

RALSTON COLLEGE



COURSE CATALOG

2024-2025



BULL ST
W. GORDON ST.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Students,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Ralston College, and to its MA in the Humanities. This course catalog provides important information to help orient you as a new student; its general guidelines and calendar will also serve as a ready point of reference throughout the year ahead. My colleagues and I hope your time at the College will be transformative for you, both academically and personally.

Yours truly,



Stephen Blackwood, PhD
President
Ralston College

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Ralston College is to provide a rigorous, transformative education in the humanities that acknowledges the dignity and realizes the potential of the human individual, and to revive thereby the conditions of a free and flourishing culture.

The College exists to share the riches of humanistic inquiry with students enrolled in its degree programs and, more broadly, with all those who seek truth with courage.

Ralston College is an independent institution devoted to freedom of thought, speech, and association. It has no political or religious affiliations, and does not accept government funds.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

Ralston College is devoted to higher education and the advancement of the arts and sciences. The College's chief aim is that its students come better to understand themselves and the world around them. The College provides a place to think hard about fundamental human questions in the context of a community devoted to friendship and freedom of thought.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Ralston College is open for business Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. This typical schedule may vary depending on the needs and events of the College.

HOLIDAYS

The College will be closed for the following 11 holidays:

- New Year's Day (January 1st)
- Martin Luther King, Jr Day (the third Monday of January)
- Presidents' Day (the third Monday of February)
- St Patrick's Day (March 17th)
- Memorial Day (the last Monday of May)
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Labor Day (the first Monday of September)
- Columbus Day (the second Monday in October)
- Thanksgiving Day (the fourth Thursday of November)
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day (December 25th)

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

- Term I: August 1st, 2024 to September 30th, 2024
- Term II: October 21st, 2024 to December 13th, 2024
- Term III: January 6th, 2025 to February 28th, 2025
- Term IV: March 17th, 2025 to May 9th, 2025
- Final Exams: April 21st, 2025 to May 9th, 2025
- Graduation: May 17th, 2025

FACILITIES

The College operates several buildings in downtown Savannah. The meeting times and locations of any particular class will be listed in the syllabus for each class. Seminars and lectures are normally held at the Atheneum (26 E. Gaston St). Other student and staff spaces are located at the Cicero House (17 W. McDonough St).

ACCREDITATION

Ralston College is authorized to operate and to grant the degree of "Master of Arts in the Humanities"

by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission (GNPEC). Ralston College is seeking accreditation from the New England Commission of Higher Education. In 2023, the New England Commission of Higher Education determined that Ralston College is eligible to proceed with an application for candidacy for accreditation within two years. A determination of eligibility is not candidacy or accreditation, nor does it indicate a likelihood of eventual accreditation. Questions about eligibility and the accreditation process should be directed to the President of the Commission.

LEGAL STATUS

Ralston College is a private non-profit institution of higher learning incorporated under the laws of the State of Georgia as a self-perpetuating corporation, and has been determined to be a 501(c)(3) public charity by the Internal Revenue Service. Ralston College is authorized by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission to confer academic degrees. The College is fully independent and has a self-governing board.

CONTACT DETAILS

The physical and legal address of Ralston College is 17 W. McDonough Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401. Its postal address is P.O. Box 8302, Savannah, Georgia 31412-8302. General correspondence may be directed to this address or by email to ralstoncollege@ralston.ac. Applications for grades and transcripts can be made through the College's Populi portal (<https://ralstoncollege.populiweb.com>).

PROGRAM OF STUDY AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

MA PROGRAM

Ralston currently offers one program, an MA in the Humanities, of approximately 35 students, which takes one year to complete. This program is guided fundamentally and thoroughly by the mission of the College to provide transformative and rigorous education in the humanities.

The MA in the Humanities focuses on the Greek Language and the careful reading and unfettered discussion of core texts, along with works of art, that trace the development of Western thought and culture.

CURRICULAR GOALS

The aim of the MA in the Humanities is to prepare students to think deeply about what it means to live a good and meaningful life. It does so through the study of the Greek language and through the analysis and interpretation of philosophical, theological, religious, and literary texts and the study of the artistic

and cultural achievements that have shaped Western culture. This includes reading texts in the languages in which they were originally composed, most notably ancient Greek, as the foundational language of Western culture. The program provides students with both an advanced knowledge of the Greek language and with an understanding of perennial metaphysical, moral, and political arguments and ideas and of their historical development from ancient times to the present.

Each year the curriculum focuses on a particular theme; in 2024-2025, the theme is “Nature”.

MA WORKLOAD

The program consists of four instructional terms. The first term is devoted to a Greek language and culture immersion program in Greece (8+ hours per day). Within each of the three terms in Savannah, instruction will be delivered via literature and culture lectures (4 hours per week), through slow-reading seminars (5 hours per week), and instruction in the Greek language (4 hours).

COURSEWORK

Overview

In order to be admitted to (i.e. to be awarded) the degree of Master of Arts in the Humanities, candidates must complete four eight-week terms:

Term I consists of immersive instruction in the Greek language and Hellenic art, thought, and culture. It is an intensive program that meets full days, six days per week for eight weeks.

Term II focuses on the ancient and classical periods. It lasts for eight weeks with Greek instruction twice per week for two hours; slow-reading philosophy seminars twice per week for two and a half hours; and a lecture course on literature and culture twice per week for ninety minutes.

Term III focuses on the medieval and Renaissance periods. It lasts for eight weeks with Greek instruction twice per week for two hours; slow-reading philosophy seminars twice per week for two and a half hours; and a lecture course on literature and culture twice per week for ninety minutes.

Term IV focuses on the modern and contemporary periods. It lasts for eight weeks. For the first five weeks it has Greek instruction twice per week for two hours; slow-reading philosophy seminars twice per week for two and a half hours; and a lecture course on literature and culture twice per week for ninety minutes. The final three weeks are devoted to final examinations.

Course Descriptions

Greek Language Residency (Term I)

The Greek Residency Program of the first term introduces students to Attic Greek and Modern Greek simultaneously, and also covers topics in Greek history, art, literature, and architecture. Students receive a thorough and analytical introduction to the grammar and syntax of both languages, and also read and explicate extended passages. By the end of the course, students are able to read basic texts and to express themselves on a large variety of topics in both languages.

Greek Instruction (Terms II-IV)

Students read, explicate, and discuss texts in the original Greek. The texts complement the themes and topics of the seminars and lectures for each term, and may include selections from Homer, Plato, Aristotle, the Septuagint and New Testament, as well as from other ancient, medieval, and modern authors.

Slow-Reading Philosophy Seminars (Terms II-IV)

The slow-reading seminars present a small number of difficult and important texts. The course begins with a close study of ancient philosophical and theological texts, with a principal focus on the Platonic dialogues and Aristotelian treatises relevant to the theme of the course. In the third term, the course moves into the medieval period, with a special focus on Augustine and Dante. The year will conclude with a close reading of modern philosophical texts, including works by Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche.

Literature, Art, and Culture Lectures (Terms II-IV)

This lecture course traces the conceptions of nature through the literature, visual and performing arts, architecture, and other expressions of culture through the ancient (Term II), medieval (Term III), and modern (Term IV) periods.

INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH

The MA program aims to present a history of human endeavor in diverse fields by means of the reading of core texts with supplementary study of works of art, music, and architecture. In general the emphasis will be on confronting these works as directly as possible, with the principal focus on primary, rather than secondary, literature. It must be understood that the reading load for this program is very heavy.

The course is suitable only for those willing to spend many hours each day reading difficult texts as well as thinking and talking with others about them. It should also be understood that the course assumes a high level of English-language facility. Those who are not already skilled in reading and writing English at a very advanced level will not flourish in this program and should not enroll in it. No knowledge of a

foreign language is currently required upon admission, but students should be ready to engage in serious and sustained study of Greek on a daily basis.

The President, Dr Stephen Blackwood, BA (Vind.), MA (Dal.), PhD (Emory), and the External Academic Dean, Dr Michael Hurley, MA (St. And.), PhD (Cantab.), will oversee the supervision of instructors and teaching methods. Other faculty, as described on the College website, will teach courses. Certain lectures, and series of lectures, will be given by visiting faculty with expertise in particular subjects.

Students can also expect to benefit from the extraordinary intellectual accomplishments, depth, and diversity represented by the College's Board of Visitors as well as from the College's international network of other academics, scholars, philosophers, writers, musicians, poets, architects, scientists, and specialists of many fields.

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

ADMISSION TO THE MA PROGRAM

Using a broad range of criteria and a combination of traditional and innovative methods of evaluation, Ralston College admits students based on merit while giving due consideration both to demonstrated achievements and distinction and to clear aptitude and scholarly promise. We also strive to cultivate a cohesive collegiate environment where every student is able to press themselves to the very limits of their abilities in a community that values friendship and freedom of thought.

Candidates who apply to Ralston College for admissions to its MA in the Humanities program are required to submit a curriculum vitae and an application essay; at the first stage, unofficial transcripts may also be supplied. These documents are reviewed by the Admissions Committee and promising candidates are advanced to the next round, at which they are invited to submit official copies of their transcripts, and a list of academic references. After a further review, finalists may be invited to participate in online interviews. Offers of admission are made thereafter.

ORIENTATION

Students will receive pre-arrival documents prior to the start of Term I in Greece and Term II in Savannah. Additional orientation to the program, facilities, policies, personnel, and expectations of the College will take place at the beginning of Term I in Greece and Term II in Savannah.

POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Ralston College admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the College. Ralston College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. This statement is made pursuant to IRS Revenue Procedure 75-50 and is not intended to exclude any category not mentioned in it.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

ASSESSMENTS

Students will be assigned a mark of “fail” or “pass” by the instructors of each course on the basis of their participation and performance on the assignments particular to each course. For more detailed information, see the syllabus provided by the course instructor.

Students must pass all coursework for each term in order to continue to the subsequent term.

Students must pass all coursework for all terms to be admitted to the final examinations.

Any student who has not completed his or her coursework, and who has not otherwise made arrangements with an instructor to do so, will be notified that he or she has been placed on academic probation. This status will not be lifted until the incomplete work has been completed to the satisfaction of the instructor.

Students who do not pass the assessments at the end of each term will be given the opportunity for a second attempt. This attempt has to be successfully completed by the beginning of the following term or, in Term IV, by the beginning of the final exam period. Until that time, such students are put on academic probation. Examiners also reserve the right to offer a viva voce examination, in cases where the result of the written examination is unclear or in doubt: this provision will be used only sparingly, but is entirely at the discretion of the examiners, where examiners have reason to believe the examination did not yield a true and fair account of the candidates ability and effort. Examples include: suspected plagiarism, where a candidate was unable to complete the examination, or where the candidate took the examination under exceptional circumstances (such as a recent bereavement).

FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Students who pass all courses of the Program will be eligible to undergo two final examinations: one in the Greek language, and a second in philosophy, literature, and culture on the curriculum of the entire

academic year. The final Greek exam will be a sat examination; the final philosophy, literature, and culture examination will be a written, take-home examination.

GRADING SCHEME

A student who passes both the final Greek examination and the final philosophy, literature, and culture examination will be admitted to the degree of Master of Arts. The grading system has four levels: “fail,” “pass,” “high pass,” and “distinction.” While the nomenclature for these four levels of distinction may vary in the way it is described (it may, for instance, be rendered in Latin on the degree diploma), the four-level system of grading is consistent. Students are graded separately between the two elements of the course and must, at a minimum, gain a pass in both elements of the course to gain an MA degree. Students who have met the minimum passing grade are formally recognized (in the College’s records and in their degree diplomas) to have passed with whatever grade they have achieved in the separate elements of their degree: for instance, “Passed with a Distinction in Greek,” or “Passed with a Distinction in both Philosophy and literature and Greek,” or “awarded a High Pass in Greek and a Distinction in Philosophy and Literature”; and so on, to reflect their grades in the two separate elements of the course. The precise wording for describing and differentiating the grading levels may vary, but the rationale for how the grades will be recorded within the College and on the students’ degree diplomas will be consistent. It should be noted that, in order to sit for the final examinations at the end of this degree program’s course of study, a student must pass all of the relevant coursework in the preceding terms; both the courses themselves and the assignments which they entail will be awarded grades of “pass” or “fail.”

ATTENDANCE

Students must attend all seminars and lectures to remain in good academic standing. If a student cannot attend a given seminar or lecture, he or she must inform one of the instructors.

MAKE-UP WORK

If a student is not able to complete an examination or assignment by a given deadline, he or she must contact the instructor in good time beforehand – urgent extenuating circumstances notwithstanding – to arrange to make up for any incomplete work. Instructors will make reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis. See also the assessment policy outlined above, which includes the discretionary provision of a viva voce examination to supplement, but also – in exceptional cases – to stand in for the written work where the written work has not been completed.

PLAGIARY

Academic integrity is an intrinsic necessity of the academic enterprise and thus of the College itself. Violations of academic integrity will be considered with the utmost seriousness and, pending investigation and confirmation by the Honor Council and Hebdomadal Board, will result in penalties up to and including dismissal from the program and expulsion from the College.

ACADEMIC PROBATION OR DISMISSAL

Suspected cases of plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity are investigated first by the instructor, then by the Honor Council, and then, if confirmed, referred for discipline to the Hebdomadal Board.

TRANSFER CREDIT

It will not be possible for credit to be given for academic work accomplished at other institutions, nor should it be assumed that other institutions will grant credit for work performed at Ralston College (though of course this is in any case a determination to be made by the other institution).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION

The annual tuition fee is \$60,000. This amount will be credited to the accounts of students on full scholarship to cover the full cost of tuition.

FINANCIAL AID AND EMPLOYMENT

Students will be eligible for a number of full or partial scholarships for tuition, housing stipends for room and board in Savannah, and, for students in highly extraordinary financial circumstances, supplementary financial aid to assist with remaining costs, as well as a limited number of part-time work-study positions. Information about scholarships will be sent to admitted students; information about the possibility of further financial aid is available upon request.

REFUNDS

Ralston College will refund all monies paid if requested to do so within three days of the payment being made (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and federal and state holidays). If a student should withdraw at some later point a refund will be made (prorated from the date of formal initiation of the withdrawal process) as long as at least 50% of the program is still in the future (in the 2024-2025 academic year, this means that the written notice by means of which the withdrawal process is intended to be initiated must be received by the College before noon on January 3rd, 2025, prior to the beginning of Term IV.)

No refunds will be issued for scholarships awarded by the College to pay tuition and related fees. This tuition refund policy does not apply to medical or compassionate withdrawals. In some cases, partial tuition adjustments or non-refundable credits may be granted, however, this will depend on each individual student's circumstances.

STUDENT INFORMATION

READMISSION

Students dismissed for reasons of academic performance or for non-academic reasons may make an application for readmission to the Hebdomadal Board.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The following steps are prescribed for students who wish to lodge a complaint about Ralston College or anyone under its aegis.

First, it is almost always best that one first attempts an informal resolution by means of frank conversation with those involved. Complaints regarding academic matters (such as, e.g., grades, timelines), should first be addressed to the Instructor and, subsequently, to the Director of the MA program.

If an informal solution should prove unsuccessful or, in academic matters, the above mentioned procedure has been exhausted without resolution, a formal process, if desired, may be initiated by submitting to the College's Delegate for Complaints, Ms Sonal Tolman (sonal.tolman@ralston.ac), a Letter of Complaint containing an account of the grievance; one may also wish to indicate in the letter one's desired outcome.

Upon receipt of the Letter, the Delegate shall review the Complaint and contact the student making the Complaint within ten business days to verify receipt of the Letter and to clarify any matters that are unclear. The Delegate will then undertake to investigate and evaluate the Complaint and will endeavor to make a determination respecting it within twenty-five business days from the date upon which the Letter was received.

If the Delegate is for any reason not able to make a determination within twenty-five business days, the Delegate shall refer the matter to the Hebdomadal Board. Under normal circumstances, however, the Delegate shall provide the Complainant with written notification of the determination and any associated outcome.

The Complainant may, if desired, appeal this result in writing to the Hebdomadal Board, which shall respond in writing to the Appeal within fifteen business days. The members of the Hebdomadal Board are Dr Adam Rutledge (adam.rutledge@ralston.ac), Mr Tyus Butler Jr (tyus.butler@ralston.ac), and Dr Stephen Blackwood (sjb@ralston.ac). The decision of the Hebdomadal Board is final in the sense of not being subject to further appeal within the College.

However, the Complainant may, having exhausted the internal Complaint Procedure, file a complaint with the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission at <https://gnpec.georgia.gov/student-resources/complaints-against-institution> East Exchange Place, Suite 220, Tucker, GA 30084.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MA

In order to be awarded the degree of Master of Arts (*Magister Artium*), candidates for the degree must pass all courses (graded pass/fail) for all four terms as well as the final two written examinations, one in Greek Language, and one in philosophy, literature, and culture, which will together assess the student's comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the material covered in all courses over the entire year.

CURRICULAR RESOURCES

Ralston College possesses a library of books accessible to members of the College. This collection has been assembled primarily to support its teaching in the humanities. Recently, it has been supplemented by the addition of several private libraries. Of particular interest is the Charles and Annette Kratz Rare Book Collection.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Students will access course content, activities, and assessments through Ralston's online Learning Management System, Populi.

STUDENT RECORDS

The College is required to retain permanent student records containing, among other things, information about your attendance, grades, and transcripts. These records will be kept and accessible in Populi. Additional information about student records can be found in the College's [Privacy Policy](#).

CAREER COUNSELING AND PLACEMENT OF GRADUATES

The MA in the Humanities is not vocational in nature, in the sense that it is not designed to be preparatory for any specific career; however, its students will develop skills, disciplines, and habits of mind and life that are likely to be useful in a wide range of fields. Although the College does not aim to provide specific preparation for any particular job or field, faculty advisors and others at the College will offer advice and, to the extent that they can, assist students as they prepare for their next steps. One-on-one career counseling will be available upon request.

In 2023-24, the College admitted 25 students, 23 of whom graduated in May of 2024. Past alumni have frequently taken positions as teachers, pursued higher education in the humanities as well as professional fields, pursued scholarly research in the humanities, and occasionally elected to work for Ralston College in various capacities.

STUDENT LIFE

Students have numerous opportunities to develop themselves outside of academics. Single students who live in College-operated housing enjoy a unique camaraderie and fellowship as part of their living arrangements. Students also attend weekly College dinners, and have the option to attend lectures and arts events held by the College that are open to the public. Students have access to a College gymnasium and, in the event of need, mental health services. Each year, students organize themselves into numerous clubs and groups centered around the interests of the various members of the class. In past years, students put on a Greek play, recited and composed poetry with prominent visiting lecturers, and have taken up independent study of Latin.

HONOR CODE

Ralston College calls upon its students to behave with virtue and honor, in a manner befitting a community of free individuals devoted to humanistic inquiry and the cultivation of excellence. The College does not attempt to act *in loco parentis* nor to codify dishonorable conduct, but rather entrusts its students with the responsibility to govern themselves in accordance with the fundamental commitments of the College to truth, freedom, beauty, and fellowship.

Any act, at the College or away, that compromises the trust and honor of any member of the community, including violations of academic integrity, will be referred to the Honor Council, which may decide to elevate the violation to the Hebdomadal Board. The Hebdomadal Board may then dismiss or suspend students for reasons relating to their academic performance or for non-academic reasons, such as a refusal to comply with duly promulgated rules, ordinances, or the directives of those in authority, or for egregious or repeated violations of the principles and values of the College.

APPENDIX

PERSONNEL

Andrew Aviste
Buildings and Facilities Manager

Nicole Blackwood
Professor of Art History
Creative Director

Stephen Blackwood
President

Ashley Bradford
Chief Operating Officer

James Bryson
Professor of Philosophy
Director of the MA in the Humanities

Joseph Conlon
Professor of Classics
Director of the Greek Program

Anna Corrias
Professor of the History of Philosophy

Daniel Gallagher
Lecturer in Literature and Philosophy

Allison Gamble
Executive Assistant to the President

Jonathan Gardner
Teaching Fellow of Greek

Joshua Gomersall
Operations Associate

Bernadette Guthrie
Interim Director of Admissions,
Head of Research, and Student Advisor

Michael Hurley
External Academic Dean

Lydia Kapp
Greek Tutor

Stephen Mobley
Manager of Student Residences

Katie Rook
Lecturer in Rhetoric

Nathanael Spanos
Operations Associate

Stephen Tardif
Professor of Literature

Sonal Tolman
Registrar

Hilary Tucker
MA Program Assistant

Samson Woodthorp
Safety and Security Officer



