

Program Title: English

Program Degree: PhD in English

A. Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

1. Program will prepare students to carry out the independent and original scholarship that informs research, teaching, and service in English departments.

- a. ***Core Knowledge, Methods, and Scholarship:*** Students will acquire general knowledge of the range of historical fields that comprise an English Department (British literature, American literature, film), and the range of theories, methods, research protocols, and scholarly practices that are necessary for strong research, teaching, and service in our discipline.
- b. ***Specialization knowledge, methods, and scholarship:*** Students will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the literature (or film) in their chosen historical field. They also will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the scholarly questions that inform research and teaching in that field; this will include a clear sense of the theories, methods, research protocols, and scholarly practices that have defined and currently define work in that field. This also will include demonstrating reading knowledge of at least one language (other than English) that is crucial for their scholarly emphasis.
- c. ***Creative synthesis and critical thinking:*** Students will learn a number of strategies for analyzing individual examples of literature and film, and for thinking synthetically about works that share a formal, generic, topical, or historical impulse. They also will learn a number of strategies for sorting through the applicability of and connections among a range of scholarly approaches to those works. This training will allow them to produce original insights about the literature and about the scholarly practices whose explanatory power is most compelling.
- d. ***Research/Methods:*** Students will learn how to design and carry out original and persuasive research in English literature with particular attention to their chosen historical field. This involves, among other skills, deciding which interpretive questions they find most compelling, selecting or devising a research method that will allow them to explore most powerfully those questions, locating their analysis within an ongoing scholarly discussion within our discipline, and developing a writing style and critical voice able to convey their analyses with grace and precision.
- e. ***Scholarship:*** Students will produce original scholarship that contributes to the growth of knowledge in their historical field.
- f. ***Independent Learner:*** Students will demonstrate an ability to define projects and conduct research independently.

2. Program will prepare students to be strong teachers in English Departments.

- a. ***The Integration of Research and Teaching:*** Students will learn how to think creatively and responsibly about how research informs the teaching of undergraduate students and graduate students.

- b. **Teaching Primary Writing:** Students will learn how to teach primary writing to incoming students. This will be, in many colleges and universities, an important component of their teaching responsibilities.
- c. **General Pedagogical Skills:** Students will learn general pedagogical skills, including techniques crucial for course design, classroom instruction, creating reading, writing, and research assignments; and evaluating and responding to student work.
- d. **English as a Second Language:** Interested and qualified students will learn how to design and teach ESOL courses.

3. Program will prepare students to present their original scholarship in professional venues.

- a. **Conferences:** Students will learn how to present their work at professional conferences.
- b. **Publications:** Students will learn how to revise and submit their work for publication.
- c. **Fellowships and Grants:** Students will learn how to locate and apply for funding most suited to their scholarly work.

B. Program Assessment Methods – Direct Methods

- **Advising Structure Prior to Dissertation**
 - Before the beginning of their first semester, incoming students meet as a group and then individually with the Director of Graduate Studies for orientation and advising. The Director of Graduate Studies reviews each student's proposed program of study for that semester.
 - Each student selects a provisional adviser during the first few weeks of graduate study. In this early stage of the student's graduate career, that adviser and the Director of Graduate Studies are responsible for consulting with the student about their program of study, helping the student to craft a curriculum that best meets their needs and satisfies our "core" and "specialization" goals, and monitoring the student's evolving curricular choices over the next few semesters. Although these faculty have primary monitoring responsibility for each student, students are encouraged to consult other faculty. Our advising is necessary tailored to the individual student's needs because students enter our program with varied backgrounds—roughly half with an MA in hand and half with only a BA, all with very different curricular experiences at the undergraduate and graduate levels. This is because a BA in English will require some historical coverage and a balance between American and British literature but cannot possibly require that students obtain the sort of coverage expected of a graduate student; both the BA and the MA will vary from department to department and student to student in their emphasis on particular theories, methods, research protocols, and scholarly practices.
 - Soon after the end of every semester, the Graduate Secretary reviews the grades to see if any students have received one or more "B" grades (anything below an A-). If so, the Director of Graduate Studies sends an

email to the faculty who awarded those grades, asking for details about the students' perceived strengths and weaknesses and inquiring whether the students have consulted with their faculty about how to improve their graduate work. In addition, the Director of Graduate Studies consults with the student and their provisional adviser.

- Soon after the end of every semester, the Director of Graduate Studies sends an email to all department faculty, listing the PhD students currently enrolled in courses, and asking if any students, whatever grade they might have received, stand out as in need of particular mentoring or advising so as to address early in their program of study any perceived weaknesses in their oral or written performance. The Director of Graduate Studies does consult with the adviser of any student who emerges as in need of this sort of help. The Director of Graduate Studies is particularly proactive (and will consult directly with the student, their adviser, and their instructors) should a pattern emerge within a semester or over more than one semester.
- Soon after the end of every year, the Director of Graduate Studies sends an email to students with incompletes to ensure that they have filled out incomplete contracts, are on-target to complete their work, and are not falling behind with other departmental requirements.
- ***Courses***
 - Individual faculty evaluate (assign a grade and provide written comments) each student's oral and written performance in their graduate seminars. Some seminars require oral reports; all require participation in seminar discussions that model creative and original engagement with literary and scholarly traditions. All require original scholarly writing and research (roughly 25 pages in length).
 - All students in the first semester of graduate study enroll in English 500—a one-credit introduction to the range of scholarly activities beyond the classroom (speakers, conferences, research seminars, readings of creative writing) that shape the scholarly community of an English department and of our discipline more broadly. The course requires that students attend a number of events on campus and that they attend a seminar whose readings and discussion prepare them for the scholarly event and whose “follow-up” discussion allows them to respond to the event with their preparation in mind.
- ***Training Programs and Editing Projects***
 - In the summer after their first year of graduate study, students attend an extensive intensive summer training program, WRT571/ENG571 focused on general pedagogical skills and the particular skills required to teach primary writing. This training program is administered by the College Writing Program.
 - During their second year of graduate study, students participate in a year-long practicum on teaching (with a focus on the teaching of primary writing), WRT572/ENG572. Students are teaching their own section of WRT105 and attending monthly small group meetings. This practicum is administered by the College Writing Program.

- Interested and qualified students participate in the College Writing Program's training program for teaching ESOL courses; this program is limited to advanced instructors (generally with at three years of experience teaching WRT105). Students who successfully complete the program will teach ESOL courses to fulfill their Doust Fellowship teaching responsibilities.
- Interested and qualified students apply and are selected to develop and hone their editing skills as members of department editing projects (Blake Archive, TEAMS/METS). The students are closely supervised and mentored by the faculty who direct these projects.
- **Exams**
 - Students complete their Language Exam before the end of their second year of study. In consultation with a qualified member of our faculty (lists of faculty provided online) they select approximately 50 pages from a literary text and 50 pages from a critical text, prepare those texts, and then schedule an exam that has a written and oral component and that is evaluated by the faculty member. After the exam is passed, the faculty examiner sends a note that is placed in the student's file.
 - Sometime during their second year of study (if not sooner) students have begun to consider which faculty will serve on their Field Exams. These faculty may or may not include the provisional adviser, depending on the student's developing scholarly focus.
 - Students are encouraged to take a 2-credit course in the second semester of their second year that allows them to work with a faculty member to begin assembling their lists and studying for the Field Exams (comprised of a Historical Field and a Conceptual Field). Sample Historical Field lists are provided online; these comprise roughly 80% of any final list, the remaining readings assembled in consultation with the faculty member (who will generally then serve as the director of the student's exam). The Conceptual Field list is designed by the student, again in consultation with their faculty examiners. It allows the student to explore in depth a method, theory, genre, form, or topic they find compelling as they consider the literature and scholarship in their historical field *and* as they consider more broadly how literature and scholarship outside their historical field might influence and be influenced by their more specialized concerns.
 - Students schedule and take their Field Exam before the end of their third year of study. The scheduling of the Field Exam depends on exam committee approval of the lists, and a completion of all course and language exam requirements. The exam is scheduled only after the Director of Graduate Studies has reviewed the exam lists and the student's record of study. A copy of the paperwork is placed in the student's file.
 - The Field Exam is comprised of a Historical Field section and a Conceptual Field section (see above for descriptions of list preparation); there is a written and oral component to each section of the exam. Faculty examiners (three from within the department, including the exam chair;

one from outside the department selected by the student in consultation with their three-member departmental exam committee) provide questions. The Historical Field and the Conceptual Field sections of the exam are “closed book” and taken in consecutive days; each requires that students select and respond to two questions over 4 hours. No more than one week later, the student meets with the faculty examiners who have reviewed the written exam and conduct an oral exam roughly two hours in length, divided between the Historical Field and the Conceptual Field. If one or more sections of the exam are not a “pass,” that portion of the exam may be re-taken with the examiners’ approval (College rules require no less than 6 months elapse between the exam and the “re-take”); that approval generally hinges on their performance on the oral and written exam and a their larger record of study over the last few years. Students not allowed to re-take the exam or students who fail the exam are asked to leave the program. All those who pass move into dissertation research. The results of the exam and any pertinent comments are placed in the student’s file.

- ***Dissertation***

- Within no more than six months after the Field Exam, students submit a research proposal to their dissertation advisor (generally but not always the chair of their Field Exam) and then, after it is revised and approved, to the Director of Graduate Studies. After it is reviewed and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, it is placed in the student’s file.
- Students work closely with a primary and at least one secondary advisor, submitting writing and research for review on a schedule determined in consultation with those advisors.
- Based on the recommendation of all committee members and the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, the student schedules their dissertation defense. The defense generally lasts no more than 2 hours and is administered by a chair appointed by the university’s dean of graduate studies, the student’s departmental primary and secondary advisors, and a representative from outside the department.

- ***Teaching***

- Students generally teach one section of WRT105 each semester of their second, third, and fourth years of graduate study. This is the College’s Primary Writing Requirement. All instructors have completed the summer training session after their first year of graduate study and the practicum that coincides with their first year of teaching (second year of graduate study). Graduate students are responsible for all instructional responsibilities for the course (designing the syllabus, teaching all sessions, grading and commenting on all assignments, meeting with undergraduate students, assigning a final grade). They consult with and are under the supervision of the College Writing Program throughout this process.
- In their fourth year of graduate study, qualified students are encouraged to apply for a College Teaching Fellowship. Students compile the application packet in consultation with their departmental advisors. The

department's Graduate Studies Committee reviews all applications, asks top applicants to revise as necessary, and then forwards the top applications to the Dean of Graduate Studies for her consideration. Students who are awarded the College Teaching Fellowship serve for one semester of their fifth year of graduate study as a TA in one of our literature courses and work closely with the faculty member at every level of course preparation (developing, designing, and teaching the course). This is a mentoring program that is not driven by enrollments; students may serve as TAs in large introductory surveys, smaller standard courses in their field, or more experimental courses (for instance, our "humanities lab" courses).

- Qualified students are encouraged to apply for the Susan B. Anthony teaching fellowship; recipients teach a section of an introductory course in gender and women's studies.
- In their fifth and sixth year of graduate study, qualified students are awarded the Doust Fellowship by the College Writing Program; this allows them to continue to teach one section of WRT105 in any semester that they do not hold a College Teaching Fellowship, or a College Dissertation Fellowship. They are under the supervision of the College Writing Program.
- Some students in their fifth and sixth year of graduate study will teach the ESOL courses in the College Writing Program to fulfill their Doust Fellowship responsibilities. They are under the supervision of the College Writing Program.
- Some students in their sixth year of graduate study apply and are selected to teach for other programs or schools in the university (i.e., the Humanities Program at the Eastman School of Music).
- ***Research – Opportunities beyond the Department***
 - Qualified fourth and fifth year students are encouraged to apply for the College Dean's Dissertation Fellowship. Students compile the application packet in consultation with their departmental advisors. The department's Graduate Studies Committee reviews all applications, asks top applicants to revise as necessary, and then forwards the top applications to the Dean of Graduate Studies for her consideration. Students who are awarded the College Dissertation Fellowship receive a semester's support in their fifth or sixth year of graduate study so that they are able to dedicate their full attention to their dissertations.
 - Qualified students (generally in their fifth year of study) are encouraged to apply for the university's Ball Dissertation Fellowship. The department's Graduate Studies Committee reviews all applications, asks top applicants to revise as necessary, and then forwards the top applications to the University Dean of Graduate Studies for her consideration. Students who are awarded the Ball Dissertation Fellowship receive support (generally in their sixth year of graduate study) so that they are able to dedicate their full attention to their dissertations.

- Qualified students are encouraged to apply for appropriate external support for summer or semester-long research. Our department website facilitates this process. Students' decisions about applying are made in consultation with their departmental advisors; the advisors review the application packet.
- Qualified students are encouraged to apply for programs with which we have a special connection – for instance, the Cornell School for Criticism and Theory, and the Folger Institute at the Folger Shakespeare Library. The Graduate Studies Committee reviews applicants for the Cornell School for Criticism and Theory, asks our top applicant to revise as necessary, and then forwards that top application to the Cornell School; our applicant is automatically accepted into the summer program. The faculty member serving as Folger Institute Representative reviews applicants to attend Folger Institute conferences, weekend workshops, and semester- and year-long seminars; asks qualified applicants to revise as necessary; and then forwards an institutional recommendation to the Folger Institute. Students accepted by the Folger Institute review committee attend these programs with Folger Institute funding for travel and lodging.
- The English department provides a modest annual travel allowance for students who are presenting their work at conferences or who are traveling to collections. Students are encouraged to seek out additional support from other appropriate university resources (for instance, the Susan B. Anthony Institute, or the Frederick Douglass Institute) and from external funding agencies. All decisions about applying to present professional work are made by the student in consultation with their departmental advisors; advisors review application materials and drafts of presentations.
- ***Job Market Preparation***
 - Students determine their readiness for the job market in consultation with their departmental advisors. Those advisors have primary responsibility for reviewing all job market materials and mentoring the student.
 - Students also work intensively with our department's Job Placement Officers. Beginning the Spring semester before the student enters the job market, the Job Placement Officers assist students at every level of the process (defining their search, writing application letters, preparing their cv, selecting and contacting recommenders, interviewing, attending campus visits) through a series of group meetings, workshops, and individual meetings and correspondence. Job Placement Officers review all job materials and arrange for "mock interviews" (after which they and other faculty advise students on their readiness and outline any other necessary preparation).

C. Program Assessment Methods – Indirect Methods

- Job Market results are collected annually and reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee (who see annual results in relation to the most recent 5-year and 10-year results).

- We update our full alumni (1960s-present) database annually with current addresses, employment, and rank. All former job positions remain part of the record.
- The information from this updated database is forwarded each year to the Director of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Studies Committee reviews the most recent 5-year and 10-year results annually.
- All information about incompletes (number, time to completion), exam results (semester of graduate study, numbers of passed or failed, exam committee assessments of failed exams), and years to completion (defense, first job, first tenure track job) are compiled annually and reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee. Comparisons with results over a larger number of years are provided as relevant.
- The Director of Graduate Studies meets annually with each of the PhD classes to reinforce expectations, remind about opportunities, and solicit suggestions for program improvement. All suggestions received as a result of these meetings are reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee and considered as part of ongoing monitoring of the program's efficiency and effectiveness.