

ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about the Master of Arts in English program. Please refer to it throughout your time as a graduate student in the department.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The English department expects that its MA recipients will leave the program with the following:

1. Working knowledge of, and capacity to respond critically to, diverse literatures and discourses;
2. Fluency in a variety of critical and theoretical methods;
3. Ability to produce publishable scholarly work; and
4. A habit of intellectual engagement with social, political, and ethical concerns.

I. SUGGESTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

- A. Books and reference tools
 - Current edition of the *MLA Handbook*
 - A recent, comprehensive dictionary and thesaurus
 - A word processing software program that allows for standard academic format
 - A comprehensive handbook of literary terms, such as *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetics*, Abrams's *Glossary of Literary Terms*, or Holman's *A Handbook to Literature*
- B. Expectations regarding general knowledge of literary terminology
 - Technical understanding of forms/genres
 - Knowledge of the terminology of literary criticism/theory
 - Willingness to think about current literary academic issues
- C. Expectations regarding graduate classes
 - Graduate classes require thorough preparation, consistent attendance, and informed participation
 - Reading assignments are necessarily longer and more demanding than undergraduate assignments
 - The level of discussion requires an approach to the material that goes beyond personal reactions
 - Assignments must be completed on time
- D. Expectations regarding research skills
 - Advanced library research skills, using both print and electronic sources
 - The ability to use/analyze/evaluate research
 - Critical reading skills
 - Familiarity with a variety of primary and secondary materials
- E. Expectations regarding writing papers
 - Composition skills: basic organizational mastery of standard English
 - Knowledge of basic and more formal expository forms
 - Experience with citation and presentation of quoted materials
 - A willingness to proofread and edit

II. STUDENT SERVICES ON CAMPUS

A. Career Center

The Career Center is located in St. Joseph Hall, 985 Madison Avenue. They offer career counseling and information from a large variety of print and electronic sources to help you find a career or redefine your career path. You are encouraged to open a career file in the Career Center and get letters of recommendation from your professors while you are studying at Saint Rose. The Career Center will send out your credentials to any positions (or graduate schools) for which you apply. Call them at 454-5141 or stop in to start your career file.

B. Writing Center

The Writing Center, part of the Academic Support Center, also located in St. Joseph Hall, is available for collaborative work on paper drafts as well as help with organization or grammatical problems. This service, provided by graduate interns, is available by individual appointment; call 458-5483.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

All students must complete 36 credits of graduate work with a grade of “B” or better in each course. Courses are three credits each. **You are encouraged to fulfill the literary theory requirement (ENG569 or 589) as early as possible in your program. You are recommended to consult with the English MA Program Coordinator, who is also your advisor.**

Overall requirements

Either ENG 569 or 589 (3)

9 or 10 courses in literature/theory/composition (depending on whether or not a student completes a thesis)* (27-30)

Advanced Project (3)

Thesis (optional) (3)

* Based on the student's advanced project or other interests and with the permission of the MA Program Coordinator, a student may take up to two elective courses. These courses may be taken outside of English, and, with the permission of the MFA Program Coordinator, one or both of those courses may be 500-level writing courses. (See the options listed in the MFA in Creative Writing.) The Practicum, ENG 593, may also be taken as an elective.

Students who already have initial certification in adolescence education may use the M.A. in English to fulfill the requirement of a master's degree for professional certification to teach English at the secondary level.

Not-for-Profit-Management Certificate option:

Students who are interested in pursuing careers in non-profit organizations may combine the MA degree with a Certificate in Not-for-Profit Management from the School of Business.

These are the requirements of the Certificate in Not-for-Profit Management:

MBA 531 Not-For-Profit Accounting (3)

MBA 582 Human Resource Management (3)

MBA 635 Marketing Management (3)

MBA 684 Fundraising and Grant Writing (3)

MBA 685 Strategic Management: Not-For-Profit (3)

Total: 15 credits (or 18 credits, see below)

Students do not need a business background before beginning the certificate, but they must apply for acceptance into the certificate program. MBA531 has a prerequisite of MBA 511 (Basic Accounting Principles), which would add another 3 credits, for a total of 18 credits. The English MA does allow students to take two electives, and the department would allow MBA 684 to count as one of its degree electives. As part of the optional Practicum (ENG 593), interested students may take an internship at a non-profit to fulfill this course and add to understanding of non-profit organizations. **Contact the MA Program Coordinator for more information on this certificate option.**

Practicum (ENG 593):

The Practicum can be taken as one of the two electives, allowable as part of the MA degree requirements. It will allow students to explore different career options related to the MA in English.

The Practicum has two tracks: Teaching College English and Non-Academic Careers.

Teaching College English:

This track offers training in pedagogy for the teaching of college-level English; students will read materials related to the philosophy of teaching English and the practical issues associated with teaching, and they will shadow a mentor.

Non-Academic Careers:

This track assists students in obtaining placements in positions that are related to an English MA degree. Students may use this practicum track to obtain internships in fields such as publishing, either in Albany or New York City, or in non-profit organizations, where grant-writing is emphasized.

The department advises students to take related coursework that would enhance their practicum experiences and/or their future career plans. Students must consult with the MA Coordinator in the semester prior to signing up for the practicum.

Advanced Project (ENG 591): General Procedures

The Advanced Project is a rigorously researched work of analysis that would be suitable for publication in an academic journal.

Within the last 15 credits of their degree, all students complete an Advanced Project—which is usually based on a researched essay begun in a graduate course. Ordinarily, this project is completed in your final semester, but since you cannot complete a project during the summer sessions, you need to plan ahead to make sure that you arrange to complete your project before your graduation date. Advanced Project topics will always be contingent upon the availability of appropriate English faculty to serve as project directors. An Advanced Project will be overseen by a project director and another faculty member who will act as a research consultant. Consult with the MA Program Coordinator to determine faculty expertise.

Contact appropriate faculty to discuss projects, as project directors will ordinarily undertake no more than three Advanced Projects in any one semester, provided those projects all involve similar topics; or no more than two Advanced Projects if those projects involve different topics.

Students must make arrangements for their Advanced Project the semester before the course is to be taken. The proposal for the Advanced Project must be approved by the project director, preferably by Advisement Day, before the MA Program Coordinator will register the student for ENG 591. Online registration is not available for this course, so students must consult with the MA Program Coordinator.

This course will require substantial independent work on the part of the student; students and directors ordinarily meet on a monthly basis. The director will be the primary contact for the project, while the research consultant will help direct the student to relevant bibliographic materials during the proposal-writing phase of the process.

This course represents advanced-level graduate work, and students will be graded accordingly. If a student receives a failing grade, the course may be repeated once, contingent on the availability of a project director. A grade of Incomplete may only be given if the director is willing to continue the project into the next semester.

Advanced Project (ENG 591): Specifications

1. Proposal Preparation:

Early in the semester preceding that in which you plan to complete the Advanced Project, determine the area in which you plan to do your project. In consultation with the English MA Program Coordinator, choose a faculty member with the appropriate expertise and set up a meeting about the possibility of directing the project. Once you have a project director, ask the director for suggestions for a research consultant, another faculty member whose primary role will be to provide additional input in relation to bibliography; the research consultant may have a very different area of expertise. **A draft of your proposal, with an annotated bibliography and a working bibliography, must be presented to your director and research consultant by Advisement Day.** The director and research consultant will suggest revisions, which must be completed before registration dates for that semester. When the director finds the proposal ready he or she will sign it. (N.B. No faculty member is required to direct a project in a given semester.)

2. Proposal requirements:

The proposal is a 5-7 page document describing what your project will entail and how it developed from one or more courses you have taken during your graduate study. Explain why you have chosen to continue to research this particular topic and how this project will represent an advanced level of research, theorizing, and criticism on the topic. Briefly explain what the focus of the project will be as you envision it at that point.

Attach two bibliographies to your proposal:

- a) An annotated bibliography of relevant critical and theoretical sources you have already read.

- b) A working bibliography of sources you plan to consult for the project.
- 3. Registration for ENG 591:
Once your director has approved your proposal, you must email a copy to the MA Coordinator. The MA Coordinator will then sign you into ENG 591. This process must be completed by the end of the semester preceding the project. N.B. Web registration is not available for this course.
- 4. Project completion:
You will work with your director to establish deadlines in relation to the Advanced Project. The director may ask for written reports, such as a review of research, and/or submission of parts of the project as he or she determines such progress reports necessary to your successful completion of the project.
- 5. The final project:
The final project – which will consist of 20-25 pages of a literary research or composition theory paper, demonstrating a level of research and sophisticated analysis, theorizing, and criticism appropriate for presentation at an academic conference or for publication in an academic journal – will be graded by your director. You should submit a copy of your Advanced Project to your director, as well as an electronic copy to the MA Program Coordinator. The proposal and project are kept on file by the English Department for program assessment purposes.

Thesis (ENG 596): Specifications

Students are encouraged, but not required, to write a three-credit thesis near the end of their study. The thesis allows the qualified student to write a single in-depth study based upon his or her research interests. Ordinarily, this thesis will extend the work completed for the Advanced Project. Students who wish to write a thesis must follow four steps:

- 1. Receive a grade of at least “A-” for the Advanced Project (ENG 591);
- 2. Submit a thesis proposal to the thesis director and two readers for approval to continue the project;
- 3. Submit a signed thesis proposal to the English MA Program Coordinator; and
- 4. Register for the thesis (ENG 596).

PROGRAM PLANNING SHEET FOR MA IN ENGLISH (for student use)

NAME _____

TRANSFER CREDITS _____

Either ENG 569 or 589 (3 credits): _____

9 or 10 courses in literature/theory/composition (depending on whether or not a student completes a thesis); up to two of these courses may be electives, including WRT courses and ENG 593, the MA Practicum (27-30 credits):

Advanced Project (3 credits)

Director: _____

Research Consultant: _____

Thesis (optional) (3 credits)

Thesis Director: _____

Reader: _____

Reader: _____