Writing Studies (CWS) facilitates research and promotes graduate study in the areas of rhetoric, written composition, language, and literacy. CWS offers graduate students pursuing doctoral degrees in participating departments a program leading to a concentration in Writing Studies. Graduate students pursuing the concentration may be enrolled in the participating departments of English, Communication, Art and Design, Curriculum and Instruction, Library and Information Science, or other departments from across campus with the approval of the student’s home department.

Writing Studies Graduate Concentration

Participating Programs:

- Communication, PhD [link]
- Curriculum & Instruction, PhD [link]
- Educational Policy, Organization & Leadership, EdD [link]
- Educational Policy, Organization & Leadership, PhD [link]
- English, PhD [link]
- Information Sciences, PhD [link]

Graduate students may elect to pursue a concentration in Writing Studies at the PhD level. Students take two foundational courses for the concentration to introduce them to the field, along with two methodology courses to ready them for their research. The first pair of requirements (ENGL 505/CI 563; and one of the following theme-focused courses: ENGL 506/CI 564, ENGL 583/CI 566, ENGL 584/CI 569 or a 500-level course approved for this requirement by the CWS Graduate Programs Committee) provides a historical background in Writing Studies while at the same time assuring knowledge of current issues through the reading and analysis of texts that mark the field. The second pair of requirements (ENGL 582/CI 565 and a second approved methodology course) introduces students in depth to strands of writing studies research - historical, empirical, and theoretical. In addition, graduate students take two courses from across the university that focus on the study of writing but that also open up avenues for interdisciplinary inquiry, a key dimension of this area of study. English, Anthropology, Curriculum and Instruction, Library and Information Science, Educational Policy Studies, Sociology, Communication, and Art and Design are among the departments from which students commonly select courses.

Admission

Students are admitted into graduate study through their home departments and the Graduate College. Students may petition to add the concentration at the point of admission or after they have begun graduate study. The petition to add the concentration must be approved by the Center for Writing Studies, the home department, and the Graduate College. (Please note that the Department of English offers separate MA and PhD tracks specializing in Writing Studies; see the Department of English for admission requirements to these degree programs.)

Graduate students planning to concentrate in Writing Studies must fulfill the degree requirements of their home department in addition to the Writing Studies’ requirements. In consultation with the home department, students determine whether the Writing Studies’ concentration is appropriate for their plan of study. Students should meet with a faculty advisor in their own department and also set up a meeting to discuss their program of concentration with the Director of the Center for Writing Studies.

Faculty Research Interests

Specific faculty interests include research in literacy studies, digital media, rhetorical studies, globalization and language, disability studies, cultural-historical activity theory, feminist theory and pedagogy, genre theory, technical communication and other areas of study related to the development of language and policy.

Facilities and Resources

CWS has a multidisciplinary group of core and affiliated faculty. It is home to the campus’s Writing across the Curriculum Program and the Writers Workshop, a campus-wide tutorial facility; a sponsor of an electronic discussion group on writing across the curriculum, and a co-founder of the University of Illinois Writing Project (UIWP), a site of the National Writing Project.

Financial Aid

Graduate students may receive assistantships as consultants in the Writers Workshop, as teachers in the Writing Across Media courses, as faculty assistants to CWS programs, and as research assistants to CWS faculty.

For additional details and requirements refer to the department’s concentration requirements [link] and the Graduate College Handbook [link].

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 505</td>
<td>Writing Studies &amp; ENGL 583 and Topics Writ Pedagogy &amp; Design or ENGL Topics Discourse and Writing</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 582</td>
<td>Topics Research and Writing</td>
<td>8</td>
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& one other methods course approved by the Director of the Center for Writing Studies

Elective hours from approved CWS list in consultation with your advisor 8

Total Hours 24

Other Requirements

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Other requirements may overlap</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students must prepare and deliver a lecture based on their research to faculty and students for the CWS Colloquium Series: Graduate Research Forum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The dissertation must demonstrably focus on Writing Studies (with a topic approved by the CWS Director) and be guided by CWS-affiliated faculty that serve on the dissertation committee.</td>
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