



UNIVERSITY OF  
**South Carolina**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2025-2026

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended as a basic guide for students pursuing graduate degrees in the English Department at the University of South Carolina. You need to be thoroughly familiar with program requirements, expectations, and policies. Additional information is available at the Graduate School's website at <http://www.gradschool.sc.edu>.

While most of the information covered in the handbook concerns formal procedures and basic requirements, students pursuing graduate degrees in English should also be aware of the numerous informal activities that enhance graduate study in our department. For example, the Graduate English Association and several other student organizations meet regularly throughout the year. Graduate student organizations also sponsor professional conferences, conduct workshops on preparing work for publication, and in promoting intellectual community in the program. Check announcements, bulletin boards, the ENGLGRAD listserv, and the department website for information on these activities.

The Graduate English Office is in Room 100 of the Welsh Humanities Office Building. While graduate students should feel free to make an appointment during office hours (9:00AM – 4:00PM Monday through Friday) with Brea Hudson, students who have questions about programs of study, qualifying exams, comprehensive exams, and any related topics should contact the Director of Graduate Studies, Gretchen Woertendyke, [woertend@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:woertend@mailbox.sc.edu). Students can reach Brea Hudson at [BAHUDSON@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:BAHUDSON@mailbox.sc.edu) Or at (803) 777-5063.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### The Advising Process

As the first step in registering each semester, you should make an appointment to talk with your advisor at the earliest date. Incoming first-year students in the MA and PhD programs will be advised by the Graduate Program Coordinator, Brea Hudson, and the current Graduate Director, Gretchen Woertendyke. Incoming MA and PhD students will be advised by the Graduate Director throughout their first year. The Graduate Director will then provide help in identifying appropriate faculty members to work with in their field of interest moving forward. PhD students should have an advisor and Committee Director by the end of their third semester. MFA students in fiction and poetry are advised, in their first year, by the director of the MFA program, which is currently James Barilla. MFA students should also choose a project director by the conclusion of the second year, before enrolling in ENGL 798 for the first time (usually the first semester of the third year).

Before meeting with your advisor, you should become familiar with the class schedule for the coming semester available at the Self-Service Carolina website: [my.sc.edu](http://my.sc.edu). The Graduate English Office also makes available a list of graduate courses to be offered with descriptions of requirements, books, and expectations.

### Program of Study

All graduate students must submit a Program of Study (POS) form to the Graduate Office en route to the Graduate School. Students in all degree programs may file the POS as early as their first semester of study but no later than November 15 at the outset of their second year of study. To avoid the need to revise the program of study, it is best to have a Committee Director before submitting. The form is like a contract with the University: an agreement signed by the student, the student's advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of the Graduate School. This formal agreement serves many purposes: it causes you and your advisor to engage in early planning with a specific goal in mind and it protects you in case of curriculum changes. A Program of Study may be modified or replaced by filling out an Adjustment form or by

submitting a new POS form. Both the [Program of Study and Adjustment forms](#) are available here and online from the Graduate School.

The Graduate School requires that the Program of Study form match the student's transcript Exactly - this requirement routinely causes last minute problems for students applying for graduation. You are strongly encouraged to update your POS before your final semester to avoid issues when you prepare to graduate.

### **Registration**

Once you are fully and formally admitted to USC, the Graduate School will enter you into the USC "Visual Information Processing" system ([vip.sc.edu](http://vip.sc.edu)). Once you are in this system, you can go to [myaccount.sc.edu](http://myaccount.sc.edu) to claim your account. IDs and passwords can also be managed in Self-Service Carolina once your account has been claimed. After you have met with your advisor and have an approved schedule, you can sign in to the "Self-Service Carolina" website and begin enrolling in courses.

Remember, while registering you should consult the course descriptions provided at the English department's website. For the latest information about the registration process, go to the registrar's site.

You will need special clearance from the Graduate English Office to register for thesis (ENGL 799), dissertation (ENGL 899), or directed reading hours (ENGL 895 or 896).

### **Grading**

The letter grades A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D, and F are used to designate work rated from excellent to failing. Generally, a grade of B is the lowest acceptable grade for a student at the graduate level. Graduate courses may count for degree credit with a grade as low as C, but the student's average on all courses attempted for graduate credit must be at least B (3.0 on a 4-point scale). Students who fall below the 3.0 average are placed on probation by the Graduate School and given one calendar year to meet the grade requirement. Students unable to do so will no longer be permitted to enroll in graduate courses in English. Grades transferred from other institutions are not included in the grade point average.

### **Pass/Fail Grading**

In some circumstances, a student may elect Pass/Fail grading in a course outside their major area. You will need special clearance from the Graduate English Office to use the Pass/Fail option. This option permits enrichment of the student's experience without affecting the grade point average, provided that the student does satisfactory work in the course. A grade of either satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) will be awarded. Those courses completed with a satisfactory grade may be counted toward total credit hours earned though they may not be used as part of the Program of Study. A grade of U received under the individual Pass/Fail option in a letter-graded course will be counted as an F for grade point average purposes. Students interested in this option should consult their faculty advisor and the Graduate Director for approval prior to registration.

### **Incompletes**

The grade of I (Incomplete), is assigned at the discretion of faculty teaching the course when she/he believes a student is prevented from completing some portion of the assigned work because of an unanticipated work-related responsibility, family hardship, illness, or accident. To be granted an Incomplete in a course, you must get faculty's approval before grades are turned in. Depending on the nature of the uncompleted requirements, the professor will specify the additional period of time allowed to complete the work before a permanent grade must be submitted. Course faculty must complete a form and submit it to the registrar explaining the

reason for the Incomplete, conditions for its make-up, and a deadline for completion. Re-enrolling in the course will not make up an Incomplete. A grade of I is not computed in calculating grade point average. After 12 months, an Incomplete that has not been replaced with a letter grade is changed permanently to an F.

### **Enrollment**

For students serving as Graduate Instructional Assistants or Graduate Teaching Assistants, six graduate credit hours are considered a full-time course load for the fall or spring semester; however, students often must take nine hours to make sufficient progress to their degrees (Nine credit hours is considered full-time for students *without* assistantships). Because of the heavy reading load and amount of research necessary for thorough study, taking more than nine hours of course work needs approval from the Graduate Director. To be entitled to use library or computer facilities, you must be enrolled for at least one credit hour. Graduate students must be enrolled in at least one credit hour post course work and up through the semester in which you plan to graduate.

Courses numbered 700–899 are restricted to graduate students. 700-level courses are usually limited to 15 students. 800-level courses are seminars limited to 12 students and presuppose that graduate-level course work has been done in the general subject area.

Courses numbered 500–699 are typically open to graduate and advanced undergraduate students; however, the requirements for graduate students enrolled in these courses exceed those for undergraduates. There are limits to how many courses Literature and Composition and Rhetoric students may take at the 500–600 level. MFA workshop courses at the 600-level are restricted to graduate students. MFA workshop courses at the 600-level are restricted to MFA students. MFA students are encouraged to take all or most of their required workshops in the genre in which they were admitted, moving through the program with their cohort. MFA students wishing to take a workshop in another genre should check with their adviser and the instructor about suitability and available space.

ENGL 799 is for Master’s-level Thesis Preparation (variable credit, 1–9 hours), and ENGL 899 is for PhD Dissertation Preparation (variable credit, 1–12 hours).

PhD students who are close to completing or have completed 12 hours of ENGL 899 should apply for a “special enrollment” privilege (colloquially referred to as Z-Status) for their fourth and/or fifth years of study. This status allows a student to enroll in as little as a single hour and be coded as “full time,” thereby qualifying that student to hold a graduate assistantship and, if at issue, for deferred loan payment. You can find more information at the Graduate School site and this form [Request for Special Enrollment](#).

### **Repeating Courses**

Much of the English Department’s graduate curriculum is composed of Special Topics Courses. These courses numbers may be repeated for credit as topics vary. For example, you may take ENGL 709 more than once as long as the topic/title is different.

### **Thesis and Dissertation Hours**

The MA degree requires at least 3 Thesis Preparation hours (ENGL 799); the MFA requires at least 6 Thesis Preparation hours (ENGL 799); the PhD requires at least 12 Dissertation Preparation hours (ENGL 899). PhD students may, if all other course requirements—including language requirements—have been fulfilled, enroll in up to 3 hours of Dissertation Preparation before they take the Comprehensive Exams and may register for an additional 6 hours during the semester they are taking these exams. Approval by the Graduate Director is required to complete more than 6 hours of ENGL 899 before they pass their Comprehensive exams (the point is to encourage timely progress toward degree).

Clearance by the Graduate English Office is required before Self Service Carolina will accept your registration for either ENGL 799 or 899. The MAT program does not require a thesis. Satisfactory completion of Thesis Preparation hours or Dissertation Preparation hours is indicated by the grade of T. Credit hours with a T grade may be counted toward total credit hours earned, but these courses will not be considered in determining your grade point average.

### **Directed Reading**

Directed Reading courses, ENGL 895 and 896, are available to students who want to design an independent course under the direction of a chosen professor. PhD and MFA students are allowed, under Graduate English Program regulations, to take one 895 and one 896 course for your degree. MA students are limited to one independent study. To take such a course, consult first with the professor with whom you want to work. Then, fill out the [Independent Study Contract](#) available here and in the Graduate School Forms Library. This form must be signed by the professor directing your work and be approved by the Graduate Director.

### **Auditing Courses**

You may choose to audit a course; however, tuition is the same whether you register to audit a course or to take it for a letter grade. Most advisors suggest taking the course for credit, since the Graduate School requires 75 percent attendance for the audit to appear on a transcript, and it does not count in your course load.

### **Dropping a Course**

You may drop a course during the regular or late registration periods. If you drop a course during the second through the sixth week of a regular semester, you will receive a W in place of a grade. After the first six weeks of the semester, a dropped course will appear on the permanent record with a grade of WF (withdraw failing) unless a verifiable, documented justification for late withdrawal is offered that is acceptable to the instructor, the Graduate Director, and the Dean of the Graduate School. A WF is treated as an F in the evaluation of your eligibility to continue in school and in computing your grade point average. If you stop attending a course, you will receive an F unless you officially withdraw from it.

### **Withdrawals**

Students intending to withdraw should first contact the Graduate English Office. Once the decision to withdraw has been made, students can email their intention to [withdraw@sc.edu](mailto:withdraw@sc.edu). Students withdrawing before the conclusion of the semester may be financially culpable for any financial aid paid on the student's behalf, including but not limited to tuition exemptions, tuition supplements, etc. Consult the Graduate Bulletin ([bulletin.sc.edu/index.php](http://bulletin.sc.edu/index.php)) for further details.

### **Appeals**

Requests for Program Waivers or Procedural Appeals must be put in writing for consideration by the Graduate Committee. The committee may refer substantive issues to a meeting of the Graduate Faculty.

*Appeals of PhD Comprehensive Examination Results:* The committee will not normally consider any appeal from a student's first attempt at a comprehensive examination, other than an appeal to invalidate the exam on account of documented illness or major procedural irregularity. If an appeal is made to invalidate the exam on such grounds, notice must be given before the exam has been graded; in the case of an oral exam, the student must give notice to the Graduate Program Office or the examiners of their intent to seek the invalidation of a negative result before the examiners have told the student of their verdict on the examination performance. If a student should fail the written comprehensive exam a second time, the Graduate Director will automatically assume the student wishes to have the result reviewed and will find four additional readers to review the

exam; a reversal of the failing grade requires majority agreement (four passes total out of seven examiners for this second attempt). If a student should fail the oral comprehensive exam or dissertation defense a second time, the Director will (whether or not the student appeals) solicit individual written reports from examiners on the conduct of the exam and the candidate's performance, as a method of confirming review.

*Appeals beyond Department Level:* A student should consult the Dean of the Graduate School about Graduate School appeals procedures. For appeals regarding University or Graduate School rules and regulations (e.g., residency requirements), write to the Graduate Director, explaining the problem. If the Graduate Director supports the appeal, they will forward the letter to the Dean of the Graduate School with an endorsement.

### **Program Transfers**

Students seeking to transfer into the English department graduate program from another department or program within the university can do so only by going through the same application process as external candidates. Such applications need not contain materials already on file with the Graduate School—such as transcripts and GRE scores—but should consist of new materials specific to admission to study in the English department, including (1) the particular degree program and area of concentration applied to, (2) a statement of purpose, and (3) an appropriate writing sample. It is highly recommended that the applicant also solicits new letters of recommendation that address the candidate's preparation for graduate study in English. Finally, these applications should be submitted via the Admit (the application portal for the Graduate School) by 15 December, if the applicant is interested in receiving financial support upon full entry to the program, if offered admission, the following August. (Students in transition may seek permission from the Director of Graduate Studies to enroll in English department courses while awaiting an admission decision.) Finally, upon receiving an offer of admission, the applicant must file a [Program Transfer](#) change of status form with the Graduate School.

### **Internal Transfers**

Transfers among programs within the English department are possible, with the agreement of the Director of Graduate Studies and, in some cases, the agreement of administrators of the given program to which the student seeks transfer. Students interested in such transfers need to bear in mind the following:

*Transfer from direct-admission PhD to the MA program:* Requires consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies, followed by a [Program Transfer](#) change status form submitted through the Graduate School. During the first two years of study, the degree requirements for direct admission PhD students and MA students are virtually the same, so the only subsequent actions necessary for a student making this transfer are (1) completion of a new program of study form, and (2) completion and submission of an approved MA thesis. During the admissions process, per agreement with the English department, the Graduate School will waive the standard fee to change the status of applicants for direct admission to the PhD program who have been accepted to the MA degree program, upon notification from the Director of Graduate Studies.

*Transfers among the concentration in English and American literature and the concentration in Composition and Rhetoric:* Requires consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and generally with the program directors involved. Such transfers may involve additional course work, whichever the direction, to satisfy program requirements, and (1) a [Program Transfer](#) change of status action filed with the Graduate School, and (2) the completion of a new program of study form. Students transferring into the concentration in English and American literature will also need to take the GRE subject test—Literature in English—and have their scores forwarded to the Graduate School.



*Transfer into the MFA program:* Can only be accomplished by the same procedures outlined for inter-departmental transfers above; i.e., students desiring to enter the MFA program must apply as new students to the program, although some course work taken in another English department program may count toward degree requirements, should the student receive an offer of admission.

*Transfers among the MFA degree program concentrations:* May only be accomplished through a resubmission of appropriate application materials—statement of purpose, writing sample, new letters of recommendation (recommended)—to the MFA Program director. Such a transfer may also involve additional course work. The student must also complete a new program of study form.

*Transfer from the MAT program to the English MA program:* Entails a new application to the Director of Graduate Studies, in the form described in the opening paragraph on interdepartmental transfers. The student must also complete a new program of study form; course work taken in the English department while in the MAT program may count toward degree requirements.

*Transfer from the MA/MLIS degree program to either the MA program in English, or the MLIS degree program:* Entails notifying the Director of Graduate Studies of the program the student is departing and filing a [Program Transfer](#) change of status form with the Graduate School. The student must also complete a new program of study form; course work taken in the English department while in the dual-degree program may count toward degree requirements.

## **Fees**

Academic fees are based on the number of hours you are taking and your residency status. You can establish residency after one calendar year. Consult the Bursar's Office website ([sc.edu/bursar/fees.shtml](http://sc.edu/bursar/fees.shtml)) for current fee amounts. Note that if you are a certified teacher with a valid certification from any state, your tuition is reduced. Also, if you are over 60 and a state resident, your tuition is free. The Residency application is on Self Service Carolina, and the residency office, 1244 Blossom Street [resident@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:resident@mailbox.sc.edu), can tell you what you have to do to qualify for residency.

## **Assistantships**

The English Department offers several types of financial assistance: teaching assistantships, editorial assistantships, instructional assistantships, and research assistantships. Teaching and instructional assistantships are typically offered with admission; the other types of assistantships, when available, usually involve a competitive application process. Students awarded an assistantship from the English Department are expected to carry no incompletes from the previous semester; to earn no more than one grade below B during their academic career; to perform assigned duties in a satisfactory manner; to maintain a grade point average of 3.5; to complete the process of qualifying for candidacy if doctoral students; to file a Program of Study during the first year of the MA or by the beginning of the second year for the PhD; and to maintain steady progress toward a degree.

*Teaching Assistants:* To qualify for a teaching assistantship, students must either have a Master's degree in English or a related field or have completed at least 18 hours of graduate course work by the semester they begin to teach. MA and MFA students who enter our program without these requisite 18 hours are expected to earn them in their first year of study. Second year MA/MFA students are not guaranteed a GTA; GTA offers will be extended based on the student's good standing in the program, their steady progress toward the degree, and the available GTA lines. Regular teaching assistants teach three classes per year, normally at the first-year level: two in the fall and one in the spring or one in the fall and two in the spring. During the semester teaching



assistants teach two classes, they are expected to take two graduate courses (six credit hours). During the semester teaching assistants teach one class, they are expected to take three graduate courses (nine credit hours). This expectation does not apply to students who have completed 60 hours and are eligible to enroll under Special Enrollment Status (Z Status; see page 6). Eligibility for assistantships for our MA programs is limited to two years; for the MFA, three years; for the PhD, five years; and for direct-admission PhD, six years.

*Instructional Assistants:* Graduate instructional assistants work 10 hours a week as discussion leaders under the supervision of professors teaching large sections of undergraduate English, as tutors in the Writing Center, or occasionally in other assignments that support faculty teaching and research. Instructional assistants should take three graduate courses each semester (9 credit hours). **Note:** Direct-Admit PhDs who are working as GIAs for their first year should work 15 hours per week.

*Research Assistants:* Research assistants work with one or more faculty members on specific projects requiring library and database research skills or in other capacities involving proofreading or fact-checking. Research assistants typically work approximately 10 hours a week and are expected to take nine credit hours per semester. Funding for research assistants is not available every year and is granted by the Graduate Director.

### **Term of Service**

For those entering the Graduate English Program in the fall semester, the term of service is August 16 to May 15. Before classes begin in the fall, graduate TAs and IAs are required to attend the orientation sessions offered by the Center of Teaching Excellence, the English Graduate Program, and the First-Year English Program (usually held the third week in August).

### **Travel Funds**

The English Department allocates funds for student travel each academic year. The current policy is that the Department will reimburse up to \$1,000 per year for students in the PhD programs and for MA, MFA, and Direct-Admit PhD students beyond their first year for travel necessary for participation in professional conferences. [Travel Request Forms](#) can be printed for you in the Graduate English Office or sent to you as a PDF from the Student Services Program Coordinator. Once the Program Coordinator has your travel request form, they will fill out the Travel Authorization Form for the Graduate Director's approval. All travel requests should be made well before your intended trip and must be made before a trip is taken. If you intend to apply for the standard amount of departmental money, you need to file your travel request at least a week before you leave. Upon return, all original receipts should be attached to a University Travel Voucher. Reimbursement usually takes three to four weeks.

In order to be considered for additional funding for presenting a paper at a national or international conference, MFA and PhD students should apply for a Graduate School Travel Grant as well as for travel assistance from the English Department. MFA and PhD students cannot utilize more than two Graduate School Travel Grants during their time in their degree program.

After the Graduate School has reviewed and acted on your travel funding request, the department will supplement your funding up to the reimbursement cap in effect. You should fill out a departmental TA (Travel Authorization) form when you apply for the Graduate School grant. We will hold your departmental request until we see if (and how much) money you get from the Graduate School. (TA forms are available on the bulletin board next to the graduate office.)

**Note:** unless you receive a copy of your approval, we have not received your request. For international travel, you must also notify the Study Abroad Office of your travel plans and purchase the insurance offered

through that office. If you have questions about these procedures, ask the Graduate Director well in advance of your trip.

### **Student Organizations**

*The Graduate English Association*, or GEA, organizes and sponsors academic and social events throughout the year to bring together all graduate English students. Look for teaching and research seminars, happy hours, seasonal parties, poetry and fiction readings, and book sales.

*RSA@USC* is the University of South Carolina graduate student chapter of RSA (Rhetoric Society of America), an organization committed to the academic study of rhetoric, rhetorical theory, critical theory, composition studies, and speech communication. In addition to providing an active community of interested student scholars, *RSA@USC* regularly hosts conferences, professional workshops, invited lectures, and social events.

Cola Literary Review is the literary journal of the English Department, publishing poetry, short fiction, one-act plays, brief articles, and interviews submitted by writers from all over the United States, and more recently, from all around the world. From its inception, Cola Literary Review has been a graduate student run publication. The journal was created in 1993 through a generous donation from Joseph Capalbo, a former graduate student in English.

## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The Department of English offers the MA, MFA, and PhD degrees. In cooperation with Library Sciences the Department offers the MLIS degree.

### **Residency**

For Master's candidates, the minimum residence requirement is two regular semesters of approximately 15 weeks or the equivalent in summer sessions. The granting of a doctoral degree presupposes a minimum of three full years of graduate study and a minimum of 30 graduate hours of study after admission to the doctoral program. The doctoral residency requirement may be satisfied only after admission to a doctoral degree program and must be fulfilled by enrollment in at least 18 graduate credit hours within a span of three consecutive semesters (excluding summers). Enrollment in a summer term is not required to maintain continuity, but credits earned during summer terms will count toward residency.

### **Time Limits for Degrees**

Students in a Master's program are expected to complete degree requirements in two years (MLIS students have three years). ***Master's students must complete degree requirements within six years. Doctoral students are expected to complete degree requirements in five years but must complete those requirements within ten years.*** Students who have courses in their degree programs that exceed the six-year limit for the Master's or the ten-year limit for the doctoral program may apply to have the expired courses revalidated. This typically involves sitting examinations on a course-by-course basis. The Graduate School charges \$25 per credit hour for such revalidation. Further instructions, as necessary, may be obtained from the Graduate Office.

Comprehensive Exams exams in the PhD program are valid for five years, after which time students may petition to revalidate their exam in consultation and approval by the Graduate Director.

A student nearing completion of a degree or who needs family or medical leave may want to explore the possibility of an under-enrollment exception (Z-status).

### **Language Requirements**

Most graduate degrees include a language requirement. Proficiency examinations are

administered by the individual language programs in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. The exam procedure varies slightly among the different programs, so you should consult the proctors for specific details. Generally, though, you will be asked to translate a 500-word passage within 60 or 75 minutes. Dictionaries and other aids are often permitted. You have three opportunities to pass this exam. The language programs usually give proficiency exams at the beginning and end of semesters. You must sign up to take the test in advance because spaces are limited. Be sure to consult the appropriate language program for specific information.

Intensive reading courses numbered 615 are designed to provide a graduate student with a basic reading knowledge of a language other than English. Quite often these courses use the proficiency exam (see above) as part of the course requirement. Consult the Master Schedule for specific course offerings.

Master's students should demonstrate reading knowledge of one language other than English. Doctoral students should demonstrate a reading knowledge of one language other than English or one language satisfied by taking a 400-level course of literature, not in translation, with a grade of B or better, or a 500-level course of literature, not in translation, with a grade of C or better. NOTE: Students may also fulfill a language requirement by passing either ENGL 701: Old English or ENGL 701: Beowulf and Old English Heroic Verse with a grade of B or better (students may take multiple Special Topics Courses with the same course number as long as the course content is different).

***Certification of language competency remains valid for six years for masters, ten years for doctoral students.***

### **Applications for Degrees**

In your last academic term, you must file a formal application with the Dean of the Graduate School. Your application must be filed by the deadline published by the Registrar and Graduate School, available on the Graduate School's website. The application for graduation is found on Self Service Carolina. Applications submitted after the announced deadline are not submitted through Self Service Carolina; the appropriate form can be found in the [Registrar's Forms Library](#).

## **MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH, WITH EMPHASIS IN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE**

The minimum course requirements include 30 semester hours, not more than six of which may be taken in Thesis Preparation (ENGL 799). Candidates must complete at least half of their credit requirements in courses numbered 700 or above, exclusive of thesis credit. The remaining credit hours may include courses numbered 500 to 699 taken for graduate credit. Enrollment in these courses requires the approval of the Graduate Director. Students need a grade point average of B or better (3.0) to graduate. (See "Grades" above.)

### **Specific Requirements**

- One course in American Literature, one in English Literature before 1660, one in English literature after 1660, and one additional course in the thesis area.
- Five electives (two of which may, with justification and the approval of the Graduate Director, be taken outside the Department). The three-hour ENGL 691–692 sequence may count as an elective.
- Three hours of thesis writing (ENGL 799). Your thesis director will supervise this course.
- Reading knowledge of one language other than English.
- Thesis (see description below).

### **Program of Study**

You must submit a [Master's Degree Program of Study Form](#) (signed by your advisor and the Graduate Director) to the Dean of the Graduate School, outlining your entire degree program.

### **Thesis**

The MA thesis is expected to make a defensible contribution to scholarship on a figure, text, movement, problem, or current questions in British, American, or Global Literatures. The thesis should be a 30- to 35-page paper (approximately 10,000 words). The thesis should be written by the student with frequent consultations with their advisor to determine direction and continually improve upon the research during the second semester of the second year. In certain fields, the director and second reader may determine the length and format of the thesis requirement. The MA thesis should be aimed at publication and, upon completion, be ready for submission in a venue appropriate to the candidate's specific field. The signatures of the director and second reader on the signature form signal that the student has fulfilled the requirement.

Thesis formatting and organization guidelines are available on the [Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation site](#). Deadlines for formatting approval are also listed on this site – you will need to submit an approved draft of your thesis to the Graduate School. By the final submission deadline, you will need to submit the thesis electronically to the Graduate School along with a signed [Thesis Signature and Approval form](#).

## **MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH, WITH EMPHASIS IN COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC**

### **Specific Requirements**

- Six hours (ENGL 790 and 791).
- Six hours from the following courses: ENGL 690\* (see workshop restrictions below), 792, 793, 794, 795, 890.
- Six hours of English and/or American literature, 700-800 level.
- Nine hours of electives (must be approved by the student's advisor and may include the ENGL 691–692 three-hour sequence).
- Three hours of ENGL 799, thesis writing
- Reading knowledge of one language other than English.
- Thesis (see description below).

\* No more than one workshop course can be counted in the 30 hours of classroom credits; students wishing to emphasize technical writing should consult the graduate director about special conditions.

### **Program of Study**

You must submit a [Master's Degree Program of Study Form](#) (signed by your advisor and the Graduate Director) to the Dean of the Graduate School, outlining your entire degree program.

### **Thesis**

The MA thesis is expected to make a defensible contribution to scholarship on a figure, text, movement, problem, or current questions in Composition and Rhetoric. The thesis should be written by the student with frequent consultations from their advisor to determine direction and continually improve upon the research during the second semester of the second year. The thesis should be a 30- to 35-page paper (approximately 10,000 words) that may be based on a seminar paper but, if so, significantly revises and extends that paper. In certain fields, the director and second reader may determine the length and format of the thesis requirement. The MA thesis should be aimed at publication and, upon completion, be ready for submission in a venue appropriate to the candidate's specific field. The signatures of the director and second reader on the title page signal

that the student has fulfilled the requirement.

Thesis formatting and organization guidelines are available on the Graduate School website. By the format check deadline, you will need to submit an approved draft of your thesis to the Graduate School for formatting approval. By the final-submission deadline, you will need to submit the thesis electronically to the Graduate School along with a signed [Thesis Signature and Approval form](#).

## **MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING**

This is a 45-hour degree designed for students who wish to pursue a career in creative writing or the teaching of creative writing.

### **Specific Requirements**

- 15 hours of workshop courses
- Three hours in theory (three of these may be in the theory and teaching of composition; however, the three-hour ENGL 691–692 sequence may not be counted toward the theory requirement).
- Nine hours in literature.
- Twelve hours of approved electives.
- Six hours of project writing (ENGL 798: Project Hours; formerly ENGL 799: Thesis Preparation)
- Project Defense

### **Program of Study**

You must submit a [Master's Degree Program of Study Form](#) (signed by your advisor and the Graduate Director) to the Dean of the Graduate School, outlining your entire degree program.

### **Project**

A book-length work (a novel, a collection of short stories, or a collection of poems) of a quality that compares favorably with work being published by university presses, commercial trade publishers, or independent literary presses. Your project director will supervise your ENGL 798 hours and your project will be read by two other faculty members: one from the MFA program and one non-MFA faculty member from the English Department. Additionally, you are encouraged to consider adding to your committee an optional fourth reader from outside of the English Department. You must orally defend your project before your committee. The deadline for the MFA project defense is April 8.

## **MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH AND MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE**

The joint MA/M.L.I.S. degree program requires 55 hours. Both degrees are awarded simultaneously.

*Advising:* MA/MLIS students should identify academic advisors in both the Department of English and the School of Library and Information Science. Prior to registering for classes each semester, you should make an appointment to talk with both advisors. Your MA advisor will help you plan and file a program of study. Students should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies for advising in English.

### **Specific Requirements**

- A reading knowledge of one language other than English.
- ENGL 700 (recommended) or another elective.
- One course from each of five course groups as listed in the Graduate Bulletin (Medieval and

Renaissance non-dramatic; Drama; British Literature, 1660-1900; American Literature before 1900; Twentieth-century Literature).

- One course in allied professional field (e.g., ENGL 796, 870-872, HIST 790, CLIS 719).
- Two other English courses.
- One hour of Thesis Preparation (ENGL 799).
- Course requirements in Librarianship (CLIS 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706) and nine hours of electives.
- Thesis: the thesis will often result from an assignment in ENGL 700 and will be read by the instructor of ENGL 700 and the English Department member of the Joint Committee

### **TRANSITION FROM MA TO PHD**

The internal progression from master study to doctoral study is not automatic. Students must apply to the PhD through the Graduate School. Successful applicants have mostly A's in their Master's-level work and the strong support of those who have taught them. Admission to the PhD Program is contingent upon timely completion of all work for the MA.

### **PHD IN ENGLISH, WITH AN EMPHASIS IN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE**

This advanced graduate degree, which has a normative timeline of five years, requires a minimum of 36 credit hours post master's level consisting of a minimum of 24 credit hours of course work and 12 credit hours of dissertation work.

#### **Specific Requirements**

- At least 24 hours of course work including at least two 800-level seminars, one class in critical theory, and the three-hour 691–692 pedagogy sequence.
- 12 hours of Dissertation Preparation (ENGL 899).
- Reading knowledge of one language other than English (satisfied by passing a reading exam or a 400-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of B or better, or a 500-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of C or better). Students may also fulfill a language requirement by passing ENGL 701: Old English or ENGL 701: Beowulf and Old English Heroic Verse with a grade of B or better.
- Admission to doctoral candidacy through a Qualifying Exam and approval of the Graduate Director.
- Written Comprehensive Exams: one in the primary field and one in the secondary field.
- Oral Exam.
- Dissertation and Oral Dissertation Defense.

#### **Transfer Credit**

Course work not part of a completed certificate program or graduate degree from USC or another institution may be transferred for credit toward a masters or doctoral degree. Course work transferred from another institution must be relevant to the program and have course content and a level of instruction equivalent to that offered by the University's own graduate programs.

Approval for acceptance of transfer credit to a student's program of study must be approved and justified by the student's academic program and submitted to the dean of The Graduate School for final approval on the [Request for Transfer of Academic Credit \(G-RTC\)](#) form.

No more than 6 semester hours may be transferred into the PhD Program of Study. Only credits with grades of B or better may be transferred from another institution into a doctoral degree program. Course work transferred into a doctoral degree program must be no more than ten years old at the time of graduation. Transfer credit is not posted to the student's official academic transcript until the term of graduation.

## Electives

Up to two electives may be taken in other departments on subjects directly related to your course of study. These electives must be approved by your doctoral committee and the Graduate Director.

## Major and Minor Fields

Students should design their major and minor fields in consultation with the members of their committee and the Graduate Director. Traditionally, major fields have focused on distinct periods of English and American literary history (for example, 19<sup>th</sup>-century English Literature or 20<sup>th</sup>-century American Literature). In recent years, though, the scope of possible major fields—reflecting current faculty specializations and student interests—has been widened to include more global routes of inquiry (for example, Postcolonial Literature) and more focused examinations of particular national or transnational literary traditions (for example, African American Literature). Minor lists might comprise a distinct body of theory (for example, Feminist or Critical Race Theory), sub-fields of global Anglophone literature or any given national literature (for example, South Asian Literature or Southern Literature), or interdisciplinary intellectual fields such as Disability Studies or Women's and Gender Studies. If students plan to pursue a minor field in Women's and Gender Studies, they are encouraged to meet the requirements for the Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies.

### *Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies:*

The Certificate of Graduate Study in Women's and Gender Studies is interdisciplinary and requires a total of 18 graduate credits within a six-year period in prescribed and elective courses.

- All students must take the two core courses: WGST 701 and 702.
- Each student must take at least nine credits in elective courses chosen from an approved list to meet the student's own interests.
- A final required seminar, WGST 797, serves as a capstone experience to help integrate the elective courses with the material learned in the introductory core.

Please see [here](#) for information about electives and for the application procedure required to enroll in the certificate program.

## Program of Study

By the beginning of your third term, you must, in consultation with your advisor, fill out the PhD [Program of Study form](#) and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies. Students will bring this form to the Qualifying Exam with the Graduate Director and major faculty advisor to determine if readiness to advance to doctoral candidacy. Students should schedule this meeting no later than the start of the third semester (see description of this process below). This form must be on file with the Dean of the Graduate School before you will be cleared for graduation. It will help you and your advisor direct your progress toward the degree. The Program of Study should be amended periodically to reflect actual courses taken by filing the [Adjustment form](#) or by submitting a new Program of Study form.

## Admission to Doctoral Candidacy

Admission by the Department of English for graduate study does not mean admission as a candidate in the English and American Literature PhD program.

PhD students in the English Department are admitted to doctoral candidacy on the basis of their Record, and by meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and the major adviser, to be held no later than the beginning of the student's third term. Prior to this meeting, the Graduate Director will review the student's class grades with the expectation of at least a 3.0 GPA over the course of the first year of study. The student will come to the meeting with a completed Program of Study form and an accompanying statement (5–6 pages) detailing progress toward dissertation and plans for future study and research. In the event of an unsuccessful review, the student will be put on probation, not be



admitted to candidacy, and be required to maintain a 3.5 GPA for each of the following two semesters. Additionally, field faculty will meet at the end of the probationary student's second year in order to make a recommendation to the Graduate Director about the student's future in the program. The Graduate Director will factor this recommendation and the student's GPA into a decision about whether the probationary student should be admitted to candidacy at the end of the second year and allowed to continue in the program.

### **Doctoral Committee**

Your committee should reflect the varied interests in the field that shape the direction of your dissertation and the field you want to be a part of. A focus that combines some aspect of national, historical, theoretical, philosophical, and literary genre will help to define your work. No later than the end of your second year, you should notify the Graduate Office that you have assembled a doctoral committee of three or four professors in your areas of specialization by obtaining the necessary signatures and filing a [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request form](#). Each committee should consist of three faculty members from the English Department along with one professor from outside the department with no departmental affiliation (for example, not a jointly hired faculty member). Often graduate students find faculty in their broader field of interest from outside the institution. In consultation with this committee, you must devise and file with the Graduate Office a reading list and tentative body of course work. This will be the basis of the formal Program of Study, initially submitted as part of the process of admission to doctoral candidacy at the start of the second term in the program. At any time, you may change the composition of your committee by advising the Graduate Director and any members removed from the committee (correspondence advising members of their removal should be copied to the Graduate Director) and by revising the Doctoral Committee Appointment Request form.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

Students are required to take written comprehensive exams in both a major and minor field by the fall semester of their fourth year in the program but should ideally have taken them during the preceding spring. This 72-hour take-home exam will consist of a response to a question in the primary field and another response to a question in the secondary field. The completed exam should not exceed 7,500 words in length.

There are no standardized reading lists for the PhD comprehensive exams in literature; instead, you are required to compile your own reading lists in consultation with your director and members of your committee. The purpose of these lists is twofold: they should cover the major texts, authors, and debates in your chosen fields of expertise, but they should also reflect your particular interests, investigations, and priorities for your emerging dissertation project. It is your responsibility, along with your committee, to strike this balance between field coverage and dissertation focus. At any point, too, you should consult the Director of Graduate Studies for guidance. No later than three months before you plan to sit the exams, you must secure your committee's approval for a provisional set of reading lists, which you must then file with the Graduate Office. By the beginning of the semester in which you plan to sit the exams, you must secure your committee's approval for your final lists, which you should also submit to the Graduate Office. Students who have not followed this procedure will not be allowed to sign up for the exams.

Questions for the primary field exam are written and graded by the qualified members of your doctoral committee. Questions for the secondary field exam are solicited from appropriate faculty by a member of the doctoral committee, who also calls on members of that faculty as graders (graders are notified that they are reading minor field exams).

### **Scheduling of Exams**

In the semester that you plan to take the comprehensive exams, you must sign up with the Graduate Office. The exams will be offered once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester and will take place over a weekend—i.e., from Friday at noon until Monday at noon. Students will not be

allowed to schedule alternative days or times in which to take the written exams.

### **Grading of Exams**

To pass each exam, you must receive passing grades on each question from two of your three readers. To receive a pass with distinction, you must receive grades of pass with distinction from two of your three readers. Should you fail one part of the exam (primary or secondary field), you will only have to retake that part; if, however, you fail both parts of the exam, you are required to retake the entire exam. You have two opportunities to pass the written exam, and you must retake any failed portion of the exam within one year.

### **Oral Examination**

You should aim to take the oral comprehensive examination within one month of the time you are notified that you have passed the written examination. This exam typically lasts from one to two hours. The oral examiners will include departmental members of your doctoral committee, with the option to bring the outside reader in at this point. If you do not pass the oral examination, you must take it again within a year. You have two opportunities to pass this exam.

### **Prospectus Meeting**

Within thirty days of passing the oral exam, doctoral candidates should submit and defend a dissertation prospectus laying out the significance, scope, research method, and theoretical approach to the dissertation topic, along with chapter summaries, and a timetable for completion. Students should obtain the [prospectus defense form](#) from the Graduate English Office and have the committee's signatures at the end of a successful defense. The prospectus defense form together with a brief description of the project should be filed with the Graduate English Office as soon as possible after the meeting.

The purpose of the prospectus defense is to gain advice and approval from your full dissertation committee (dissertation director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from outside the department). Approval of the prospectus constitutes an agreement that committee members will not object to the finished dissertation if it fulfills the basic plan, methods, and theoretical approach outlined initially. Of course, committee members may object to the dissertation on other grounds, such as quality of writing, effectiveness of argument, sufficiency of documentation, and so forth. The director of your dissertation will supervise your 12 hours of ENGL 899. Please consult with the Graduate Director and your committee chair for guidelines on the prospectus.

### **Dissertation**

Your dissertation committee is your doctoral committee in its final form; it includes your dissertation director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from an outside department. (English department faculty affiliated with other programs or with joint appointments may not serve as outside readers). The dissertation must be defended orally before the dissertation committee. Students submit work in progress to their Dissertation Director and should get approval from their Director before submitting the dissertation in full to the rest of the committee. At least two weeks before the defense is to be held, you must submit the dissertation in its final form to the director and the rest of the committee. Be sure to consult the Graduate School for current requirements regarding the format of the dissertation as well as for information about electronic submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School.

### **PHD IN ENGLISH, WITH AN EMPHASIS IN COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC**

Doctoral students in Composition and Rhetoric are expected to take at least 33 hours of coursework and 12 dissertation hours (see "Transfer Credit," below, for one option for fulfilling six of those hours). The curriculum synthesizes philosophical, historical, and cultural dimensions

of rhetoric through a variety of courses in rhetorical theory and composition pedagogy. The program gives students the flexibility to design their own specialization within the broad field of Composition and Rhetoric and provides them a unique opportunity to draw on the strengths of its core faculty and also of rhetoricians within the Speech Communication faculty.

### **Specific Requirements\***

- ENGL 790, 791, 890.
- 6 hours from ENGL 792, 793, or 794.
- 6 hours from ENGL 795, 796, 797 or courses from Speech Communication, English or American Literature or another Composition and Rhetoric course with the approval of the student's advisor.
- 12 hours in an area of specialization approved by student's doctoral committee.
- Admission to doctoral candidacy.
- Written comprehensive exams: one in the major field and one in your specialization area.
- Oral exam in the major field
- 12 hours of ENGL 899 (dissertation writing).
- Reading knowledge of one language other than English (satisfied by passing a reading exam or a 400-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of B or better, or a 500-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of C or better). Students may also fulfill a language requirement by passing ENGL 701: Old English or ENGL 701: Beowulf and Old English Heroic Verse with a grade of B or better.
- Minimum of one year's experience teaching English composition at the school or college level.
- Completion of dissertation and oral dissertation defense.

\*The 3-hour 691-692 pedagogy course can count toward total course hours as an elective.

### **Transfer Credit**

Course work not part of a completed certificate program or graduate degree from USC or another institution may be transferred for credit toward a masters or doctoral degree. Course work transferred from another institution must be relevant to the program and have course content and a level of instruction equivalent to that offered by the University's own graduate programs. Approval for acceptance of transfer credit to a student's program of study must be approved and justified by the student's academic program and submitted to the dean of The Graduate School for final approval on the [Request for Transfer of Academic Credit \(G-RTC\)](#) form.

No more than 6 semester hours may be transferred into the PhD Program of Study. Only credits with grades of B or better may be transferred from another institution into a doctoral degree program. Course work transferred into a doctoral degree program must be no more than ten years old at the time of graduation. Transfer credit is not posted to the student's official academic transcript until the term of graduation.

### **Electives**

Up to two electives may be taken in other departments on subjects directly related to your course of study. These electives must be approved by your doctoral committee and/or the Graduate Director.

### **Program of Study**

By the beginning of your third term, you must, in consultation with your advisor, fill out the PhD [Program of Study](#) form and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies; students will bring this form to the meeting to determine qualification for doctoral candidacy that you must schedule with PhD (Literature) the Graduate Director and major advisor no later than the start of the third semester (see description of this process below). This form must be on file with the Dean of the Graduate

School before you will be cleared for graduation. It will help you and your advisor direct your progress toward the degree. The Program of Study should be amended periodically to reflect actual courses taken by filing the Adjustment form or by submitting a new Program of Study form.

### **Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Admission by the Department of English for graduate study does not mean admission as a candidate in the Composition and Rhetoric PhD program.

PhD students in the English Department are admitted to doctoral candidacy on the basis of their record and a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and the major adviser, to be held no later than the beginning of the student's third term. Prior to this meeting, the Graduate Director will review the student's class grades with the expectation of at least a 3.0 GPA over the course of the first year of study. The student will come to the meeting with a completed Program of Study form and an accompanying statement (5–6 pages) detailing progress toward dissertation and degree thus far and plans for future study and research. In the event of an unsuccessful review, the student will be put on probation, not be admitted to candidacy, and be required to maintain a 3.5 GPA for each of the following two semesters. Additionally, field faculty will meet at the end of the probationary student's second year in order to make a recommendation to the Graduate Director about the student's future in the program. The Graduate Director will factor this recommendation and the student's GPA into a decision about whether the probationary student should be admitted to candidacy at the end of the second year and allowed to continue in the program.

### **Doctoral Committee**

No later than the end of your second year, you should notify the Graduate Office that you have assembled a doctoral committee of three or four professors in your areas of specialization by obtaining the necessary signatures and filing a [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request](#) form. Each committee should consist of three faculty members from the English Department along with one professor from outside the department with no departmental affiliations. In consultation with this committee, you must devise and file with the Graduate Office a reading list and tentative body of course work. This will be the basis of the formal Program of Study, initially submitted as part of the process of admission to doctoral candidacy at the start of the second term in the program. At any time, you may change the composition of your committee by advising the Graduate Director and any members removed from the committee (correspondence advising members of their removal should be copied to the Graduate Director) and by revising the Doctoral Committee Appointment Request form.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

Students are required to take written comprehensive exams in both a major and minor field by the fall semester of their fourth year in the program but should ideally have taken them during the preceding spring. The 72-hour take-home comprehensive exam will consist of answers to **three** questions—two from the major area (one in rhetoric and one in composition) and one from the area of specialization. Each response should be no longer than ten pages, meaning that the completed exam should not exceed 7,500 words or 30 pages in length.

### **Scheduling of Exams**

In the semester that you plan to take the comprehensive exams, you must sign up with the Graduate Office. The exams will be offered once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester and will take place over a weekend—i.e., from Friday at noon until Monday at noon. Students will not be allowed to schedule alternative days or times in which to take the written exams.

### **Grading of Exams**

To pass each exam, you must receive passing grades on each question from two of your three readers. To receive a pass with distinction, you must receive grades of pass with distinction from two of your three readers. Should you fail one part of the exam (primary or secondary field), you will only have to retake that part; if, however, you fail both parts of the exam, you are required to retake the entire exam. You have two opportunities to pass the written exam, and you must retake any failed portion of the exam within one year.

### **Oral Examination**

You should aim to take the oral comprehensive examination within one month of the time you are notified that you have passed the written examination. This exam typically lasts from one to two hours. The oral examiners will include departmental members of your doctoral committee, with the option to bring the outside reader in at this point. If you do not pass the oral examination, you must take it again within a year. You have two opportunities to pass this exam.

### **Prospectus Meeting**

Ideally, within thirty days of passing the oral exam, doctoral candidates should submit and defend a dissertation prospectus laying out the significance, scope, research method, and theoretical approach to the dissertation topic, along with chapter summaries, and a timetable for completion. Students should obtain the prospectus defense form from the Graduate English Office and have the committee's signatures at the end of a successful defense. The prospectus defense form together with a brief description of the project should be filed with the Graduate English Office as soon as possible after the meeting.

The purpose of the prospectus defense is to gain advice and approval from your full dissertation committee (dissertation director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from outside the department). Approval of the prospectus constitutes an agreement that committee members will not object to the finished dissertation if it fulfills the basic plan, methods, and theoretical approach outlined initially. Of course, committee members may object to the dissertation on other grounds, such as quality of writing, effectiveness of argument, sufficiency of documentation, and so forth. The director of your dissertation will supervise your 12 hours of ENGL 899.

### **Dissertation**

Your dissertation committee is your doctoral committee in its final form; it includes your dissertation director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from an outside department. (English department faculty affiliated with other programs or with joint appointments may not serve as outside readers). The dissertation must be defended orally before the dissertation committee. At least two weeks before the defense is to be held, you must submit the dissertation in its final form to the director and the rest of the committee. Be sure to consult the Graduate School for current requirements regarding the format of the dissertation as well as for information about electronic submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School.

## **DIRECT-ADMISSION PHD IN ENGLISH, WITH AN EMPHASIS IN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE**

For this six-year program, the minimum course requirements include 60 credit hours, not more than 12 of which may be taken in Dissertation Preparation. No more than 15 hours may be taken in courses numbered at the 500 and 600 levels.

## Specific Requirements:

### Years One-Two:

- One course in American Literature, one in English Literature before 1660, one in English Literature after 1660, and one additional course in the student's primary area.
- English 700 is recommended (or an additional elective if ENGL 700 is not offered) and one critical theory course is required.
- 12 hours of electives, which may include the three-hour 691–692 pedagogy sequence. (No more than six hours of electives may be taken from outside the department during the student's total coursework; all such electives must be approved by the Graduate Director or the doctoral committee).
- Admission to doctoral candidacy at the beginning of the third term (see description of the process below).

### Years Three-Six:

- 18 hours of electives; course work must include at least two 800-level seminars.
- 12 hours of Dissertation Preparation (ENGL 899).
- Reading knowledge of one language other than English (satisfied by passing a reading exam or a 400-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of B or better, or a 500-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of C or better). Students may also fulfill a language requirement by passing ENGL 701: Old English or ENGL 701: Beowulf and Old English Heroic Verse with a grade of B or better.
- Written PhD Comprehensive Examination in the primary and secondary field.
- Oral Examination in the primary field.
- Dissertation & Oral Dissertation Defense.

## Major and Minor Fields

Students should design their major and minor fields in consultation with the members of their committee and the Graduate Director. Traditionally, major fields have focused on distinct periods of English and American literary history (for example, 19<sup>th</sup>-century English Literature or 20<sup>th</sup> -century American Literature). In recent years, though, the scope of possible major fields—reflecting current faculty specializations and student interests—has been widened to include more global routes of inquiry (for example, Postcolonial Literature) and more focused examinations of particular national or transnational literary traditions (for example, African American Literature). Minor lists might comprise a distinct body of theory (for example, Feminist or Critical Race Theory), sub-fields of global Anglophone literature or any given national literature (for example, South Asian Literature or Southern Literature), or interdisciplinary intellectual fields such as Disability Studies, Medical Humanities, Law and Literature, or Women's and Gender Studies. If students plan to pursue a minor field in Women's and Gender Studies, they are encouraged to meet the requirements for the Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies.

### *Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies:*

The Certificate of Graduate Study in Women's and Gender Studies is interdisciplinary and requires a total of 18 graduate credits within a six-year period in prescribed and elective courses.

- All students must take the two core courses: WGST 701 and 702.
- Each student must take at least nine credits in elective courses chosen from an approved list to meet the student's own interests.
- A final required seminar, WGST 797, serves as a capstone experience to help integrate the elective courses with the material learned in the introductory core.

Please see [here](#) for information about electives and for the application procedure



required to enroll in the certificate program.

### **Program of Study**

By the beginning of your third term, you must, in consultation with your advisor, fill out the PhD [Program of Study](#) form and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies; students will bring this form to the meeting to determine qualification for doctoral candidacy scheduled with the Graduate Director and major advisor at the start of the third semester. This form must be on file with the Dean of the Graduate School before you will be cleared for graduation. It will also help you and your advisor monitor your progress toward the degree. The Program of Study should be amended periodically to reflect actual courses taken by filing the [Adjustment form](#).

### **Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Admission by the Department of English for graduate study does not mean admission as a candidate in the English and American Literature PhD program.

Students are admitted to doctoral candidacy on the basis of their record, and by meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and the major advisor, which students should schedule by the beginning of their third term. Prior to this meeting, the Graduate Director will review the student's class grades with the expectation of at least a 3.0 GPA over the course of the first year of study. The student will come to the meeting with a completed Program of Study form and an accompanying statement (five-six pages) detailing progress toward dissertation and degree thus far and plans for future study and research. In the event of an unsuccessful review, the student will be put on probation, not be admitted to candidacy, and be required to maintain a 3.5 GPA for each of the following two semesters. Additionally, field faculty will meet at the end of the student's second year in order to make a recommendation to the Graduate Director about the probationary student's future in the program. The Graduate Director will factor this recommendation and the student's GPA into a decision about whether the probationary student should be admitted to candidacy at the end of the second year and allowed to continue in the program.

### **Doctoral Committee**

No later than the end of your second year, you should notify the Graduate Director that you have assembled a doctoral committee of three or four professors from the department and one professor from outside the department by obtaining the necessary signatures and filing a [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request](#) form. In consultation with this committee, you must devise and file with the Graduate Office a reading list and tentative body of course work. As you progress toward your degree, you will likely need to file an [Adjustment to the Program of Study](#) form you completed as part of the process of admission to doctoral candidacy (see above). At any time, you may change the composition of your committee by notifying the Graduate Director and any members removed from the committee (letters advising members of their removal should be copied to the Graduate Director) and by revising the Doctoral Committee Appointment Request form.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

Direct-admit PhD Students are required to take written comprehensive exams in both a major and minor field by the spring of their fourth year in the program. This 72-hour take-home exam will consist of a response to a question in the primary field and another response to a question in the secondary field. The completed exam should not exceed 7,500 words in length or 30 pages. There are no standardized reading lists for the PhD comprehensive exams in literature; instead, you are required to compile your own reading lists in consultation with your committee. The purpose of these lists is twofold: these lists should cover the major texts, authors, and debates in your chosen fields of expertise, but they also reflect your particular interests, investigations, and priorities for your emerging dissertation project. It is your responsibility to strike this balance between field coverage and dissertation focus. To do this, you should start consulting with your committee about your reading lists well



in advance (ideally a year before you take exams). No later than three months before you plan to sit the exams, you must secure your committee's approval for a provisional set of reading lists, which you must then file with the Graduate Office. By the beginning of the semester in which you plan to sit the exams, you must secure your committee's approval for your final lists, which you should also submit to the Graduate Office. Students who have not followed this procedure will not be allowed to sign up for the exams.

Questions for the primary field exam are written and graded by the qualified members of your doctoral committee. Questions for the secondary field exam are solicited from appropriate faculty by a member of the doctoral committee, who also calls on members of that faculty as graders (graders are notified that they are reading minor field exams).

### **Scheduling of Exams**

In the semester that you plan to take the comprehensive exams, you must sign up with the Graduate Office. The exams will be offered once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester (they will take place over a weekend—i.e., from Friday at noon until Monday at noon). Students will not be allowed to schedule alternative days or times in which to take the written exams.

### **Grading of Exams**

To pass each exam, you must receive passing grades on both questions from two of your three readers. To receive a pass with distinction, you must receive grades of pass with distinction from two of your three readers. Should you fail one part of the exam, you will only have to retake that part; if, however, you fail both parts of the exam, you are required to retake the entire exam. You have two opportunities to pass the written exam, and you must retake any failed portion of the exam within one year.

### **Oral Examination**

You must take the oral comprehensive examination within one month of the time you are notified that you have passed the written examination. This exam typically lasts from one to two hours. The oral examiners will be the departmental members of your doctoral committee and may also include one faculty member from outside the department. If you do not pass the oral examination, you must take it again within a year. You have two opportunities to pass this exam.

### **Prospectus Meeting**

Ideally, within thirty days of passing the oral exam, doctoral candidates should submit and defend a dissertation prospectus laying out the significance, scope, research method, and theoretical approach to the dissertation topic, along with chapter summaries, and a timetable for completion. Students should print the [prospectus defense form](#) from the Graduate English Office, bring it to the prospectus meeting, and have the committee members' signatures at the end of a successful prospectus defense. The prospectus defense form together with a brief description of the project should be filed with the Graduate English Office as soon as possible after the meeting.

The purpose of the prospectus defense is to gain advice and approval from your full dissertation committee (dissertation director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from outside the department). Approval of the prospectus constitutes an agreement that committee members will not object to the finished dissertation if it fulfills the basic plan, methods, and theoretical approach outlined initially. Of course, committee members may object to the dissertation on other grounds, such as quality of writing, effectiveness of argument, sufficiency of documentation, and so forth. The director of your dissertation will supervise your 12 hours of ENGL 899.

### **Dissertation**

Your dissertation committee is your doctoral committee in its final form; it includes your

dissertation director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from an outside department. (English department faculty affiliated with other programs or with joint appointments may not serve as outside readers). The dissertation must be defended orally before the dissertation committee. At least two weeks before the defense is to be held, you must submit the dissertation in its final form, to the director and the rest of the committee. Be sure to consult the Graduate School for current requirements regarding the format of the dissertation as well as for information about electronic submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School.

## **DIRECT-ADMISSION PHD IN ENGLISH, WITH AN EMPHASIS IN COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC**

The curriculum synthesizes philosophical, historical, and cultural dimensions of rhetoric through a variety of courses in rhetorical theory and composition pedagogy. The program gives students the flexibility to design their own specialization within the broad field of Composition and Rhetoric and provides them a unique opportunity to draw on the strengths of its core faculty and also of rhetoricians within the Speech Communication faculty.

For this six-year program, the minimum course requirements include 66 semester hours, not more than 12 of which may be taken in Dissertation Preparation. No more than 15 hours may be taken in courses numbered at the 500 and 600 levels.

### **Specific Requirements\*:**

- ENGL 700 is recommended (or another elective course).
- ENGL 790, 791, 890,
- Six hours from ENGL 792, 793, 794.
- Six hours from the following courses: ENGL 690\* (see workshop restrictions below), 792-797 or courses from Speech Communication or another Composition and Rhetoric course with the approval of the student's advisor.
- Six hours from English and/or American literature, 700-800 level.
- Nine hours of electives \*\* (must be approved by the Composition and Rhetoric committee).
- 12 hours in area of specialization approved by student's doctoral committee.
- Admission to doctoral candidacy.
- Written Comprehensive Exams in the major field and in the area of specialization.
- Oral Exam in the major field.
- 12 hours of ENGL 899 (dissertation writing).
- Reading knowledge of one language other than English (satisfied by passing a reading exam or a 400-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of B or better, or a 500-level course in literature, not in translation, with a grade of C or better). Students may also fulfill a language requirement by passing ENGL 701: Old English or ENGL 701: Beowulf and Old English Heroic Verse with a grade of B or better.
- Minimum of one year's experience teaching English composition at the school or college level.
- Completion of dissertation and oral dissertation defense.

\* No more than one workshop course can be counted in the 30 hours of classroom credits; students wishing to emphasize technical writing should consult the graduate director about special conditions.

\*\* The three-hour 691–692 pedagogy sequence may count toward total course hours as an elective.

### **Program of Study**

By the beginning of your third term, you must, in consultation with your advisor, fill out the [PhD Program of Study](#) form and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies; students will bring this

form to the meeting to determine qualification for doctoral candidacy that you should schedule with the Graduate Director and major advisor by the start of the third semester. This form must be on file with the Dean of the Graduate School before you will be cleared for graduation. It will also help you and your advisor direct your progress toward the degree. The Program of Study should be amended periodically to reflect actual courses taken by filing the [Adjustment form](#) available through the forms library on the Graduate School's website.

### **Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Admission by the Department of English for graduate study does not mean admission as a candidate in the Composition and Rhetoric PhD program.

Students are admitted to doctoral candidacy on the basis of their record and a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and the major adviser, to be held at the beginning of the student's third term. Prior to this meeting, the Graduate Director will review the student's class grades with the expectation of at least a 3.0 GPA over the course of the first year of study. The student will come to the meeting with a completed [Program of Study](#) form and an accompanying statement (5–6 pages) detailing progress toward dissertation and degree thus far and plans for future study and research. In the event of an unsuccessful review, the student will be put on probation, not be admitted to candidacy, and be required to maintain a 3.5 GPA for each of the following two semesters. Additionally, field faculty will meet at the end of the probationary student's second year in order to make a recommendation to the Graduate Director about the student's future in the program. The Graduate Director will factor this recommendation and the student's GPA into a decision about whether the probationary student should be admitted to candidacy at the end of the second year and allowed to continue in the program.

### **Doctoral Committee**

No later than the end of your second year, you should notify the Graduate Director that you have assembled a doctoral committee of three or four professors in your major field plus an outside reader by obtaining the necessary signatures and filing a [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request](#) form available through the forms library on the Graduate School website. In consultation with this committee, you must devise and file with the Graduate Office a reading list and tentative body of course work. This will be the basis of the formal Program of Study, submitted upon admission to candidacy. At any time, you may change the composition of your committee by written notice to the Graduate Director and any members removed from the committee (letters advising members of their removal should be copied to the Graduate Director) and by revising the Doctoral Committee Appointment Request form.

### **Comprehensive Exams**

Doctoral candidates are required to take written comprehensive exams in both composition and rhetoric and the field of specialization by the fall semester of their third year in the program. Questions for the exams are prepared by members of the doctoral committee (and, in the case of some specialization exams, by appropriate faculty in the specialization area).

Questions are based on reading lists for both the major and minor areas. The minor area list is compiled by the candidate and approved by the doctoral committee. Minor reading lists must be on file in the Graduate Office at the beginning of the semester in which you take the exams.

This 72-hour take home exam will consist of answers to three questions— two from the major area (one in rhetoric and one in composition) and one from the area of specialization. Each response should be no longer than ten pages, which is to say that the completed exam should be approximately 7,500 words or 30 pages in length.

### **Scheduling of Exams**

In the semester that you plan to take the comprehensive exams, you must sign up with the Graduate Office. The exams will be offered once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester (these will take place over a weekend—i.e., from Friday at noon until Monday at noon). Students will not be allowed to schedule alternative days or times in which to take the written exams.

### **Grading of the Exam**

To pass the general comprehensive examination, you must receive passing grades on both questions from two of your three readers. To receive a pass with distinction, you must receive grades of pass with distinction on both questions from at least two of your three readers. The same grading standards apply for the response to the specialization exam. Should you fail one part of the exam, you will only have to retake that part; if, however, you fail both parts of the exam, you are required to retake the entire exam. You have two opportunities to pass the written exam, and you must retake any failed portion of the exam within one year.

### **Oral Examination**

You should aim to take the oral comprehensive examination within one month of the time you are notified that you have passed the written examination. This exam typically lasts from one to two hours. The oral examiners will be your doctoral committee and one faculty member from another department. The exam covers both your major and your minor fields. If you do not pass the oral examination, you must take it again within a year. You have two opportunities to pass this exam.

### **Prospectus Meeting**

Ideally, within thirty days of passing the oral exam, doctoral candidates should submit and defend before the full dissertation committee, including the outside reader, a dissertation prospectus laying out the significance, scope, research method, and theoretical approach to the dissertation topic, along with chapter summaries, and a timetable for completion.

Students should print the [prospectus meeting form](#) from the Graduate English Office and get committee members' signatures at the end of successful prospectus defense. The prospectus form together with a brief description of the project should be filed with the Graduate English Office as soon as possible after the meeting.

The purpose of the prospectus meeting is to gain advice and approval from your dissertation committee (director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from outside the department). Approval of the prospectus constitutes an agreement that committee members will not object to the finished dissertation if it fulfills the basic plan, methods, and theoretical approach outlined initially. Of course, committee members may object to the dissertation on other grounds, such as quality of writing, effectiveness of argument, sufficiency of documentation, and so forth. The director of your dissertation will supervise your 12 hours of ENGL 899.

### **Dissertation**

Your dissertation committee is your doctoral committee in its final form; it includes your dissertation director, at least two specialists in your research area or areas, and one faculty member from an outside department. (English department faculty affiliated with other programs or with joint appointments cannot serve as outside readers). No later than the end of your second year, you should notify the Graduate Director that you have filed a [Doctoral Committee Appointment Request](#) form available through the forms library on the Graduate School website. At any time, you may change the composition of your committee by advising the Graduate Director and any members removed from the committee (correspondence advising members of

their removal should be copied to the Graduate Director) and by revising the Doctoral Committee Appointment Request form. The dissertation must be defended orally before the dissertation committee. At least two weeks before the defense is to be held, you must submit the dissertation in its final form, to the director and the rest of the committee. Be sure to consult the Graduate School for current requirements regarding the format of the dissertation as well as for information about electronic submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School.

## **ETHICAL ISSUES**

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism, presenting another person's words or ideas as your own, is not tolerated. The Graduate Program in English assumes that work submitted by students – all process work, drafting, brainstorming, final works – will be generated by the students themselves as directed by the class and program requirements. This policy means that the following constitute violations of academic honesty: a student has another person/entity do the work of any substantive portion of a graded assignment for them, which includes buying work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete work, and using generative AI tools such as ChatGPT.

The community of scholars at the University of South Carolina is dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Choosing to join the community obligates each member to the Carolinian Creed. Academic dialogue and civil discourse are the cornerstone of the educational system and crucial to individual growth. Students are encouraged to practice personal and academic integrity, respect the rights and dignity of all persons, respect the rights and property of others, discourage bigotry, while striving to learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions, and demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their need for conditions which support their work and development.

### **University Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment & Sexual Misconduct ([CR 1.00](#))**

Discrimination or harassment based on age, ancestry, citizenship status, color, disability, ethnicity, familial status, gender (including transgender), gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (false pregnancy, termination of 8 pregnancy, childbirth, recovery therefrom or related medical conditions, breastfeeding), race, religion (including religious dress and grooming practices), sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other bases under federal, state, local law, or regulations is prohibited. Sexual Misconduct, including sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and sexual harassment (university definition and/or Title IX), is prohibited. The university prohibits discrimination and harassment based on protected class along with sexual misconduct in all education programs and activities, including employment and admissions, for faculty, staff, prospective employees, students, student organizations, and other persons utilizing the university's resources (e.g. third parties such as volunteers, visitors, or contractors).

It is the responsibility of every member of the University of South Carolina community to foster an environment free from prohibited conduct, as defined by this policy. All members of the community are expected to take reasonable actions to prevent or stop an act of prohibited conduct and the university will help prevent retaliation from occurring.

This policy provides information about campus and community resources, the difference between privacy and legal confidentiality, how to make a report of discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or related retaliation, available supportive measures, and information about resolution options, including how to file a complaint requesting an investigative or informal resolution. [See the full policy for further details: Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment & Sexual Misconduct (CR 1.00) <<https://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/cr100.pdf>>].

## **University Policy on Prohibited Consensual Relationships**

The purpose of this policy is to address consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships between faculty, staff, students, and third parties in which there is a power differential. Without alternative arrangements, these relationships are prohibited by this policy. This policy seeks to ensure the learning and working environment is free from real or apparent conflicts of interest when individuals in positions of unequal power at the university are involved in relationships.

Romantic and/or sexual relationships, even if consensual, may have unintended, adverse effects on the climate of an academic program or work unit, thereby impairing the learning or working environment for the parties involved and others, both during a relationship and after the dissolution of the relationship.

Sexual and/or romantic relationships, even when consensual, between individuals in inherently unequal positions, e.g., in which one party has supervisory authority, academic authority, or other authority over another party, should be avoided and in many circumstances are strictly prohibited by this policy. These relationships can occur in multiple contexts, however, this policy covers all sexual and/or romantic relationships involving individuals in unequal positions, even if not addressed explicitly in this policy.

An employee may not have a consensual romantic and/or sexual relationship with anyone where a power differential exists or is reasonably likely to exist in the future. A non-exhaustive list of prohibited relationships is shown below. Similarly, employees are prohibited from exercising supervisory authority over others with whom they have had a prior consensual relationship.

The university requires self-disclosure of prohibited relationships to allow for alternative arrangements to rid of potential for conflict of interest, exploitation, favoritism, and bias, which may undermine the real or perceived integrity of all the education programs and activities including employment and admissions.

This policy applies to all members of the University of South Carolina community, including students, faculty, staff and third parties. It is the responsibility of every member of the University of South Carolina community to avoid prohibited relationships and report them as required by this policy.

More information on this policy can be found here:

[https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/civil\\_rights\\_title\\_ix/policies\\_and\\_procedures/](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/civil_rights_title_ix/policies_and_procedures/)

## **Timeline for Completion of Master's Degree in Two Years**

### **Year One**

During your first year you will begin taking classes, work on the coursework requirements, and identify interest areas and a focus for your thesis. Start thinking about potential advisors and second readers for your thesis.

### **Year Two**

During your second year you will complete your coursework and work on your thesis.

*Fall Semester:* In the Fall of your second year, you should identify potential advisors, confirm that the advisor can take you on as an advisee, and then identify a second reader for your thesis. Before leaving for winter break, you should discuss with your advisor and second reader a timeline and some deadlines for your thesis. Also during this semester you should fill out the [Master's Program of Study](#), to be submitted to the Graduate English Office before winter break.

*Spring Semester:* You will complete your thesis and submit copies to your director and second reader for approval. You will also submit the thesis electronically to the Graduate School. Check



the Graduate School calendar for the final submission date for thesis that year. You will also work with the Graduate English Office to complete all the required paperwork for graduation.

**Note:** During your program you must also complete a language requirement as described in the Graduate Handbook under “Degree Requirements: Language Examination”.

Paperwork Required and When to Complete:

- [Master’s Program of Study](#) – Fall of your second year.
- [Thesis Signature Form](#) – After your thesis has been approved.
- Foreign Language Verification – anytime during your MA
- [Program of Study Adjustment](#) – After your thesis has been approved. If there are no changes to your Program of Study between your first submission and graduation, this is not needed.

### **Timeline for Completion of MFA Degree in Three Years**

#### **Year One**

During your first year you will begin taking classes in interest areas and as well as workshop courses in your area of specialty, either fiction or poetry. You should also start developing relationships with professors to start thinking about an advisor for your project.

#### **Year Two**

During the second year you will continue your coursework and begin working on your project with your advisor.

*Fall Semester:* Identify your advisor, and work with your advisor and the English Office coordinator to fill out the [Master’s Program of Study](#). Please aim to submit this for approval before leaving for winter break.

*Spring Semester:* By the end of spring, you should have an advisor and additional readers for your project. Before departing for the summer, discuss with your advisor a timeline and some deadlines for your project chapters.

#### **Year Three**

During your third year you will complete your coursework and the required project hours. Once you have completed your coursework, you will register for project hours and/or workshop courses until the completion of your degree.

*Spring Semester:* You will complete your project and schedule your defense with your director and additional readers. You should plan on submitting your project at least two weeks in advance of your defense date. You must defend your project by April 8. Finally, you will work with the Graduate English Office to ensure that all paperwork required for graduation is completed.

Paperwork Required and When to Complete:

- [Program of Study Master’s](#)– Fall of your second year.
- MFA Project Signature Form - After your successful project defense. We are in the process of creating this new form; it will be available soon on the English Department website.
- [Program of Study Adjustment](#) – After your successful Project defense. If there are no changes to your Program of Study between your first submission and graduation, this is not needed.



## Timeline for Completion of Doctoral Degree in 5 Years

For Regular-Admit PhD Students

### Year One

During your first year you will begin taking classes in your areas of interest, and you should also start developing relationships with your potential advisor (who doesn't necessarily have to be your eventual dissertation director) and committee members. We encourage students to take a variety of courses including those that may not speak directly to your interests when first starting the program. Exposure to a range of intellectual traditions will enrich your theoretical, philosophical, historical, and literary perspectives and will help to shape your dissertation in unforeseen ways.

### Year Two

No later than midterm in your third semester (Fall of your second year), you will meet with the Graduate Director and your major advisor to assess your qualifications for doctoral candidacy. Along with a completed copy of your Program of Study, you should bring to this meeting, which you are responsible for scheduling, a statement (5-6pp.) detailing both your progress toward dissertation and degree thus far and plans for future study and research. (See detailed description of this process in the Graduate Handbook in the section devoted to your degree program).

During your second year you will continue your coursework as designed by you and your advisor. During this year, you should secure a comps/dissertation director and begin forming your committee(s). You will also begin working with your director/committee members to form reading lists for your primary and secondary field comprehensive exams. (**Note:** The readers for your exams do not necessarily have to be the members of your dissertation committee, although the director is often the same for both.) The summer between your second and third years is a great time to tackle some or much of the reading for these exams.

### Year Three

*Fall Semester:* You should finish any coursework not yet completed. Once you have finished coursework and successfully completed your comprehensive exams, you will typically register for dissertation hours each semester.

If you have already completed coursework and had your primary and secondary field reading lists approved by your readers, then you may choose to take your comprehensive exams during this semester. In response to an e-mail from the Student Services Coordinator, you will need to identify the semester in which you plan to take your exams as well as your potential readers (your director plus two-three other professors from the department); although the department typically asks three readers to read each field exam, depending on your degree emphasis and director's preference, your committee may opt to bring in one professor from outside the department at this point.

*Spring Semester:* If you have not already done so, you should take your comps during the spring semester of your third year or, less ideal, fall semester of your fourth year in order to complete the degree within five years.

Within one month of receiving news that you have passed the written portion of the exam, you must schedule your Oral Examination, which is based entirely on your primary field exam. Within 30 days of successfully passing your oral examination you must have a [dissertation prospectus](#) approved by your committee (it is at the prospectus meeting that most committees bring in the fourth outside reader).

## Years Four and Five

You will work closely with your dissertation committee and especially your director to research and complete your dissertation in a timely manner. You should submit to your director chapters as you progress and consult your committee frequently for changes/improvements to be made. You will need to secure approval from your director before submitting the full dissertation to the rest of your committee members. You will submit a final copy of the dissertation no less than two weeks before the oral defense is to be held unless otherwise specified by your committee. Be sure to check the current Graduate School calendar for the final submission date for dissertations.

Note: During your program, you must also complete one language requirement as described in the Graduate Handbook under “Degree Requirements: Language Requirement”. Ideally this will happen while you’re still taking coursework.

Paperwork Required and When to Complete:

- [Qualifying Exam Verification](#) – in the Fall semester of your second year.
- [Doctoral Program of Study](#) – in the Fall semester of your second year.
- Comprehensive Examination Reading list – before you take your written comprehensive exams
- [Comprehensive Exam Verification](#) – after your successful oral exams.
- Foreign Language verification – it is ideal to complete the foreign language requirement before comprehensive exams. Proof of meeting your foreign language requirement is shown through coursework and evidence of passing a translation exam.
- [Prospectus Approval Form](#) – after your successful prospectus defense.
- [Doctoral Committee Appointment Form](#) – After your successful prospectus defense.
- [Doctoral Program of Study Revisions](#) – before the semester you plan to graduate.
- [Dissertation Signature and Approval Form](#) – After your successful dissertation defense.
- [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) – After your successful dissertation defense.

## Timeline for Completion of Doctoral Degree in Six Years – Direct Admission

### Year One

During your first year you will begin taking classes in your areas of interest, and you should also start developing relationships with your potential advisor (who doesn’t necessarily have to be your eventual dissertation director) and committee members.

### Year Two

You will continue your coursework in your second year. No later than midterm in your third semester (Fall of your second year), you will meet with the Graduate Director and your major advisor to assess your qualifications for doctoral candidacy. Along with a completed copy of your [Program of Study](#), you should bring to this meeting, which you are responsible for scheduling, a statement (5-6pp.) detailing both your progress toward dissertation and degree thus far and plans for future study and research. (See detailed description of this process in the Graduate Handbook in the section devoted to your degree program).

### Year Three

During your third year you will continue your coursework as designed by you and your advisor. During this year, you should secure a comps/dissertation director and begin forming your committee(s). You will also begin working with your director/committee members to form reading lists for your primary and secondary field comprehensive exams. (Note: The readers for your exams do not necessarily have to be the members of your dissertation committee, although the director is often the same for both.) The summer between your third and fourth years is a great time to tackle some or much of the reading for these exams.

## Year Four

*Fall Semester:* You should finish any coursework not yet completed. Once you have finished coursework and successfully completed your comprehensive exams, you will typically register for dissertation hours each semester.

If you have already completed coursework and had your primary and secondary field reading lists approved by your readers, then you may choose to take your comprehensive exams during this semester. In response to an e-mail from the Student Services Coordinator, you will need to identify the semester in which you plan to take your exams as well as your potential readers (your director plus two-three other professors from the department); although the department typically asks three readers to read each field exam, depending on your degree emphasis and director's preference, your committee may opt to bring in one professor from outside the department at this point.

*Spring Semester:* If you have not already done so, you should take your comps during the spring semester of your fourth year or, less ideal, fall semester of your fifth year in order to complete the degree within six years.

Within one month of receiving news that you have passed the written portion of the exam, you must schedule your Oral Examination, which is based entirely on your primary field exam. Within 30 days of successfully passing your oral examination you must have a dissertation prospectus approved by your committee (it is at the prospectus meeting that most committees bring in the fourth outside reader).

## Years Five and Six

You will work closely with your dissertation committee and especially your director to research and complete your dissertation in a timely manner. You should submit to your director chapters as you progress and consult your committee frequently for changes/improvements to be made. You will need to secure approval from your director before submitting the full dissertation to the rest of your committee members. You will submit a final copy of the dissertation no less than two weeks before the oral defense is to be held unless otherwise specified by your committee. Be sure to check the current Graduate School calendar for the final submission date for dissertations.

Note: During your program, you must also complete one language requirement as described in the Graduate Handbook under "Degree Requirements: Language Requirement". Ideally this will happen while you're still taking coursework.

Paperwork Required and When to Complete:

- [Qualifying Exam Verification](#) – in the Fall semester of your second year.
- [Doctoral Program of Study](#) – in the Fall semester of your second year.
- Comprehensive Examination Reading list – before you take your written comprehensive exams
- [Comprehensive Exam Verification](#) – after your successful oral exams.
- Foreign Language verification – it is ideal to complete the foreign language requirement before comprehensive exams. Proof of meeting your foreign language requirement is shown through coursework and evidence of passing a translation exam.
- [Prospectus Approval Form](#) – after your successful prospectus defense.
- [Doctoral Committee Appointment Form](#) – After your successful prospectus defense.
- [Doctoral Program of Study Revisions](#) – before the semester you plan to graduate.
- [Dissertation Signature and Approval Form](#) – After your successful dissertation defense.
- [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) – After your successful dissertation defense.

## Course Numbers

ENGL 550 - Advanced English Grammar  
ENGL 565 - African American Theatre  
ENGL 600 - Seminar in Verse Composition  
ENGL 601 - Seminar in Verse Composition  
ENGL 602 - Fiction Workshop: Short Story  
ENGL 603 - Nonfiction Prose Workshop  
ENGL 604 - Seminar in Composition for the Visual Media  
ENGL 605 - Seminar in Composition for the Visual Media  
ENGL 606 - Playwriting Workshop  
ENGL 610 - Fiction Workshop: Book-Length Manuscript  
ENGL 611 - Writing the Longer Nonfiction Project  
ENGL 612 - Writing Poetry: Traditional and Modern Forms  
ENGL 613 - Writing the Full-Length Play  
ENGL 615 - Academic and Professional Writing  
ENGL 616 - Writing Children's and Young Adult Literature  
ENGL 620 - Computer Methods for Humanistic Problems  
ENGL 620P - Laboratory for Computer Methods for Humanistic Problems  
ENGL 650 - Special Topics in Literature  
ENGL 680 - Survey of Linguistics  
ENGL 690 - Special Topics in Composition  
ENGL 691 - Teaching of Literature in College  
ENGL 692 - Teaching of Composition in College  
ENGL 700 - Introduction to Graduate Study of English  
ENGL 701 - Special Topics in Old English Literature and Culture  
ENGL 704 - Special Topics in Medieval Literature and Culture  
ENGL 706 - Special Topics in 16th and 17th Century British Literature and Culture  
ENGL 707 - Special Topics in 18th Century British Literature and Culture  
ENGL 709 - Special Topics in 19th Century British Literature and Culture  
ENGL 714 - Special Topics in 20th & 21st Century British Literature and Culture  
ENGL 719 - Special Topics in Colonial American Literature and Culture  
ENGL 721 - Special Topics in 19th Century American Literature and Culture  
ENGL 722 - Special Topics in 20th & 21st Century American Literature and Culture  
ENGL 731 - Special Topics in Children's and Young Adult Literature  
ENGL 733 - Classics of Western Literary Theory  
ENGL 734 - Modern Literary Theory  
ENGL 736 - Special Topics in Gender and Sexuality Studies  
ENGL 739 - Special Topics in Critical Race and Ethnic Studies  
ENGL 740 - Special Topics in Southern Literature and Culture  
ENGL 741 - Special Topics in African American Literature and Culture  
ENGL 743 - Special Topics in Women's Literature and Culture  
ENGL 746 - Special Topics in Transatlantic Literature and Culture  
ENGL 747 - Special Topics in Global Anglophone Literature and Culture  
ENGL 748 - Special Topics in Postcolonial Literature and Culture  
ENGL 749 - Special Topics in Performance Studies  
ENGL 754 - Special Topics in Film and Media Studies  
ENGL 764 - Special Topics in Theory and Critical Methods  
ENGL 765 - Advanced Film Study  
ENGL 766 - Special Topics in Genre, Form, and Aesthetics  
ENGL 776 - Introduction to Bibliography and Textual Studies  
ENGL 781 - History of English Language

ENGL 782 - Varieties of American English  
ENGL 788 - Stylistics  
ENGL 789 - Poetics  
ENGL 790 - Survey of Composition Studies  
ENGL 791 - Introduction to Research on Written Composition  
ENGL 792 - Classical Rhetoric  
ENGL 793 - Rhetorical Theory and Practice, Medieval to Modern  
ENGL 794 - Modern Rhetorical Theory  
ENGL 795 - The Teaching of Business and Technical Writing  
ENGL 796 - Special Topics in the Teaching of English  
ENGL 797 - Current Scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition  
ENGL 799 - Thesis Preparation  
ENGL 803 - Special Topics: Seminar in Literary and Cultural Studies  
ENGL 804 - Special Topics: Seminar in Theory and Critical Methods  
ENGL 805 - Special Topics: Seminar in Media Studies  
ENGL 831 - Theory of Prose Fiction  
ENGL 832 - Theory of Poetry  
ENGL 846 - Studies in Southern Literature  
ENGL 850 - Studies in British and American Literature  
ENGL 862 - Special Topics in Children's and Young Adult Literature  
ENGL 870 - Seminar in Bibliography, Textual Criticism, and Editing  
ENGL 871 - Seminar in Bibliography, Textual Criticism, and Editing  
ENGL 872 - Seminar in Bibliography, Textual Criticism, and Editing  
ENGL 890 - Studies in Rhetoric and Composition  
ENGL 895 - Directed Reading and Research  
ENGL 896 - Directed Reading and Research  
ENGL 899 - Dissertation Preparation

## **Helpful Forms**

You can access and download a wide variety of forms—e.g., Master’s Degree or Certificate Program of Study, Doctoral Program of Study, Thesis and Dissertation Approval forms, and so on—from the Graduate School’s Forms Library.

The Registrar’s forms library will have forms related to registration and enrollment, such as audit forms, grade change forms, and registration exception forms.

Some forms are available only on Self Service Carolina, such as the Residency Verification Form and the name change form.

When in doubt about where to find a form, contact the English Graduate Program Coordinator or the Director of Graduate Studies to point you in the right direction.