

MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

Program Director

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Program Description

The Master of Arts program in English offers courses in:

- literature research,
- history and theory;
- genre and figure studies;
- creative and professional writing;
- linguistics and composition theory;
- film; and
- the teaching of writing and literature.

Faculty members strive to offer students an understanding of the traditions of literary study and familiarity with the latest multicultural and interdisciplinary approaches. The M.A. in English prepares graduates to pursue opportunities in teaching, professional writing, and further graduate study.

Working closely with their advisors, students design individual programs to meet their interests and goals. Students are encouraged to explore a variety of approaches to the study of literature, language, and writing and to develop their abilities as readers, critics, writers, and teachers. The program requires 30 semester hours of coursework in English, during which students complete and present a thesis or portfolio of their representative work to a faculty review committee.

Admission Requirements

Students must have an undergraduate English major or other preparation judged satisfactory by the department and an grade point average in undergraduate study of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale). Applicants for the M.A. are required to submit a brief (750-1000 words) statement of purpose outlining their reasons for wishing to obtain the M.A. in English and how that degree fits into their professional goals. Applicants are also required to submit a short sample of academic prose, preferably an undergraduate class paper.

Graduate Certificates

Graduate certificates in professional and technical writing, teaching of writing, literature for children and young adults, and teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) are available through the English Department. Please see the appropriate information in the Graduate Certificates section of this catalog.

Advising

All students should have their schedules approved by a graduate faculty advisor every semester. After initial enrollment in the program, the student and his or her advisor will establish a coursework plan including alternate course selections.

Students who anticipate graduate study beyond the M.A. are strongly advised to acquire basic reading competence in at least one foreign language.

Corey E. Andrews, Ph.D., Professor
Eighteenth-century literature; Scottish Studies; Robert Burns; poetry; bibliography; working-class studies

Diana Awad-Scrocco, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Professional and technical writing; medical rhetoric; composition

Christopher Barzak, M.F.A., Professor
Fiction writing; fiction; contemporary British and American literature

Laura L. Beadling, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Terry Benton, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Philip Sean Brady, Ph.D., Professor
Modern Irish literature; creative writing; modern world literature

Jeffrey M. Buchanan, Ph.D., Professor
Rhetoric and composition; English education

Suzanne Diamond, Ph.D., Professor
Theory and politics of written expression/confession; heredity narratives; college composition instruction development

Timothy Francisco, Ph.D., Professor
Shakespeare; Jacobean drama; journalism

Julia M. Gergits, Ph.D., Professor
Victorian literature; women's studies; technical writing; literature and the Other

Jay L. Gordon, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Rhetoric; technical and professional communication; document design; pedagogy of writing

Scott A. Leonard, Ph.D., Professor
Nineteenth-century British literature; critical theory; composition/rhetoric

Steven Reese, Ph.D., Professor
Twentieth-century British literature; creative writing

Dolores V. Sisco, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
African diaspora studies; postcolonial studies; popular culture

Linda J. Strom, Ph.D., Associate Professor

All master's degree students must complete 30 semester hours in English courses at the graduate level; exceptions must have prior approval of the English Department chair and the Director of Graduate Studies. All M.A. students must take at least one course in each of two areas:

- one theory or methods course (graduate assistants must take ENGL 6907 Teaching of Writing; ENGL 6989 Teaching Practicum may not fulfill this requirement);
- one language, discourse, or writing course.

Students may select the literature-based M.A. or the M.A. track in Professional Writing and Editing to complete their degree.

M.A. in English

To complete this option, students must complete 30 semester hours in English courses at the graduate level; exceptions must have prior approval of the Department Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies. In addition to theory, language, discourse, or writing courses required above, students selecting this option must take at least two literature courses from a list of approved courses, as well as one of these courses:

- ENGL 6900 Methods of Literary Research, or
- ENGL 6901 Methods of Composition Research.

To complete their degree requirements, students in this option may either submit a thesis or a graduate portfolio.

Students in this option are encouraged, but not required, to create a focus area with their remaining courses. Possible focus areas include:

- literature,
- linguistics,
- professional writing and editing,
- composition and rhetoric,
- teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), and
- literature for children and young adults.

Students who plan on pursuing a Ph.D. in literary studies are strongly encouraged to complete a broad selection of courses in British and American literature.

M.A. in English, Professional and Technical Writing Track

To complete this option, students must complete 30 semester hours of credit in the following courses. Two of these courses must also satisfy the theory, language, discourse, or writing courses required above.

COURSE	TITLE	S.H.
Required Core Courses		
ENGL 6943	Technical Communication	3
ENGL 6944	Document Design and Production	3
ENGL 6945	Theory of Professional and Technical Communication	3
ENGL 6992	Professional Communication (special topics)	3
ENGL 6953	Publications Issues and Management	3
ENGL 6949	Professional and Technical Editing	3
Select three of the following:		9
ENGL 6901	Methods of Composition Research	
ENGL 6907	Teaching of Writing	
ENGL 6950	Sociolinguistics	
ENGL 6955	Advanced Linguistics	
ENGL 6958	English Grammar	
ENGL 6993	Discourse Theory	
ENGL 6998	Professional Writing Internship	3
or ENGL 6999	Thesis	
Total Semester Hours		30

Thesis and Portfolio Options

All M.A. students must submit a thesis or portfolio. Handouts on thesis and portfolio guidelines and examples of past theses and portfolios are available from the departmental Director of Graduate Studies.

The thesis option is designed especially for, but is not limited to, students planning to pursue a doctorate. Students choosing this option must select a committee consisting of a thesis director and two additional graduate faculty members. This committee must approve a thesis proposal before the student can register for thesis credit. Students must demonstrate through the thesis a familiarity with appropriate sources and an ability to interpret the material and properly document their research. Students selecting the thesis option may count up to three semester hours of thesis credit (ENGL 6999 Thesis) toward their total of 30 semester hours of coursework.

The portfolio consists of selected work written during graduate coursework or as part of a professional internship. The student will present the portfolio to a faculty review committee no later than the eighth week of the semester in which s/he plans to graduate. Students in the Professional Writing and Editing track may count up to three semester hours of credit earned in their professional internship toward the 30 semester hour requirement.

Learning Outcomes

English graduate students will demonstrate the ability to produce professional-quality research papers that could be used as the basis for conference presentations or professional publications.

English graduate students will demonstrate the use of a variety of interpretive strategies for analyzing multiple kinds of texts, including close reading, contextual analysis, analysis of form and genre, and rhetorical analysis.

English graduate students will demonstrate the use of theories related to the representation of culture, race, class, gender, and sexuality to interpret literary texts.

English graduate students will demonstrate the ability to participate in the professional life of the field as scholars, teachers, editors, and/or writers.