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.

Faculty Research Interests

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

Diana Awad Scrocco, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Professional and Technical Communication; Medical Rhetoric and Communication; Composition Studies; Writing Center Studies

Kevin Ball, Ph.D., Professor, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Planning
Composition and rhetoric; literacy studies; community literary practices

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

Laura Beadling, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Contemporary Film; Screenwriting; Native American Film; Gender and Film

Terry Benton, M.A., Instructor
Children’s Literature

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

Steven Brown, Ph.D., Professor
Applied linguistics; English as a second language

Jeffrey M. Buchanan, Ph.D., Associate 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., Associate Professor
Shakespeare; Jacobean drama; journalism
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.

Degree Requirements

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; ENGL 6989 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. 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

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

Jay Gordon, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Rhetoric; professional and technical writing

William Greenway, Ph.D., Professor
Poetry writing; poetry; modern British and American literature

Patricia M. Hauschildt, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Culturally relevant pedagogical practices; narrative and identity methodologies; young adult literature

Karen Kaiser Lee, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Professional writing and editing; multimedia composition; the relationship between research and 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 Sisco, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
African diaspora studies; postcolonial studies; popular culture

Linda Strom, Ph.D., Associate Professor
American Literature and Culture; Women's Literature

Stephanie A. Tingley, Ph.D., Professor
American literature; film studies; pedagogy
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.

**Required Core Courses:**

- 6943  Professional and Technical Communication
- 6944  Document Design and Production
- 6945  Theory of Professional and Technical Communication
- 6992  Professional Communication (special topics)
- 6953  Publication Issues and Management
- 6949  Professional and Technical Editing

Choose Three Courses from the Following:

- 6901  Methods of Composition Research
- 6907  Teaching of Writing
- 6950  Sociolinguistics
- 6955  Advanced Linguistics
- 6958  English Grammar
- 6993  Discourse Theory

Choose Either:

- 6998  Professional Writing Internship and Professional Portfolio
- 6999  Thesis

**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) 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.

**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.