**Description:** Rhetoric & Composition/Professional & Technical Writing (RC/PTW) covers a vast intellectual territory that draws on more than 3000 years of history and touches on every geographical area of the world. Clearly one reading list isn’t going to be able to do justice to the world of possibilities. Therefore, we have limited our list’s focus to ideas and concepts that students are likely to encounter in courses offered in the MA program (ENGL 257 or ENGL 259) and/or in the Professional & Technical Writing certificate program. It’s unlikely that students will have read all of these texts in those classes, but it is very likely that students will have read some of these texts and should be able to draw on their RC/PTW coursework to read the others without excessive difficulty.

Questions that students encounter on the exam will allow students to focus their attention more toward Rhetoric & Composition or Professional & Technical Writing in keeping with courses they’ve taken; however, students opting to take this portion of the exam will need to read texts, familiarize themselves with concepts, and be able to refer thoughtfully to texts and concepts from both sections on the exam. The majority of these texts can be accessed through SJSU’s library. The exceptions are marked below with an asterisk (*), and we are working to acquire those for the library.

**Rhetoric & Composition Readings**


**Professional and Technical Writing Readings**

Sample questions:

**Rhet/Comp**

In selecting readings for the MA exam in Rhetoric and Composition, we intentionally chose texts that argue for multiple, in some cases competing, definitions of rhetoric and/or composition. In fact, arguing over what we should be arguing over is a central and fundamental aspect of the field because our central practices and values are wrapped up in perpetually shifting situations—that is, in relation to the realities and responsibilities of writing and speaking in specific contexts, with specific purposes, for specific audiences. In a short essay, refer to four or more readings from the exam list to 1) identify what you see as two or three most important components of a definition of rhetoric and/or composition, and 2) make an argument for why those are the most important components.

**PTW**

In technical writing and editing, we often say that the technical writer is, first and foremost, an advocate for the reader. In a short essay 1) refer to multiple readings from the exam list and your experience to discuss what it means to be “an advocate for the reader,” and 2) discuss the technical writer’s specific role in advocating for the reader in two topics in technical writing (such as UX/document design, technical editing, content writing, writing for professional publications, etc.).

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