

The WRTC Graduate Program Application Process

Online applications accepted at <https://www.jmu.edu/grad/prospective/index.shtml> from **Oct. 15 – April 1**

General Overview

Required Materials

- A 2-3 page research statement discussing how your goals align to the graduate program and faculty
- 20-30 pages (or equivalent) of academic or professional documents (may be print, electronic, digital, multi-modal, etc.) comprised of one or more manuscripts/items
- Three letters of recommendation from faculty or supervisors
- Official transcripts from all undergraduate institutions

Review Process

- Each applicant's materials are evaluated holistically by a committee of graduate faculty
- No one item can make or break an application
- Applicants will be notified in mid-February of their application status

Details about Materials

Research Statement

- Should explain how the graduate program relates to your prior experience
- Should identify a few specific faculty whose research agendas speak to your own interests (see reverse)
- Should explain how the program fits into your long-term professional/academic goals

Document Samples

- Should demonstrate your strengths as a communicator
- Should complement your research statement
- May include an overall statement explaining the context and relevancy of the documents

Letters of Recommendation

- Should be from past or present faculty members in any discipline who know your abilities
- May also be from current or recent supervisors in a professional employment or internship position
- Should focus on your communication abilities

Transcripts

- An undergraduate major in WRTC or the humanities is **not** required
- Applicants will ideally have a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Grades from junior/senior years have greater weight
- Grades from writing/communication/humanities courses have greater weight

Selected WRTC Graduate Faculty and Research Interests

- **Traci Zimmerman**, Director of WRTC, conducts research on U.S. Intellectual Property Law, the understanding of “fair use,” and attitudes about open access. She is also interested in the “post-human” moment: what it means to be human in an increasingly networked and computer-mediated world particularly with regard to identity, empathy, accountability, memory and privacy.
- **Michael Klein**, Director of Graduate Studies, performs research in the relationship between popular culture and science and technology, narrative in medicine, rhetorics of health and medicine, and archives and cultural memory.
- **Jennifer Almjeld**, Associate Director of Graduate Studies, studies and teaches classes in the areas of feminist rhetoric, computers and writing, and online identity. Her most recent scholarship includes a study of the rhetorical practices of online dating, embodiment in digital research and girl video gamers.
- **Angela Crow** divides her time between mobility and digital literacy studies, risk assessment and health concerns, and work with writing program administration. Her interests also include big data, surveillance, and assessment concerns, and social networking and identity constructions.
- **Lori Beth De Hertogh** researches intersections between feminism, rhetorics of health and medicine, and technology. Her current work examines how online communities influence women’s healthcare choices and experiences regarding pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding. To learn more about Lori Beth's scholarly activities, visit her website at www.loribethdehertogh.com.
- **Susan Ghiaciuc** teaches courses in, and centers her research on, the topics of disability studies, ethics, and non-dominant discourses.
- **Scott Lunsford** performs research in areas that include the intersections of rhetoric and mobility, material rhetorics, genre studies, multimodality, and digital scholarship.
- **Seán McCarthy** teaches classes and conducts research at the intersections amongst writing studies, digital media studies and civic engagement in theory and practice.
- **Cathryn Molloy** is currently researching rhetorics of health and medicine; rhetorics of the behavioral health sciences; rhetorics of the everyday; feminist rhetorics; and linguistic diversity.
- **Sarah O'Connor** studies in the areas of narrative and service learning, service learning and first year writing, rhetoric and the changing media environment, prison writing, and digital writing in the composition classroom.
- **Alex Parrish**'s research and teaching interests include: animal rhetorics, environmental writing, rhetorics of science and technology, histories of rhetoric, critical animal studies, cross-cultural communication, and biosemiotics. He is currently finishing his second monograph, *A Hoot in the Light: Illuminating the Sensory Modes of Animal Rhetorics*, which is under contract with the University of Chicago Press.
- **Elizabeth Pass** performs a majority of her research in hypertext theory and its application, social media, web design, digital storytelling, and the usability and accessibility of these realms. She is currently working on projects that center around art & design, design & music, augmented reality, and usability testing accessibility and disability tools.
- **Vanessa Rouillon** examines the rhetorical work of African American communities in the early twentieth century. Her scholarship explores the intersections of race, rhetoric, and identity, as communities advance and support a particular rhetorical vision in overwhelmingly white locations.
- **Michael Smith** performs research in areas that include personal narrative, narrative journalism, ethnography, ethics in communication, place studies, attention management and attention economies, and graphic novels.
- **Jim Zimmerman** studies contemporary American rhetorical practices in business and professional life, with a special emphasis on “presence at work,” “self-regulation,” and “self-emancipation.”