

**Northern Illinois University
Department of English**

**Graduate Student
Handbook 2022-2023**



Photo by Michael Day

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1. Introduction

The Department of English offers a variety of options within its programs for the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. This handbook explains the rules and procedures pertaining to those degrees, augmenting the policies and regulations contained in the Graduate Catalog.

It is the responsibility of each student admitted to the Graduate School to know and to observe all regulations and procedures related to the degree being sought as outlined in either the Graduate Catalog in effect at the time of admission or the Graduate Catalog in effect at the time of graduation. Regulations will not be waived nor will exceptions be granted because a student pleads ignorance of the rule or because he or she was not informed of it by the Director of Graduate Studies or other authority. In particular, students planning to obtain a degree should be aware of the deadlines for filing the necessary documents in the Graduate School.

The rules, procedures, and standards described in this booklet are determined by the Graduate Faculty of the Department of English and are administered by the Graduate Studies Committee, by the Director of Graduate Studies, and by the Chair of the English Department. As changes are made in various requirements, they will be communicated to the department in the form of addenda to this handbook and by memoranda to students. Students must stay abreast of these changes. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this handbook, its policies are binding only insofar as they reflect the policies set forth in the Graduate Catalog, available in its latest edition here: <http://catalog.niu.edu/index.php>

Individual questions or problems may be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies.

2. Admission to the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs

All decisions about admission to graduate degree programs offered in English are made by the Director of Graduate Studies upon recommendation by the Admissions and Standards Committee. When the applicant's admission file is complete in the Graduate School, it is forwarded to the department for evaluation. The department's decision to admit, to admit with certain provisions or stipulations, or not to admit is reported to the Graduate School, which in turn notifies the applicant.

All the below dates are for **priority consideration**, meaning the department will still consider applications after the stated deadlines. Assistantship applications will be considered after the deadline if funding is available.

The Graduate School has established the following priority consideration deadlines for admission for each semester.

- U.S. citizens and international students living in the United States: **April 15** for fall admission; **October 10** for spring admission; **April 15** for summer admission.
- International students living abroad: **March 15** for fall admission; **September 15** for spring admission.
- Consideration for Graduate Assistantships requires a separate application, which has an annual deadline of **March 1** for priority consideration on assistantships offered in the following academic year (though, if funding is available, the department will consider late applications). The application is here: https://www.hr.niu.edu/hrs/_files/employment/3700-graduate-assistant-application.pdf

2.1. Applying for Admission and Admission Requirements

The NIU English Department sets high admission standards in order to ensure student success in our programs. All elements of the M.A. and Ph.D. applications are completed online through the **Graduate School application system**.

Start your application via this link: <http://www.niu.edu/grad/admissions/apply-now.shtml>

2.1.1. For Master's Degrees – Native English-Speaking Applicants

1. Transcripts from all institutions of higher education attended (Minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0/Minimum English course GPA of 3.2)
2. Two letters of recommendation (from professors who know the applicant's work well).
3. A goals statement (explaining the nature and purpose of your interest in the area of English studies that you wish to pursue in our program).
4. A writing sample (an example of quality work, ideally in the area of English studies you wish to pursue, in the range of 1,000 to 3000 words [excluding Works Cited and notes, if applicable]).

2.12. For Master's Degrees – Non-Native English-Speaking Applicants

1. Transcripts from all institutions of higher education attended (Minimum GPA of 3.2)
2. Two letters of recommendation (Two letters of recommendation from professors who know the applicant's work well, and who can speak credibly and specifically about the applicant's ability, surmised or witnessed, in an English-speaking environment)
3. A goals statement (explaining the nature and purpose of your interest in the area of English studies that you wish to pursue in our program).
4. A writing sample (an example of quality work, ideally, in the area of English studies you wish to pursue, in the range of 1,000 to 3000 words [excluding Works Cited and notes, if applicable]).
5. TOEFL or IELTS test scores [TOEFL IBT score of at least 80 (with a spoken score of 26) or PBT score of at least 550; or IELTS scores of 7 (speaking) and 7 (composite)]

2.13. For the Ph.D. – Native English-Speaking Applicants

1. Transcripts from all institutions of higher education attended (Minimum graduate GPA of 3.2)
2. Three letters of recommendation (from professors who know the applicant's work well).
3. A goals statement (explaining the nature and purpose of your interest in the area of English studies that you wish to pursue in our program).
4. A writing sample (an example of quality work, ideally in the area of English studies you wish to pursue, in the range of 2,000 to 6,500 words [excluding Works Cited and notes, if applicable]).

2.14. For the Ph.D. – Non-Native English-Speaking Applicants

1. Transcripts from all institutions of higher education attended (Minimum graduate GPA of 3.2)
2. Letters of recommendation (Three letters of recommendation from professors who know the applicant's work well, and who can speak credibly and specifically about the applicant's ability, surmised or witnessed, in an English-speaking environment)
3. A goals statement (explaining the nature and purpose of your interest in the area of English studies that you wish to pursue in our program)
4. TOEFL or IELTS test scores [TOEFL IBT score of at least 80 (with a spoken score of 26) or PBT score of at least 550; or IELTS scores of 7 (speaking) and 7 (composite)]
5. A writing sample (an example of quality work, ideally, in the area of English studies you wish to pursue, in the range of 2,000-6,500 words [excluding Works Cited and notes, if applicable])

The English Department's Admissions and Standards Committee examines students' credentials in light of the requirements listed above, balancing each requirement with the others in order to estimate the potential for success that the "package" suggests. Excellent letters of recommendation, for example, may compensate for a slightly insufficient GPA.

2.15. For Students-at-Large

A student may wish to take graduate courses without being formally admitted to a graduate degree program and may do so as a Student-at-Large (SAL). A student who matriculates as a Student-at-Large is subject to the regulations specified in the Graduate Catalog. A Student-at-Large should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies and may register for courses in the English

department. Registration for graduate courses, however, in no way implies admission to the degree-granting programs in English.

The Graduate School maintains SAL files until a student formally applies and is admitted to a degree program. *Ordinarily, no more than a total of 15 transfer and SAL graduate hours may be applied toward a graduate degree.* None of them will count toward a formal program of study for a degree unless approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

The application for attending classes at NIU as a Student-at-Large can be started here:

<https://www.niu.edu/grad/admissions/at-large/index.shtml>

3. Master of Arts in English

3.1. Advising

The Director of Graduate Studies is the advisor for all graduate students in the program. Students should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies on all matters of program requirements, of rules and regulations, of preparation for comprehensive examinations—on all questions, problems, and complaints about the graduate program.

Some departmental programs and functions, especially a number at the Master's level, also have specialist advisors who assist the Director of Graduate Studies. In particular, English Education master's candidates also pursuing *Teacher Licensure* will receive advising from the Teacher Licensure coordinator.

Students involved or interested in these programs may contact the advisors directly but must also be aware that the Director of Graduate Studies is the final authority on program requirements, rules, and regulations.

The Skinny on the M.A. in ENGLISH at NIU

The degree consists of:

- **Track I or Track II:**

Track I features a foreign- language requirement and 30 hours of coursework; Track II has no foreign-language requirement and 36 hours of coursework.

- **An Area of Study**, of which there are seven:

- 1) British and American Literature;
- 2) English Education;
- 3) Film and Literature;
- 4) Linguistics;
- 5) Literature and Rhetoric/Writing;
- 6) Rhetoric and Writing;
- 7) Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

3.2. Tracks

The Department of English offers two tracks leading to the M.A. degree. The choice of tracks depends both upon one's background—especially knowledge of language(s) other than English—and upon one's career goals.

3.2.1. Track I (Foreign Language requirement)

Track I is designed to prepare students for graduate work at the doctoral level. A student pursuing an M.A. under this option must:

- earn a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit in the Department of English (except as specified in section 3.3 for particular areas of study),
- demonstrate average proficiency in one foreign language (regarding which, see below),
- and pass a comprehensive examination or write a thesis appropriate to the student's program after completing a minimum of 24 semester hours that satisfy requirements for an M.A. in English (see sections 3.5 and 3.6).

Language Proficiency

Foreign language proficiency may be demonstrated in French, German, Greek (classical or koine), Italian, Latin (classical or medieval), Russian, Spanish, or another language approved by the Director of Graduate Studies on the basis of demonstrated relevance to the student's program of studies. Students are urged to satisfy the language requirement as early as possible in their program.

To satisfy language requirements, students may demonstrate proficiency in any one of a number of ways:

- For average or high proficiency: Earn a passing score on a translation examination on a non-fiction text approved by the Director of Graduate Studies administered by the Office of Testing Services (Adams Hall). <http://www.niu.edu/testing/>
- For average proficiency: Earn a grade of S (satisfactory) in a two-course sequence of special summer courses for graduate students offered by the Department of Foreign Languages (FLFR 501/02 for French, FLGE 501/02 for German, and FLSP 501/02 for Spanish). Not every course is offered each summer. Plan ahead. Check with the Department of Foreign Language for the schedule. There is no registration waiting list. First come, first served when registration opens.
- For average proficiency: provide documentation of a degree from a college or university at which the foreign language was the language of instruction. In some cases, an undergraduate major in a foreign language may be approved upon petition to the Graduate School as a demonstration of proficiency.
- For average proficiency: Achieve a grade of B or better in at least 12 hours of foreign language acquisition work (or the equivalent) within a single language, completed at an accredited U.S. institution of higher learning. The last course (minimum of three credits) taken in the language must be completed within three years of admission to, and enrollment in, the student's master's program or within five years of admission to, and enrollment in, the student's doctoral program. The grade of B or better must be earned in all courses applied to the requirement, as demonstrated by official transcript.

322. Track II (No Foreign Language requirement)

Track II is designed for students whose professional interests and pursuits would benefit from a strong background in English. This track addresses the goals of students who are currently teaching in secondary schools or community colleges or who plan to teach at one of these levels, whether in literature, composition, or professional writing; students who plan to teach English as a second language; students who seek careers as technical writers, editors, or trainers; students interested in business or public relations; and practicing professionals in any field seeking to sharpen their skills and earn an M.A. in English. A graduate advisor and the student will design a program of study (subject to the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies) that will typically include at least 6 semester hours of study outside the English Department. This program of study will be designed in view of both curricular coherence and the student's individual academic and professional goals. A student pursuing an M.A. under this option must

- earn a minimum of 36 semester hours of credit, usually including at least 27 in the Department of English,
- and pass a comprehensive examination or write a thesis appropriate to the student's program after completing a minimum of 24 semester hours that satisfy requirements for an M.A. in English (see sections 3.5 and 3.6).

3.3. Areas of Study

The department offers seven plans of study at the M.A. level. Exceptions in each plan may be made only at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Studies.

As early as possible in the pursuit of your Master's degree, consult with the Director of Graduate Studies about your intended Track (I or II, as explained above) and Area of Study (as described below). At that time, the Director and the Graduate Secretary will register your intended program of study within the MyNIU "Academic Requirements" page, which will then allow you to follow your progress toward the degree. The following link leads to MyNIU, where you will need to log in to see the Academic Requirements page:

<http://myniu.niu.edu/>

This page and subsequent pages provide the plans of study as contained in the Graduate Catalog. You should use these pages, in combination with the MyNIU Academic Requirements page, to plan and track your progress in the program.

3.3.1. British and American Literature

The focus on British and American literature involves intensive study of a wide range of literary texts and historical periods. This area of study is designed for those who wish to focus on literature and literary criticism.

Core Research Requirement (3 semester hours)

ENGL 601 - Bibliography and Methods of Research Credits:

Literary Criticism and Theory or History of the Language (3 semester hours))

ENGL 602 - Literary Theory and Criticism A. History of Literary Theory

ENGL 602 - Literary Theory and Criticism B. Contemporary Literary Theory

ENGL 602 - Literary Theory and Criticism C. Interpretation of Literary Texts

ENGL 602 - Literary Theory and Criticism D. Feminist Literary Theory and Criticism

ENGL 611 - History of the English Language

ENGL 612 - Old English

ENGL 613 - Middle English

British Literature 1660-1900 (3 semester hours))

ENGL 656 - Restoration and Early 18th Century Literature

ENGL 657 - Later 18th Century English Literature

ENGL 658 - English Drama: 1660-1800

ENGL 659 - 18th Century English Novel

ENGL 660 - British Romantic Period

ENGL 661 - Victorian Poetry: 1830-1880

ENGL 662 - 19th Century British Prose

ENGL 663 - 19th Century British Novel

ENGL 664 - British Literature: 1880-1920

ENGL 756 - Seminar: Restoration and 18th Century English Literature

ENGL 762 - Seminar: 19th Century British Literature

ENGL 764 - Seminar: British Literature, 1880-1920

American Literature to 1900 (3 semester hours))

ENGL 676 - American Literature to 1830
ENGL 677 - American Literature: 1830-1865
ENGL 678 - American Literature: 1865-1910
ENGL 679 - 19th Century American Novel
ENGL 776 - Seminar: American Literature to 1830
ENGL 777 - Seminar: 19th Century American Literature

Diverse Literatures (3 semester hours))

ENGL 671 - Postcolonial Literatures in English
ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature A. African American Literature
ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature B. Native American Literature
ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature C. Latina/Latino American Literature
ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature D. Special Topics
English topics course with approval of academic advisor

British Literature to 1660 (6 semester hours))

ENGL 635 - Middle English Literature
ENGL 636 - Beowulf
ENGL 637 - Chaucer
ENGL 638 - 16th Century Prose and Poetry
ENGL 639 - English Drama to 1600
ENGL 640 - English Drama: 1600-1660
ENGL 641 - Shakespeare
ENGL 642 - 17th Century Prose and Poetry
ENGL 643 - Spenser
ENGL 644 - Milton
ENGL 736 - Seminar: Medieval Literature
ENGL 737 - Seminar: Chaucer
ENGL 738 - Seminar: 16th Century English Literature
ENGL 741 - Seminar: Shakespeare
ENGL 742 - Seminar: 17th Century English Literature
ENGL 744 - Seminar: Milton

Literature in English since 1900: British, American, and/or Postcolonial (6 semester hours))

ENGL 665 - British Literature Since 1900
ENGL 666 - 20th Century British Poetry
ENGL 667 - 20th Century British Drama
ENGL 668 - 20th Century British Fiction
ENGL 681 - American Literature: 1910-1960
ENGL 682 - American Literature Since 1960
ENGL 684 - 20th Century American Poetry
ENGL 685 - 20th Century American Fiction
ENGL 687 - 20th Century American Drama
ENGL 765 - Seminar: 20th Century British Literature
ENGL 783 - Seminar: 20th Century American Literature

Course work in non-literature, with consent of adviser (3 semester hours)

Electives chosen in consultation with adviser (0-6 semester hours, depending on track 1 or 2)

332. English Education

This area of study is designed primarily for English language arts professionals who are currently teaching in the schools and those seeking a career in teaching high school English. It provides advanced study in pedagogical content knowledge for high school English teachers. The Master's degree in English Education can also provide a path for initial teacher licensure in the State of Illinois, although the licensure program is distinct from the English Education M.A., and the differences must be clearly understood. Students interested in initial teacher licensure in English

should consult Section 4 of this handbook and meet with the teacher licensure advisor as soon as possible.

Required Courses (3 semester hours)

ENGL 601 - Bibliography and Methods of Research

Electives in Pedagogy (9 semester hours)

ENGL 604 - Topics in Materials for the English Classroom (3-9)

ENGL 622 - Theories and Methods of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (or LTIC 520 Methods and Materials for Teaching English as a Second Language)

ENGL 623 - Second Language Acquisition (or LTIC 545- Applied Linguistics for Teachers in Multilingual Classrooms, or FLAL 583- Applied Linguistics and the Romance Languages)

ENGL 646 - The Teaching of Literature in Middle and High Schools

ENGL 647 - The Teaching of Writing in Middle and High Schools

ENGL 648 - Materials and Methods of Teaching English in Middle and High Schools

ENGL 697 - English Institute

Electives in Language, Literature, and Rhetoric (15 semester hours)

In consultation with the advisor, the student should choose at least one course from linguistics, one from rhetoric (one semester of ENGL 600 may be used to satisfy the rhetoric requirement), and three from literature.

Among the three literatures courses, the student is required to take one diverse literature course that provides significant exposure to, immersion in, and dialogue with historically marginalized subject positions from the following: ENGL 602D, ENGL 671, ENGL 693, or any literature course or topics class designed to include substantial diversity content, with approval of advisor.

Other Electives (3-9 semester hours, depending on track 1 or 2)

In consultation with the advisor, as many as three hours (track I) or nine hours (track II) of coursework may be taken outside the department in such areas as communication, curriculum and instruction, media, reading, special education, etc. (such as ESPY 508, TLSE 457, or EPFE 510, 520, or 521).

3.3.3. Film and Literature

The area of study in film and literature is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary examination of the relationships between traditional literary study and the cinema. This focus is designed for students from a wide variety of undergraduate degrees (communication, education, English, film, theater, etc.), for teachers in the broad range of language skills and art, and for professionals in the media.

Its purpose is to study how the cinema engages, appropriates, and extends the forms, philosophies, and values of literature.

Required Courses (9 semester hours)

ENGL 601 - Bibliography and Methods of Research

ENGL 690 - Film and Literature

ENGL 691 - Topics in Film and Literature

At least one course from the following (3 semester hours)

ENGL 602 - Literary Theory and Criticism

ENGL 603 - Traditions in Written Rhetoric

ENGL 611 - History of the English Language

British or American Literature to 1900 (3 semester hours)

ENGL 635 - Middle English Literature; ENGL 636 - Beowulf; ENGL 637 - Chaucer; ENGL 638 - 16th Century Prose and Poetry; ENGL 639 - English Drama to 1600; ENGL 640 - English Drama-1600-1660; ENGL 641 - Shakespeare; ENGL 642 - 17th Century Prose and Poetry; ENGL 643 - Spenser; ENGL 644 - Milton; ENGL 656 - Restoration and Early 18th Century Literature; ENGL 657 - Later 18th Century English Literature; ENGL 658 - English Drama- 1660-1800; ENGL 659 -

18th Century English Novel; ENGL 660 - British Romantic Period; ENGL 661 - Victorian Poetry- 1830-1880; ENGL 662- 19th Century British Prose; ENGL 663- 19th Century British Novel; ENGL 664- British Literature- 1880-1920; ENGL 676- American Literature to 1830; ENGL 677- American Literature- 1830-1865; ENGL 678- American Literature- 1865-1910; ENGL 679- 19th Century American Novel

British, American, and/or Postcolonial Literature since 1900 (6 semester hours)

ENGL 665- British Literature Since 1900; ENGL 666- 20th Century British Poetry; ENGL 667- 20th Century British Drama; ENGL 668- 20th Century British Fiction; ENGL 671- Postcolonial Literatures in English; ENGL 681- American Literature- 1910-1960; ENGL 682- American Literature Since 1960; ENGL 684- 20th Century American Poetry; ENGL 685- 20th Century American Fiction; ENGL 687- 20th Century American Drama

Diverse Literature: (3 semester hours)

ENGL 671 - Postcolonial Literatures in English; ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature A. African American Literature: ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature B. Native American Literature: ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature C. Latina/Latino American Literature; ENGL 693 - Ethnic American Literature D. Special Topics; English topics course with approval of academic advisor

Elective in literature (3 semester hours)

Non-literature electives (3-9 semester hours, depending on whether Track I or Track II is chosen) These can include courses in offered by the English Department. If taken outside the English Department, courses can include COMS 556, COMS 562, COMS 656, or other film-related electives with consent of advisor.

334. Linguistics

The focus in general linguistics involves the scientific study of human language. Courses focus on the analysis of sound structure, word structure, syntax, and meaning in English and other languages, as well as on discourse, language variation, language teaching, and first and second language acquisition. This focus is designed for those with a particular interest in the structure and function of human language.

Required Courses (15 semester hours)

ENGL 608 - Research Methods in Linguistics
ENGL 615 - Descriptive English Linguistics
ENGL 617 - Phonology
ENGL 618 - Syntax
ENGL 620 - Semantics
OR ENGL 633 - Pragmatics and Discourse

At least one course from the following (3 semester hours)

ENGL 606 - Morphology
ENGL 611 - History of the English Language
ENGL 616 - Pedagogical Grammar
ENGL 619 - Varieties of English
ENGL 620 - Semantics
ENGL 621 - Topics in Linguistics
ENGL 623 - Second Language Acquisition
ENGL 623: Second Language Acquisition
ENGL 633 - Pragmatics and Discourse
ENGL 634 - Linguistics and Literature
ENGL 714 - Seminar: English Linguistics
LTIC 545 - Applied Linguistics for Multilingual Classrooms

FLAL 545 - Applied Linguistics and the Romance

Languages

FLAL 583 - Applied Linguistics and the Romance Languages

Additional coursework (12-18 semester hours, depending on whether Track I or Track II is chosen)

Coursework in Anthropology, Computer Science, English, Language, Philosophy, and/or Psychology, chosen in consultation with the advisor.

335. Literature and Rhetoric/Writing

The area of study allows the student to blend the study of literature and the study of rhetoric/writing. This focus is designed for those with an interest in the research and teaching of rhetoric/writing and literature. This area of study is also intended for students who wish to pursue the master's degree as a stepping stone to further graduate study in either literature or rhetoric/composition/writing studies.

Required Courses (9 semester hours)

ENGL 601- Bibliography and Methods of Research or ENGL 625- Methods of Research in Professional Writing

ENGL 603 - Traditions in Written Rhetoric

ENGL 610 - Rhetoric of Prose Composition

Electives in Rhetoric and Communication (6-9 semester hours – If ENGL 601 is chosen, 9 semester hours are required in rhetoric and communication)

ENGL 600 - Internship in the College Teaching of English

ENGL 602A - Literary Theory and Criticism: History of Literary Theory

ENGL 604 - Topics in Materials for the English Classroom

ENGL 626 - Technical Writing

ENGL 627 - Technical Editing

ENGL 629 - Topics in Rhetoric

ENGL 630 - Theory and Research in Professional Writing

ENGL 700 - Topics in the Teaching of College English

ENGL 703 - Seminar: Rhetorical Studies

COMS 600 - The Classical Tradition in Rhetorical Theory

COMS 602 - Contemporary Rhetorical Theory

COMS 603 - Seminar in Public Rhetoric

COMS 604 - Methods of Rhetorical Criticism

COMS 605 - Theory and Uses of Argument

COMS 606 - Communication Ethics

COMS 610 - Symbolic Behavior and Communication

COMS 620 - Rhetorical Approaches to Social Movements

COMS 640 - Seminar in Communication and Gender

COMS 707 - Seminar in Persuasion

COMS 760 - Seminar in Rhetoric

Distribution Requirements in Literature (12-15 semester hours – If ENGL 625 is chosen, 15 semester hours are required in literature)

At least one course from each of the following groups:

British Literature to 1660 (3 semester hours):

ENGL 635, ENGL 636, ENGL 637, ENGL 638, ENGL 639, ENGL 640, ENGL 641, ENGL 642, ENGL 643, ENGL 644, ENGL 736, ENGL 737, ENGL 738, ENGL 741, ENGL 742, ENGL 744.

British Literature 1660-1900 or American Literature to 1900 (3 semester hours): ENGL 656, ENGL 657, ENGL 658, ENGL 659, ENGL 660, ENGL 661, ENGL 662, ENGL 663, ENGL 664, ENGL 676, ENGL 677, ENGL 678, ENGL 679, ENGL 756, ENGL 762, ENGL 764, ENGL 776, ENGL 777.

Literature in English since 1900: British, American, and/or Postcolonial (3 semester hours): ENGL 665, ENGL 666, ENGL 667, ENGL 668, ENGL 671, ENGL 681, ENGL 682, ENGL 684, ENGL 685, ENGL 687, ENGL 765, ENGL 783.

Diverse Literature (3 semester hours):
ENGL 671; ENGL 693A, ENGL 693B. ENGL 693 C, ENGL 693D or English topics course with approval of academic advisor.

Additional Electives (3-9 hours, depending on whether Track I or Track II is chosen):
Courses in literature, rhetoric, or composition—or another complementary field, with the approval of the advisor. If you have taken ENGL 625, you are required to take at least one more literature course as an additional elective.

3.3.6. Rhetoric and Writing

This area of study concentrates on various aspects of writing. It is intended for students and practicing professionals who wish to develop their writing skills in order to seek or advance a career in professional writing and who wish to explore the rhetorical, linguistic, and technological context of professional writing. This area of study is also intended for students who wish to pursue the master's degree in rhetoric and writing as a stepping stone to further graduate study.

Rhetoric and Writing (6 semester hours)

ENGL 610 - Rhetoric of Prose Composition Credits
ENGL 625 - Methods of Research in Professional Writing Credits

Course work from the following (9 semester hours)

ENGL 609 - Creative Writing Credits
ENGL 626 - Technical Writing Credits
ENGL 627 - Technical Editing Credits
ENGL 628 - Internship in Technical Writing or Editing Credits (1-12)
ENGL 632 - Writing for Digital Media Credits
ENGL 692 - Nonfiction Writing Credits

Two of the following (6 semester hours)

ENGL 603 - Traditions in Written Rhetoric Credits
ENGL 629- Topics in Rhetoric Credits
ENGL 630 - Theory and Research in Professional Writing Credits
ENGL 631 - Topics in Professional Writing Credits
ENGL 700 - Topics in the Teaching of College English Credits
ENGL 703 - Seminar: Rhetorical Studies Credits

Two of the following (6 semester hours)

ENGL 606 - Morphology Credits
ENGL 614 - Introduction to Linguistics Credits
ENGL 615 - Descriptive English Linguistics Credits
ENGL 618 - Syntax Credits
ENGL 620 - Semantics Credits
ENGL 633 - Pragmatics and Discourse Credits
ENGL 634 - Linguistics and Literature Credits

Electives (3-9 semester hours)

Students may elect Department of English courses in rhetoric, literature, and linguistics or, with the faculty advisor's approval, courses in such areas as communication, education, journalism, art, business, technology, and instructional technology from other departments.

3.3.7. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

The area focuses on various aspects of teaching English to speakers of other languages. It is intended for students and educators who wish to study English as a Second Language (ESL),

English as a Foreign Language (EFL), multicultural education, or communication skills.

Required Courses (18 semester hours)

Students are strongly encouraged to enroll in ENGL 615 and ENGL 622 or LTIC 520 in their first semester, if offered.

ENGL 608 - Research Methods in Linguistics

ENGL 615 - Descriptive English Linguistics

ENGL 617 - Phonology

ENGL 618 - Syntax

ENGL 622- Theories and Methods of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (or LTIC 520 - Methods and Materials for Teaching English as a Second Language)

ENGL 623- Second Language Acquisition (or LTIC 545 - Applied Linguistics for Teachers in Multilingual Classrooms, or FLAL 583- Applied Linguistics and the Romance Languages)

Additional Coursework (3 semester hours)

Graduate course work in the department of English in linguistics, rhetoric, or literature.

Additional coursework in English, Education, Languages, Anthropology, Philosophy, or other related disciplines (9-12 semester hours, depending on whether Track I or Track II is chosen)

Chosen in consultation with the advisor, in correspondence with coursework accepted for the College of Education's "Certificate of Teaching English as a Second Language and Bilingual Education"

3.4. Independent Reading (ENGL 698)

Students may propose an independent study (ENGL 698, 1-3 semester hours). Ordinarily, they should propose such a study only after half or more of the required hours to a degree have been completed. The semester in advance of enrolling for ENGL 698, an independent study director must be secured and a study/course proposal, signed by the professor who will direct the study and the student, must be submitted for approval by the Director of Graduate Studies. **ENGL 698 can only be repeated up to 6 hours;** this is a hard-and-fast limit that applies to all study at NIU, including Student-at-Large classes as well as the M.A. and Ph.D. if both are taken at NIU.

3.4.1. Proposals

Because ENGL 698 is intended to allow students to pursue work beyond regular course offerings, the course of study proposed for ENGL 698 should not duplicate courses listed in the catalog.

Credits for ENGL 698 are variable, from 1-3 hours. The scope and depth of an independent study assigned 3 semester hours should be equivalent to the scope and depth of a regular 3-hour course offering.

3.4.2. Procedures

To propose an Independent Study (ENGL 698), a student must do the following *a semester in advance of anticipated enrollment*:

- (1) Consult with an appropriate faculty member about the proposed course of study and procure the consent of the faculty member to serve as director of the study.

(2) Draw up a program of study according to the following format, using the ENGL 698 proposal form available from the Graduate Secretary:

- subject of the study
- semester, director, and number of credits (1-3 semester hours)
- description of the course
- texts to be included, both primary and secondary
- requirements (number of meetings with the director; papers; examinations)
- signatures of student and director

(3) Submit the completed independent study proposal, signed by the study director and the student, to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval, after which the Graduate Secretary will assist in enrollment in ENGL 698.

3.5. Comprehensive Examinations for the M.A. Degree

Students may either take a take-home comprehensive examination or write a thesis (regarding which, see Section 3.6). The department administers the comprehensive examination twice yearly, in early October and in late February or early March.

To take the comprehensive examination, students must:

- Complete at least 24 hours of graduate coursework toward an M.A. in English.
- Fill out an application form by the deadline announced in advance of the test date. Contact the Graduate Secretary for the form, which should be turned in to the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Register for at least one hour of coursework in the semester in which they take the exam.

Until one week before administration of the M.A. exam, applicants may request to withdraw their name from the list of students to be examined. This request must be made in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies.

3.5.1. Examination Areas

Examinations are tailored to the plans of study in the M.A. program, and are based upon reading lists determined by the examining committees, which will be posted on the website two months before the exam. On the website, you will also find statements of expectations for each area

British and American Literature

English Education

Film and Literature

Linguistics

Literature and Rhetoric/Writing

TESOL

Rhetoric and Writing

3.5.2 Procedures for the Examination

The lists for the various examination fields are emailed to examinees approximately eight (8) weeks prior to the date of examination. Specific “statements of expectations are available on the website: [M.A. Exams and Thesis – NIU – Department of English](#)

To prepare for the exam, students may consult appropriate faculty members and copies of past comprehensive examinations (on reserve in Founders Memorial Library Reserve Room or, for more recent exams, you may contact the Graduate Secretary).

Each examination is prepared by at least three graduate faculty members with expertise in the plan of study. Students write the exam anonymously under an assigned letter code so that their identity is unknown to the examiners.

Students write essay responses to questions in a take-home format. These exam periods would be, usually, the first weekend in October and a weekend in late February/early March. The exam is conducted according to an honor pledge, distributed by the Director of Graduate Studies at the time of admission to the exam, which must be signed and returned to the Director prior to the distribution of the exam

For each of the two exam periods, fall and spring, the Graduate Secretary distributes exam prompts electronically at 4 PM Friday. Students email their work to the Graduate Secretary and Graduate Director no later than 5 PM Sunday. The graduate director will send a confirmation of receipt.

3.5.3 Grading of the Examination

When the exam responses have been written, the Director of Graduate Studies circulates them (identified only by a letter code) to each of the examiners. Each examiner reads and grades exams and submits a grade of “pass,” “pass with distinction,” or “fail” to the Director of Graduate Studies. If the results are not unanimous, the Director of Graduate Studies instructs the readers to review the exam, discuss, and issue a consensus ballot. When all ballots are returned, the Director of Graduate Studies tabulates the results and reports them, by email, to each student.

Students failing the exam may request a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and the examining committee so that they may understand the strengths and weaknesses of their performance in preparation to take the examination a second time.

The exam may be repeated only once. It may be retaken in any subsequent semester, for which the requirement that the student be enrolled in at least one hour of English classes also applies.

3.6. The M.A. Thesis

In consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and in keeping with a program of courses, a student may elect to write an M.A. thesis (ENGL 699): an original work of scholarship. Successful completion of a thesis satisfies the university requirement for a comprehensive examination.

3.6.1. Timing of the Thesis

The Comprehensive Examinations (as described in 3.5) and the Thesis follow very different schedules. In order to ensure good progress toward degree and timely completion, students writing the thesis must understand the differences and proceed accordingly.

The finished thesis, formatted according to Graduate School regulations, must be submitted to the Graduate School by the middle of the final semester of the semester in which the student wishes to graduate typically also the final semester of coursework. Because a thesis takes much longer than half a semester to produce, work on the thesis must begin well before the final semester.

Accordingly, the semester in which the thesis is defended—and typically the only semester in which the student registers for ENGL 699, thesis hours—should be devoted to refining an already-completed draft that has already been fully reviewed by the thesis director and the other members of the thesis committee. Virtually all of the research and writing must take place earlier: for example, in the summer and the fall semesters prior to a spring graduation.

As a rule of thumb, then, students intending to write a thesis should begin active work one year in advance of the date they hope to defend: so a student intending to graduate in May of a given year should begin the process described below in March or April of the *preceding* year.

3.6.2. Procedures for the Thesis Committee and Thesis Proposal

To write an M.A. thesis, a student must first assemble a committee and write a proposal, ideally one year in advance of the date by which the student wishes to complete the thesis. In no case should a student expect to proceed with the thesis unless a committee has been formed—and a proposal approved by that committee—by the beginning of the semester *before* the semester of graduation (so, the beginning of the fall semester if a spring graduation is intended).

The process of forming a thesis committee and receiving approval of a thesis proposal is as follows. The thesis-writing student should:

The Skinny on the M.A. Exam vs. Thesis

Should you take the exam or thesis option? If you are a *fulltime M.A. student*, consider the following when making this decision:

- 1.) The exam is less time-consuming, requiring a two-month preparation process during the semester of the exam.
- 2.) The thesis process starts with the student locating a faculty director, ideally, by the end of the second full semester, with the rest of the committee formed soon after. The proposal process occurs the semester before you defend. To receive proper committee feedback, a student should ideally complete a first draft at least three months before the defense.
- 3.) While the thesis is often pursued by students wanting to develop publishable research, the option is *not* a prerequisite for pursuing a Ph.D. Usually, if moving directly into a doctoral program after a M.A., the writing and defense timeline does not allow the document to be employed as a writing sample in an application packet.
- 4.) Students should speak with the Director of Graduate Studies and area specialist faculty to determine which option best fits their academic goals.

(1) **Seek an appropriate graduate faculty member to direct the thesis.** The NIU Graduate Catalog specifies that the thesis should offer a “scholarly contribution to knowledge” and “must be in the area of the student’s major.” It is the student who approaches a potential director with an idea for a thesis. The thesis director initially, followed by the committee members, determines the suitability of a particular topic as a scholarly contribution to knowledge. It is the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the faculty on the thesis committee, who affirms whether a topic lies within the student’s major. Theses may also have co-directors, in which case one of the co-directors may be from a department other than English. To ensure the selection of a thesis director with appropriate status, consult the list of Graduate Faculty at the conclusion of this handbook.

(2) **Form a committee.** A full thesis committee consists of three graduate faculty, a director and two readers. Students, in consultation with the thesis director and the Director of Graduate Studies, select a thesis committee consisting of the director and one other graduate faculty members.

Upon selecting the chair and second reader, the M.A. candidate does not have to locate a third reader. The Director of Graduate Studies may locate a *designee reader* from a pool of available faculty. This faculty member can be from outside the field or subfield of the thesis. If the student locates a willing third reader while developing the proposal, the Director of Graduate Studies may designate that faculty member as the designee reader. The designee reader will not read the thesis until the final defense copy is available. Designees are not required to read the proposal, but may if they wish.

(3) **Write a thesis proposal according to the following format.** Usually, the proposal will, in the first instance, be formulated in collaboration with the thesis director, but it will also be reviewed by at least one other committee members. The thesis writer maybe be asked to revise and rewrite the proposal by one or more of the committee members prior to their signifying approval by their signatures. The thesis proposal is a document consisting of the following:

- a working title for the thesis
- a description of the project: the topic on which the thesis will focus, including a description of the questions the project will answer, the problems the project will solve, the issues the project will examine, or the project’s proposed thesis
- a statement of methodology: the tools and methods you plan to use in order to pursue the project, identification of the texts/subjects/objects for analysis that the thesis will examine
- a statement of the previous scholarship in the field (situate your work in the conversation about the writer or texts that are your subject)
- a bibliography, both primary and secondary
- signatures of the director and committee members

(4) **Defending the proposal:** This step is *optional* for thesis writers and determined at the discretion of the thesis director and committee. In these cases, the thesis writer submits to a defense of the thesis proposal at a time mutually convenient to the writer, director, and committee member(s), once the proposal is completed. When such a time has been determined, contact the Graduate Secretary to have a room reserved and official paperwork prepared.

3.6.3. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Inquiry Form

All thesis writers, regardless of topic, must submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Inquiry Form. This form should be completed immediately after the proposal defense (for students who have a proposal defense) or immediately after approval of the proposal (for all others). This form states whether the research proposed for the thesis involves living human or animal subjects:

<http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/pdf/IRB-Inquiry-Form.pdf>

When the research does not involve such subjects, only the Inquiry Form needs to be submitted. In cases where the research does involve such subjects, a further application must be completed.

3.6.4. IRB Approval

In cases where living human or animal subjects *are* involved, the thesis or dissertation writer must also submit an application and obtain university approval for such research. This approval must be sought and obtained *before the phase of data collection begins*.

Students should consult with their committee and secure the approval of an authorized English Department Reviewer—typically the Director of Graduate Studies—well in advance of the beginning of data collection. The IRB application form may be found on the website of the Office of Research Compliance and Integrity:

<http://niu.edu/divresearch/compliance/human/irb/index.shtml>

3.6.5. Writing the Thesis

The process of writing a thesis will vary significantly depending upon the nature of the project or its field. All theses, however, are produced “under the supervision of a graduate faculty member,” as the Graduate Catalog states. As noted above—in 3.6.2(1)—the immediate supervision might also be provided by co-directors.

The thesis director (or co-directors) not only provides primary guidance in ensuring that the thesis is of sufficient intellectual rigor to constitute a “scholarly contribution to knowledge” but also establishes guidelines and expectations for the timely completion of a significant thesis. These guidelines and expectations are to be communicated both to the thesis writer and to the non-directing members (or member) of the thesis committee. The thesis director or co-directors have the primary responsibility of ensuring the meeting of these guidelines and expectations.

As described in 3.6.1, the thesis writer should expect for work on the thesis to unfold over approximately *one year*, from conception to final defense and deposit. Ideally, by the end of their second full semester of coursework, a student should have approached a potential thesis director(s) and developed an idea.

3.6.6. Defending and Depositing the Thesis

In the semester in which the thesis is defended, the writer of the thesis must register for ENGL 699.

Officially, the only requirement for eligibility to enroll for ENGL 699, thesis hours, is the approval of the thesis proposal by the committee. In practice, because only 3 hours of ENGL 699 can be counted toward graduation and because it requires “continuous enrollment”—once enrolled in ENGL 699, the student must enroll in it in every successive semester until the thesis is defended—students are usually well advised to wait until the semester when they are reasonably confident they will be able to defend their thesis before registering for ENGL 699.

When the thesis is deemed ready by the director and committee members, they will agree upon a date and time for the defense. The thesis writer must then request the Office of Graduate Studies to submit, on the writer’s behalf, a “Request for Oral Defense of Thesis” (available through the link below) for this time and date. The Graduate Secretary will reserve a room for the defense.

<http://www.niu.edu/grad/resources/student-forms.shtml>

The nature of the defense derives from the second definition of *defend*: “to support or maintain, as by argument or action; to justify” (*American Heritage Dictionary*). The defense will be

serious and intellectually rigorous. Neither the candidate nor the dissertation committee members can presume the successful outcome of the defense. For degree-seeking purposes, the thesis defense is considered the comprehensive examination for the M.A. degree.

At the conclusion of the defense, the thesis writer may be asked to make final revisions prior to depositing the thesis at the Graduate School. These revisions must be reviewed and approved by the thesis director and/or one or more committee members. Once final approval is obtained from the committee (whether at the defense or subsequent to it, following successful revision), the dissertation must be deposited in the Graduate School. In addition to the manuscript form and content required by the departmental committee, the thesis must conform to the requirements of the Graduate School, available through their website website. The thesis must be submitted electronically starting from the Graduate School website. <http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/>.

The thesis writer must meet all Graduate School deadlines for defense of the thesis and its submission to the Graduate School. A completed thesis must be deposited with the Graduate School approximately 6 weeks prior to the intended date of graduation, which in turn requires filing a request for the thesis defense well before the midway point of the semester in which the student plans to graduate—or even before the semester begins, in the case of the summer schedule! No later than the beginning of the semester in which you plan to defend your thesis and graduate with your degree, consult the following schedule of Graduate School deadlines, which are immutable: http://www.niu.edu/grad/_pdf/graduation-deadlines.pdf

3.7. Time Limits

Students must complete all requirements for the M.A. degree in six years.

If a student does not enroll in any courses for a period of one year, he or she must complete a Re- entry Application which may be found on the Graduate School website via this link: http://www.niu.edu/grad/_pdf/Reentry-Request-Form.pdf

If a student is beyond the six-year time limit and has not graduated, the student must complete a Time Extension Request, which may be found on the Graduate School website via this link: <http://www.niu.edu/its/asp2/OnBaseForms/gradschool/RcGrExtension.aspx>

3.7.1 Recertification of Courses

If an NIU course taken more than six years before the date of graduation is needed by a student to meet graduation requirements, the student must re-certify any such course to show a current and adequate understanding of its subject matter. The process is handled within the department by professors in the field(s) covered by the courses; consult the Director of Graduate Studies for details.

3.8. Graduation Procedures

In order to graduate, students must:

(1) Complete the requirements for their chosen plan of study. For recently entering students, progress in the fulfillment of most program requirements can be monitored through the “Academic Requirements” record available through MyNIU.

(2) Complete an application to graduate, which is done through MyNIU. See the linked NIU web page for directions: <http://www.reg.niu.edu/regrec/graduation/application.shtml> Please note that the deadlines for graduation application are *early* in the semester or even (in the case of the summer semester) several weeks prior to the beginning of the semester. Consult the schedule: http://www.niu.edu/grad/_pdf/graduation-deadlines.pdf

(3) Pay a processing fee, billed to your Bursar’s account.

3.8.1 Graduation Deferment

Students should apply for graduation just as soon as they identify the semester in which they believe they will graduate. The application to graduate in a given term becomes available nearly one calendar year prior to the graduation date. Submitting an application to graduate does not constitute a binding agreement that students must graduate in that term, just that they hope to do so. The application initiates a review of the students' completion of degree requirements in the Graduate School and in the office of Graduate Studies in English.

In the event that students do not, in fact, graduate in the semester that they anticipate, they do *not* need to take any action during that semester. They will not need to file a new graduation application at any time nor pay an additional fee, and they do not need to request a graduation deferment nor file any notice whatsoever with the Graduate School.

Subsequently, however, when students arrive at the semester when they are ready to submit their final credentials for graduation—typically by having applied for the comprehensive exam or scheduled a thesis defense—they must submit a request to “Defer or Reactivate an Application for Degree”:

<http://www.niu.edu/its/asp2/OnBaseForms/gradschool/RcGrGradDefer.aspx>

The deadlines for setting a new degree date (what the Graduate School calls, a bit misleadingly, a “Graduation Deferment,” which is actually a petition to “un-defer” a previous graduation date) are less far in advance of the graduation date than the deadlines for the initial graduation application. The deadlines are tied to other deadlines significant to the graduation schedule— especially, establishing the date for defense of a thesis. Yet again— consult the schedule: http://www.niu.edu/grad/_pdf/graduation-deadlines.pdf

4. Educator Licensure in English Language Arts

4.1. The Educator Licensure Program

The department offers a program in Educator Licensure for High School English. The initial teacher certification program in English qualifies students for the Educator Licensure in English issued by the State of Illinois. The State issues licenses upon the recommendation of the Department of English and Northern Illinois University.

For students who pursue teacher licensure at the graduate level—that is, already having earned a bachelor’s degree—the path to licensure may vary greatly, depending especially upon the undergraduate degree. Students with a bachelor’s degree in English or Education may well be able to complete course requirements for teacher licensure in fewer hours than are required to earn an M.A. in English. Conversely, students who do not have this undergraduate background may require *more* courses than would be needed to complete the M.A.

In general, though, we may say that

- Graduate students pursuing licensure may do so either as Students-at-Large or as degree-seeking students, almost always choosing the English Education area as the specialization.

We hasten to add that

- The admission requirements and application process for the English graduate program—whether as a regularly admitted student or a Student-at-Large—are distinct and separate from the requirements and process for the Teacher Licensure Program.

And, finally, we note that

- The NIU program in Teacher Licensure for High School English fulfills all requirements for licensure in the State of Illinois. Indeed, the requirements for the NIU program exceed the requirements for state licensure.

The balance of this section of the Handbook is dedicated to explaining the process for obtaining teacher licensure for high school English, including both applying for licensure and enrolling in the classes needed to satisfy State of Illinois requirements. While the *Director of Graduate Studies* provides advice on choosing courses in the English department, gaining admission into the M.A. in English, and meeting requirements for English degrees, the *Advisor in English Education and Teacher Licensure* provides guidance on the requirements for admission to the teacher licensure program and on obtaining English teacher licensure.

4.2. Admission to the Teacher Licensure Program

The first step toward licensure is admission to the program. Students can, and often must, begin taking graduate courses in order to qualify for admission. In any event, admission to the university and to English department degree programs are *distinct* processes from admission to the teacher licensure program. It is possible to be admitted to the teacher licensure program

without ever seeking admission to a degree program at NIU; it is also possible to be admitted to a degree program at NIU but not be admitted to the licensure program here.

To qualify for admission at the post-undergraduate level, students must meet the following criteria. Please note that these criteria define minimum standards; entry into the teacher licensure program is competitive, and meeting the minimum standards does not guarantee admission.

Teacher Licensure Program Admission Requirements:

1. Application in writing
2. Submission and approval of a portfolio of writing
3. Grade of “C” or better in core competency classes: Math (3 hours), Speech (3), Writing (6)
4. Passing score on the Test of Academic Proficiency or ACT substitution
5. Any one of the following:
 - a. Admission to an NIU graduate program in English
or
 - b. Bachelor’s degree in English with a minimum GPA of 2.75 and minimum English GPA of 3.0, and completion of at least six semester hours of graduate credit in English at NIU with a minimum GPA of 3.0
or
 - c. Completion of at least 12 semester hours of graduate credit in English at NIU with a minimum GPA of 3.0

4.3. Teacher Licensure Program Requirements

Students seeking licensure should consult with the Teacher Licensure advisor as soon as possible in order to plan a program of studies that will lead to satisfaction of all the requirements for licensure in English education, most of which are State of Illinois requirements, not university ones. The English Education/Teacher Licensure advisor will also be aware of any changes in licensure requirements, which in the instance of the State of Illinois requirements would supersede the program outlined below.

Every effort is made to keep the program requirements listed below current, but changes do occur, and the State requirements applied to a candidate will be those in force at the time of application for licensure, not—as with many university requirements—those in force at the time a candidate began the licensure program.

List of Program Requirements

1. 33 semester hours of coursework in the English content area, with the following minimum distributions:

- At least 6 hours in American Literature, ordinarily to include work in pre-1865 American Literature
- At least 12 hours in British Literature, ordinarily to include Shakespeare
- At least 3 hours in Linguistics
- At least 3 hours in Advanced Writing or Rhetoric

The 33 hours cannot include ENGL 647 and ENGL 648 (and their undergraduate counterparts, ENGL 404 and ENGL 480), which are considered methodology rather than content classes.

The 33 hours of coursework in the English content area may be at the undergraduate or graduate level. Most students seeking licensure through graduate study will achieve this requirement through a combination of past undergraduate courses and current graduate courses, sometimes also taking a few undergraduate courses while a graduate student. Conversely, for graduate students who do not already have an undergraduate major or minor in English, the requirement of 33 hours in the content area may well require that more classes must be taken for licensure than will be required for the Master's degree.

2. English Education coursework (9 semester hours), specifically:

- ENGL 646: Teaching of Literature
- ENGL 647: Teaching of Writing
- ENGL 648: Materials and Methods of Teaching English

3. College of Education courses (typically 15 semester hours) as follows:

- One course in Foundations of Education (EPFE), chosen from the following: EPFE 400/500: Social Foundations of Education; EPFE 410/510: Philosophical Foundations of Education; EPFE 520: Historical Foundations of Education; EPFE 521: Historical Foundations of Education in the United States
- One course in Literacy Education—Bilingual/ESL (LTIC): LTIC 420/520: Methods and Materials for Teaching English as a Second Language in Content Areas
- One course in Educational Psychology (EPS), chosen from the following: EPS 406/507: Issues in Human Development and Learning in the Middle School and High School Years; EPS 508: Theories and Research in Adolescent Behavior and Development
- One course in Literacy Education—Reading (LTRE): LTRE 511: Teaching Reading in the Content Areas
- One course in Methods of Special Education (SESE): SESE 557: Systems for Integrating the Exceptional Student in the Regular Classroom

4. Clinicals (13 semester hours) as follows:

- ILAS (Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts and Sciences) 201: Introductory Clinical Experience: 40 clock hours plus seminars—1 credit hour
- ILAS 301: Second Clinical Experience—50 clock hours plus seminars—2 credit hours
- ENGL 645: Clinical Experience in Secondary English Language Arts: 50 clock hours plus seminars—1 credit hour
- ENGL 649: Student Teaching (Secondary) in English: 16 weeks—9 credit hours

4.4. **Teacher Licensure Program Sequencing**

For students entering the Graduate program with an undergraduate English major or minor (whether as an admitted graduate student or a Student-at-Large), it is generally possible to complete all requirements for teacher licensure in the state of Illinois in two years (four regular, spring/fall semesters) *plus* one semester for student teaching.

Completion within this time frame of two years depends upon careful sequencing, in which English and Education classes are taken concurrently and in proper sequence. For instance, the usual sequence of English Education classes is ENGL 647 (Teaching of Writing), then ENGL 646 (Teaching of Literature). ENGL 648 (Materials and Methods) should invariably be the third course in the sequence. Even less flexible is the sequence of clinicals, the first clinical (ILAS 201), the second clinical (ILAS 302), and the final clinical (ENGL 645) must be taken in that order, and rarely concurrently.

The Teacher Licensure Advisor, whose office is in the English Undergraduate Studies Office, keeps an up-to-date list of suggested courses of study tailored to the semester when each cohort of students enters the licensure program. Consultation of this list—and with the Licensure Advisor—at the beginning of the student's program is strongly recommended.

5. **Certificate of Graduate Study**

The department of English offers courses leading to a certificate of graduate study in English Education. It requires 18 hours of coursework. It is issued by the Graduate School upon recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies in English, assisted by the advisor in English Education. In the semester in which you are completing the final course(s) to satisfy the certificate requirements, please make a request of the Graduate Secretary to prepare a verification form to be sent to the Graduate School.

Upon certification of the completion of coursework by the Graduate School, the Office of Registration and Records will contact the student regarding procedures for ordering an official, engraved 11" x 8 ½" Certificate of Graduate Study from Northern Illinois University.

5.1. **Certificate in English Education**

This certificate recognizes successful completion of a set of courses intended to enhance the professional qualifications of teachers of English in secondary schools. Only courses taken at NIU may be applied to the certificate. Successful completion requires a GPA of at least 3.0 in the courses used to meet the requirements. Courses used to satisfy the requirements of the certificate may also be applied toward a graduate degree. However, students pursuing this certificate need not be admitted to a graduate program. Please contact the Director of Graduate Studies if you wish to pursue this certificate.

Total Course Requirements (18 semester hours)

At least 9 semester hours from the following (courses marked with an asterisk [*] are strongly recommended for most students)

ENGL 604 -Topics in Materials for the English Classroom
ENGL 607 - Topics in Literature (must have approved pedagogical topic)
ENGL 610 - Rhetoric of Prose Composition
ENGL 622 - Theories and Methods of TESOL
ENGL 629 -Topics in Rhetoric (must have approved pedagogical topic)
ENGL 646* -The Teaching of Literature In Middle And High Schools
ENGL 647* - The Teaching of Writing in Middle and High Schools
ENGL 648* - Materials and Methods of Teaching English in Middle and High Schools
ENGL 697 - -English Institute (1-6 semester hours)

One course from the following: (3 semester hours)

ENGL 601 - Bibliography and Research Methods
ENGL 602 - Literary Theory and Criticism
ENGL 603 - Traditions in Written Rhetoric
ENGL 609 - Creative Writing
ENGL 690 - Film and Literature
ENGL 692 - Nonfiction Writing

One course from the following: (3 semester hours)

ENGL 611- History of the English Language
ENGL 614 - Introduction to Linguistics
ENGL 616 - Pedagogical Grammar
ENGL 619 - Varieties of English
ENGL 623 - Second Language Acquisition

One 600-level literature course (3 semester hours)

6. Doctor of Philosophy in English

The Doctor of Philosophy degree represents the highest level of academic achievement formally recognized in the humanities. The degree is a symbol that the individual has met high standards of academic excellence and mastered advanced techniques in a discipline.

Our program of study leading to the Ph.D. is designed to prepare students for research and teaching and for positions of leadership in education and other fields. Small graduate seminars enable students to develop the critical and investigative skills necessary to successful scholarship, teaching, and leadership in education and other fields.

The doctoral degree in English is granted not only on the basis of successful completion of a program of prescribed courses but chiefly in recognition of the candidate's high attainments and ability as shown, first, by passing the required examinations in his or her fields and, second, by the completion of a dissertation.

6.1 Advising

Soon after admission to the program Ph.D. students should meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to evaluate their transcript of coursework in the M.A. degree in relation to the core of courses required for the Ph.D. The Director of Graduate Studies may also approve transfer credit for up to 15 combined hours from NIU student-at-large coursework and hours beyond the master's degree taken at another university.

6.1.1.1 Time Limits

Students must complete all requirements for the Ph.D. degree in nine years.

If a student does not enroll in any courses for a period of one year, he or she must complete a Re-entry Application which may be found on the Graduate School website via this link:
http://www.niu.edu/grad/_pdf/Reentry-Request-Form.pdf

If a student is beyond the nine-year time limit and has not graduated, he or she must complete a Time Extension Request, which may be found on the Graduate School website via this link:
<http://www.niu.edu/its/asp2/OnBaseForms/gradschool/RcGrExtension.aspx>

6.1.2 Recertification of Courses

If an NIU course taken more than nine years before the date of graduation is needed by a student to meet graduation requirements, the student must re-certify any such course to show a current and adequate understanding of its subject matter. The process is handled within the department by professors in the field(s) covered by the courses; consult the Director of Graduate Studies for details.

6.2. Doctoral Program of Courses

Students must secure departmental approval for a program of courses including a minimum of 72 hours beyond the baccalaureate. Up to 30 hours of work completed as part of a master's program, and accepted as part of admission credentials, may be included in the 72 hours. Core and distribution requirements met at the M.A. level may fulfill, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, the requirements at the Ph.D. level, freeing students to take electives to complete the 30 hours of coursework beyond the M.A. required for the Ph.D. English Ph.D. students must normally complete a minimum of 72 semester hours.

These include 60 hours of course work (30 of which may be approved M.A. course work) and 12 hours of ENGL 799, Doctoral Dissertation. Students and assigned advisers design a program to prepare students for areas of study leading to field examinations, a dissertation, and professional expertise.

Core Requirements: One course from each of the following groups (15 semester hours)

Research Methodology (3 semester hours)

ENGL 601	Bibliography and Methods of Research
ENGL 608	Research Methods in Linguistics
ENGL 625	Methods of Research in Professional Writing

Issues in Criticism (3 semester hours)

ENGL 602	Literary Theory and Criticism A. History of Literary Theory
ENGL 602	Literary Theory and Criticism B. Contemporary Literary Theory
ENGL 602	Literary Theory and Criticism C. Interpretation of Literary Texts
ENGL 602	Literary Theory and Criticism D. Feminist Literary Theory and Criticism

History of the Language (3 semester hours)

ENGL 611	History of the English Language
ENGL 612	Old English
ENGL 613	Middle English

Rhetoric (3 semester hours)

ENGL 603	Traditions in Written Rhetoric
ENGL 610	Rhetoric of Prose Composition
ENGL 630	Theory and Research in Professional Writing

Linguistics (3 semester hours)

ENGL 615	Descriptive English Linguistics
ENGL 617	Phonology
ENGL 618	Syntax
ENGL 620	Semantics
ENGL 622	Theories and Methods of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
ENGL 623	Second Language Acquisition

Area of Specialization: Courses to be determined by student in consultation with advisor (12 semester hours)

Electives: These electives could constitute a secondary area of specialization depending on the individual student's interests (9 semester hours)

Students must also include at least three 700-level seminars. Normally, students should select 700-level courses only if they have studied the period or subject at the undergraduate or M.A. level. Exceptions to the required 700 specification may be made with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

6.3. Foreign Language/Research Tool Requirements

Ph.D. candidates must demonstrate average proficiency in two foreign languages, high proficiency in one, or average proficiency in one foreign language and one research tool.

See section 3.2.1 for means to satisfy foreign language requirements.

Proficiency in a research tool may be demonstrated by earning a grade of "B" or higher in a pair of related courses, typically a pair of methodological and/or theoretical courses related to the student's field specializations and/or proposed dissertation topics. Discuss possible courses fulfilling the research tool requirement with the Director of Graduate Studies, whose approval is required.

By rule of the NIU Graduate Catalog, Language/Research Tool requirements must be satisfied before taking candidacy examinations.

6.4. Candidacy Examinations: Field Exams and Dissertation Proposal Defense

All Ph.D. students must pass three Ph.D. candidacy examinations: two written and one oral.

The two written examinations are selected from the following fields of study. Although officially categorized as "Candidacy Examinations" by the Graduate Catalog, they are customarily referred to as the "Field Exams" in the English Department:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| I. | Linguistics or philology |
| II. | Medieval literature (Old English literature and Middle English literature) |
| III. | English literature from 1500 to 1600 |
| IV. | English literature from 1600 to 1660 |
| V. | British literature from 1660 to 1800 |
| VI. | British literature from 1800 to 1900 |
| VII. | British literature since 1900 |
| VIII. | American literature to 1865 |
| IX. | American literature since 1865 |
| X. | African American literature |
| XI. | British and American women's literature since 1750 |
| XII. | Film and Literature |
| XIII. | Rhetoric |
| XIV. | Writing Studies |
| XV. | A special field as determined by an examination committee and the student in consultation. (See section 6.4.1 for procedures to propose a special field.) |

The oral examination shall be an explanation and defense of the student's dissertation

proposal, including its relation to the larger body of relevant knowledge and to the teaching of English or other professional pursuits.

64.1. Proposing a Special Field Examination

If students wish one of the two Field exams to be a Special Field, they must propose the field and obtain approval in advance.

Timing of the Special Field

Students wishing to propose a Special Field are advised to begin well in advance of their anticipated examination date to design the field and secure its approval. At a minimum, they must be aware that, every fall and spring semester, there is a special due date for Special Field proposals that is earlier than the application deadline for the regular Field exams.

This early due date is necessary so that the Graduate Studies Committee has time to consider the application for the special field. Typically, the due date for the Special Field proposal is in the second week of the semester preceding the date of the examination (so, early in September for the January exams; late in January for the August exams).

Ideally, because Field exams typically require 9-12 months of preparation in reading and studying, students seeking to take a special field as one of their two written candidacy exams *should develop a proposal and pursue its approval a year or more prior to the desired examination date*. Students cannot assume the approval of a special field. Not infrequently, the Graduate Studies Committee will request revisions of a special field proposal before they will approve it.

Consult with the Director of Graduate Studies regarding the meeting schedule of the Graduate Studies Committee so as to pursue approval and receive a Committee decision in timely fashion.

Writing the Proposal

It is assumed that a Special Field is initiated by the student. Although there may well be a track record for special fields of a particular type—previously approved special field proposals filed in the Office of Graduate Studies may be consulted—each Special Field should have a distinctive reading list compiled by the student and a unique rationale.

Once initiated by the student, Special Field proposals are also collaborative in nature. While formulating a proposal, the student should find three faculty members who are able and willing to serve as an examining committee for the proposed topic. In the universe of possible special fields in English, only a smaller subset of fields can actually be staffed by graduate faculty, and hence it is critical that students consult with faculty in the process of formulating the proposal and to be prepared to follow their direction about how to devise a feasible Special Field area.

Once a student identifies a suitable examining committee of three Graduate Faculty—at least two of whom must be English professors—the student should consult with the faculty to develop an appropriate reading list and write an appropriate rationale. The three members of the examining committee must approve of the reading list and the rationale prior to its being submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies, who in turn forwards it to the Graduate Studies Committee.

For the Special Field proposal, the student must submit the following:

- A bibliography of primary and secondary sources defining the area to be covered. Faculty should be consulted but must not be expected to supply the student with a bibliography; rather, it is up to the student to prepare a preliminary listing, to be

submitted to cooperating faculty for suggested revisions, in a process that may involve several go-rounds.

- A rationale for the proposed area in the form of an essay not to exceed five pages. The rationale/essay should provide a concise statement of (1) what is to be covered on the proposed exam, and (2) why a request for a special examination field is justified in this case (how this field differs from the regular fields listed in the Graduate Catalog and what it allows and accomplishes that the regular fields do not). As with the bibliography, the rationale should be submitted to the cooperating faculty for suggestions for revision prior to submission to the Director of Graduate Studies.
- A doctoral candidacy examination Field XV proposal cover sheet (obtainable from the Graduate Secretary) signed by the examiners who approve the proposal and recommend it for consideration by the Graduate Studies Committee.

Submitting the Proposal for Approval

The proposal must be approved by the Graduate Director. The special field proposal will then be forwarded to the Graduate Studies Committee for their consideration. After the Graduate Studies Committee meets and considers the proposal, the student and the field committee will be notified in writing of the decision of the Graduate Studies Committee.

If the proposal is not approved, it is returned to the student and the examination committee with comments and/or recommendations for revision.

6.42. Procedures for Admission to the Candidacy Examinations (a.k.a., Field Exams)

Written candidacy examinations are offered twice a year: in August, two weeks prior to classes in the fall semester; and in January, in the week prior to classes in the spring semester. For admission to the examinations, a student must:

- Complete at least 20 of the 30 semester hours of graduate coursework in the doctoral program of study
- Satisfy the foreign language/research tool requirements
- Complete a petition to sit for the examinations, to be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies on the schedule established by the Graduate Studies office.

The Director of Graduate Studies checks the record of students who apply to make sure they have met all of the eligibility requirements for admission to the examinations, and then appoints appropriate examination committees to prepare the examinations.

Until one week before administration of the candidacy examinations, a student may request to withdraw his or her name from the list of students to be examined. This request must be made in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies.

6.43. Nature of the First Two Candidacy Examinations: The Field Exams

The Field Exams are given twice yearly, typically in the second week of August and in the first week of January. The Field Exams are open-book, take-home but timed exams taking place over two two-day periods, each usually a Monday beginning at 9AM through a Wednesday ending at noon and, then, a Thursday to Saturday with similar deadline. Students must demonstrate their proficiency within two fields according to expectations and reading lists defined by the faculty who regularly serve as examiners in those fields, and published on the English department website at <https://www.niu.edu/clas/english/academics/graduate/phd-program/exams.shtml>

In preparation for the examinations, students are encouraged to

- Consult the Reading Lists established for the fields. A disciplined plan of independent

reading guided by the lists is encouraged from early in the program, as soon as students' fields of interest are defined.

- Consult with members of their examination committees prior to the examination (although students are in no way obliged to do so and may prefer to preserve anonymity). Consult the file of previous candidacy examinations in the reserve area of Founders Memorial Library. Note, however, that exams written for the August 2014 sitting of the exams and earlier—and some for the January 2014 sitting of the exams—were written for a former format calling for a closed-book examination—understanding, however, that the new format will likely require more in-depth analysis.

6.4.4. Administration of the Field Exams

The Director of Graduate Studies appoints examiners for each field in which students have asked to be examined. Committees generally consist of three members but may include four. Where there are more than three specialists in a field among the Graduate Faculty, assignments are generally rotated. For Special Field exams, the examining committee will, except in unusual circumstances, be the graduate faculty who reviewed and approved the Special Field proposal.

Students are informed in writing of their admission to the examination and of the examiners in each field. The identity of the students remains anonymous unless individual students choose to identify themselves to faculty by consulting with them in preparation for the examinations.

The examinations are administered in August and January, preceding the Fall and Spring semesters. For each of the exam periods, exam prompts will be distributed at 8 AM on a day appointed by the Graduate Director (most likely a Monday morning) and will be collected by the Graduate Secretary no later than noon two days later (most likely Wednesday).

The exam is conducted according to an honor pledge, distributed by the Director of Graduate Studies at the time of admission to the exam, which must be signed and returned to the Director prior to the distribution of the exam.

Students are advised that, although the time allotted for the exam is substantial, it remains a timed exam, requiring at least as much advance study as a closed-book exam and disciplined use of the available time to complete both exams. In the event a student is retaking one of the exams because of a previous failure (but has passed the other Field exam), the student needs to re-take the failed exam only. The letter admitting the student to the exam will explain details for this procedure.

The exams will be available for distribution in electronic format sent via email, unless special accommodations are needed and requested prior to the exam date. The student must submit the completed exams by the deadline in electronic form but must also keep a paper copy, available for collection upon request of the Graduate Director. It will be the student's responsibility to deal with any technical difficulties.

Strict limits will be applied to the total number of words used for the essays: the minimum will be 2,500 words, the maximum 4,500 words, for each of the exams. Faculty will consider the scope of their questions in writing 2, 3, or 4 questions for each exam.

When the essays have been written, the Director of Graduate Studies circulates them (identified only by a letter code) to the examiners. Each examiner submits one of three grades, either "pass" or "pass with distinction" or "fail," in a secure ballot collected by the Graduate Studies office. If the results are not unanimous, the Director of Graduate Studies instructs the readers to confer and to issue a consensus ballot. When all balloting is complete, the Director of Graduate Studies reports the results to the students, the Graduate School, and the Graduate Faculty of the department.

Students failing one or more fields may request a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and the examination committee that has set the exam(s).

6.4.5. Nature and Purpose of the Oral Examination

The third candidacy examination is an oral defense of the student's dissertation prospectus. The examination presumes that well in advance of sitting for candidacy examinations, the student has selected a dissertation director and, in consultation with the director, a dissertation committee. See Section 6.6 of this Handbook.

The purpose of the oral examination of the dissertation prospectus is to further the student's progress toward the start and completion of the dissertation by questioning the student, evaluating the student's dissertation prospectus, and making recommendations to sharpen the project. To this end, a committee selected according to the procedures outlined below will examine the student for a period of one hour and consider the following:

- The clarity and viability of the hypothesis or set of research questions as something that will admit of development into a monograph – a 200-page study of a single subject
- The quality, scope, and depth of the ideas, questions, and methodologies around which the student will develop the monograph
- The student's readiness to narrow or enlarge the scope of the project in order to allow the results of the investigation to shape the dissertation
- The student's plan for completing the dissertation in a timely fashion

6.4.6. Procedures for the Oral Examination—Defense of the Dissertation Prospectus

In timely consultation with the prospective dissertation director and committee, the student will prepare a dissertation prospectus. In order to facilitate the student's movement through candidacy examinations and toward completion of the dissertation in a timely fashion (i.e., within the year following candidacy examinations), the oral examination process, including a second defense of the prospectus in the case of a failure, *must ordinarily be completed within six months of the date when the student takes and passes the Field exams.*

Composition of the Prospectus

The prospectus shall consist of a brief essay that outlines and provides a rationale for the dissertation's hypothesis, places it in the context of scholarship in the field, explains its anticipated methodology, and provides a tentative organization of the dissertation.

The prospectus shall include, as well, a working bibliography. The bibliography must identify the primary works that will be the objects of study and the secondary works, theoretical and critical, that serve as the tools of analysis and constitute the scholarship in the area of the dissertation.

During the defense of the prospectus, the student should be prepared to explain the rationale for the project; hypothesis and/or research questions; methodology of the study; what has been done on the subject; and the place of the proposed research project in the scholarly conversation.

Scheduling the Examination

The prospectus must be prepared by the student, signed by all members of the dissertation committee, and presented to the Director of Graduate Studies no later than five months after the candidate takes and passes the Field exams. The five-month period should be considered a maximum; a more ideal timing calls for assembling a dissertation committee, writing a proposal, and defending the proposal during the semester immediately following the Field exams.

The signatures of the dissertation committee members indicate their consent to permit an oral examination. Within the following two weeks, the Director of Graduate Studies shall appoint a 3-person examination committee. Normally, this committee will be identical with the dissertation committee.

Conduct and Results of the Examination

The committee shall examine the student on the prospectus for a period of one hour. Except where there are unforeseen difficulties, immediately following the examination the committee will report

the results of the examination orally to the student and by ballot to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Should the student fail the examination, the examination committee shall supply to the student and to the members of the dissertation committee a written statement of recommendations for improvement of the prospectus. The student shall then revise the original prospectus within 30 days of notification of failure and submit it to the dissertation committee for signatures. The revised prospectus, signed by committee members, will then be delivered to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will schedule a second defense of the prospectus within one week.

6.4.7. Reexamination

Each failed examination, written or oral, may be retaken once. The procedure for reexamination is similar to that for the first attempt, except that even more detailed attention is devoted to the student's preparation.

Should a student fail any one of the examinations a second time, the Graduate School dismisses him or her from the doctoral program.

In sum, then:

- If a student receives a grade of pass or pass with distinction in each of the examinations, he or she is recorded as having passed the examination.
- If a student fails one or more of the examinations, he or she is recorded as having failed the candidacy examinations and must repeat the failed field(s).
- If upon repetition of the failed field(s) the student passes, he or she is then reported as having passed the candidacy examinations.
- If the student fails any field a second time, no additional opportunities to take the examination are permitted.
- Upon notification that a student has successfully completed coursework, foreign language/research tool requirements, and the candidacy examinations, and that a dissertation director has been appointed, the Graduate School formally recognizes the student as a candidate for the doctoral degree.

6.5. The Ph.D. Dissertation

Early in the doctoral program of study, Ph.D. students should identify senior graduate faculty members (marked by an asterisk in the list of Graduate Faculty in section 12 of this handbook) from one of the fields of specialization who might serve as the director of the dissertation. Selection of the dissertation director is the responsibility and prerogative of the individual student, though advice about this selection may be sought from the Director of Graduate Studies or another faculty mentor or mentors.

Ultimately, of course, the dissertation is the undertaking that distinguishes a doctoral degree from other academic degrees and contributes to the reputation it enjoys as the highest degree that academe can offer. It is evidence that the student can perform as an independent and original scholar and make, as the Graduate Catalog phrases it, "a substantial contribution to knowledge."

Ideally, graduate students begin work toward the dissertation the day that they begin graduate study. They should carefully select related courses that will lead toward a specialization in a given area and allow them to produce a connected body of work. The "unfinished business" and unanswered questions of any course provide prime material for dissertation topics. Seminar papers may lead to proposals or

even dissertation chapters. Preparation for candidacy examinations should immerse students even more deeply in the literature, criticism, or theory they have identified as a major area, particularly if they design a special field examination. The value of the working relationships students establish with faculty in their area of interest cannot be underestimated. One should not, therefore, view the dissertation as a completely separate requirement to be put off until the time of candidacy examinations. The dissertation process should begin much earlier.

6.51. The Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee consists of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty, one of whom serves as director of the dissertation and two of whom serve as readers. In some cases, especially when an interdisciplinary project calls for expertise outside the Department of English, a dissertation might also have two co-directors. Well in advance of the oral candidacy examination, and in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies, the student should identify a dissertation director. In consultation with the student, the dissertation director recommends the other members of the dissertation committee to the Director of Graduate Studies. The majority of the members, including the director, must be senior members of the graduate faculty.

The dissertation director and committee members must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate School *prior to* the scheduling of a proposal defense. A form for proposing a dissertation director and committee is available at the Graduate School webpage at the address below. The form requires signatures from the proposed director, the committee members, and the Director of Graduate Studies prior to submission to the Graduate School.

<http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/pdf/forms/Dissertation-Committee-Approval-Form.pdf>

For details on the proposal defense, see sections 6.4.5—6.4.7, above, in this Handbook.

6.52. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Inquiry Form

All dissertation writers, regardless of topic, must submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Inquiry Form. This form should be completed immediately after the proposal defense. This form states whether the research proposed for the thesis involves living human or animal subjects:

<http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/pdf/IRB-Inquiry-Form.pdf>

When the research does not involve such subjects, only the Inquiry Form needs to be submitted. In cases where the research does involve such subjects, a further application must be completed.

6.53. IRB Approval

In cases where living human or animal subjects *are* involved, the dissertation writer must also submit an application and obtain university approval for such research. This approval must be sought and obtained *before the phase of data collection begins*.

Students should consult with their committee and secure the approval of an authorized English Department Reviewer—typically the Director of Graduate Studies—well in advance of the beginning of data collection. The IRB application form may be found on the website of the Office of Research Compliance and Integrity: <http://niu.edu/divresearch/compliance/human/irb/index.shtml>

6.54. Writing the Dissertation and Dissertation Hours (ENGL 799)

The process of writing a dissertation may vary significantly depending upon the nature of the project and the field in which the dissertation is written. All dissertations, however, are produced “under the supervision of a senior member of the graduate faculty,” as the Graduate Catalog states. As noted above—in 6.5.1.—the immediate supervision might also be provided by co-directors.

The dissertation director or co-directors provide primary guidance in ensuring that the dissertation is of sufficient intellectual rigor to constitute a “substantial contribution to knowledge in which the student exhibits original scholarship and the ability to conduct independent research.” The director or co-directors also establish guidelines and expectations for the timely completion of such a dissertation. These guidelines and expectations are to be communicated both to the dissertator and to the non-directing members (or member) of the dissertation committee. The dissertation director or co-directors have the primary

responsibility of ensuring these guidelines and expectations are met.

Once coursework, Foreign Language/Research Tool requirements, Field exams, and other requirements are successfully completed, the Ph.D. student selects a dissertation director and committee, is admitted to full doctoral candidacy, and writes the dissertation. While dissertating, the student must enroll in at least one hour of ENGL 799 (doctoral dissertation) every semester, including summers, until graduation. This rule applies with no exceptions unless a student requests and receives a formal leave of absence from the Graduate School.

There is a minimum credit-hour requirement for the Ph.D. For students admitted under the 2012- 13 Graduate Catalog or earlier, the requirement is 30 hours of ENGL 799. For students admitted under the 2013-14 Graduate Catalog or later, the requirement is 12 hours of ENGL 799. A student admitted under the earlier catalogs may petition to be considered for graduation under the current Graduate Catalog; see the Director of Graduate Studies for details.

Note that ENGL 799 is a variable-hour course, with the default being one hour; students desiring credit for more than one hour of ENGL 799 in a given semester must be sure to register for the desired number of hours.

6.6. The Dissertation Defense

Upon the completion of the dissertation to the satisfaction of the dissertation director (or co- directors) and the other members of the dissertation committee, the student proceeds to the oral defense of the dissertation. Although a dissertation might well be revised following the defense— with changes ranging from very minor edits to substantial reworking, typically depending upon assessments made at the defense itself—the substantive research, analysis, and writing constituting a dissertation must have been completed before a defense can be scheduled.

The dissertation director or directors carry the primary responsibility of ensuring that the dissertation has reached a stage at which it can be successfully defended. This responsibility is shared by the other committee members, who must sign the application for a defense date. The signatures of the director(s) and committee member(s) indicate that they have read the dissertation and judge it to be ready for defense.

The signatures of the director(s) and committee member(s) do not indicate final approval of the dissertation nor guarantee that the student will pass the defense, however. The defense will be serious and intellectually rigorous. Neither the candidate nor the dissertation committee members can presume the successful outcome of the defense.

6.6.1. Procedures for Arranging the Defense

Prior to the semester in which you hope to defend:

As soon as you identify the semester in which you hope to defend your dissertation and plan to graduate, you should apply for graduation. A first application for graduation has a deadline well in advance of the deadline for scheduling a dissertation defense in a particular semester. Hence, this initial deadline will, in all probability, precede the date by which a dissertation defense can be proposed. Consult the following schedule to determine the deadline for the semester in which you hope to graduate; the deadline is very early in the fall and spring semesters and actually comes before the summer semester: <http://www.niu.edu/grad/pdf/graduation-deadlines.pdf>

The application to graduate can be done via MyNIU. A processing fee will be billed to your Bursar's account when you make your initial application for graduation. See the linked NIU website for directions: <http://www.reg.niu.edu/regrec/graduation/application.shtml>

After you apply for graduation, you will receive a letter from the Graduate School records officer stating graduation requirements. Questions about the letter should be addressed to the records

officer or the Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible to guarantee on-time graduation. Whether at the time you receive the letter or (still better) before, you can monitor your fulfillment of program requirements through the “Academic Requirements” page available through MyNIU.

If a student is unable to defend the dissertation in the hoped-for semester, he or she does not need to take any action to “defer” graduation. Any application for graduation after the first application will have a later deadline. In fact, conveniently, the deadline for a subsequent application is the same as the deadline for petitioning for a dissertation defense. Just remember to submit a request to “Defer or Reactivate an Application for Degree” at the same time you submit the application for the defense; the link to defer (or really, “un-defer”) your application is available here: <http://www.niu.edu/its/asp2/OnBaseForms/gradschool/RcGrGradDefer.aspx>

The process is the same as with the Master’s thesis and graduation, a fuller discussion of which may be found in the Handbook at 3.8.1.

At least four weeks prior to the dissertation defense:

The candidate makes arrangements for the defense with the dissertation director, committee members, and the Director of Graduate Studies. Specifically, once the director(s) and the committee members determine that a draft is defensible, they and the Director of Graduate Studies need to establish a time of not less than 120 minutes when they can meet to conduct the defense. The Graduate Secretary will reserve the room for the defense once notified of the date and time for the defense.

In order for the defense to be scheduled, a majority of the committee (including the dissertation director) must sign the Graduate School’s *Request for Appointment of Committee to Conduct an Oral Defense of Dissertation* form (available from the Graduate Secretary). These signatures—a minimum of three—do not indicate final approval, only that the committee members have read the dissertation and judge it to be ready for defense. The Director of Graduate Studies must also sign the form.

At least three weeks prior to defense:

The candidate submits to the Director of Graduate Studies two printed copies of a completed, defense-ready draft of the dissertation. The manuscript must conform to the form and content required by the dissertation committee and the requirements of the Graduate School as specified in *Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Electronic Theses and Dissertations*: <http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/pdf/ETD-Guidelines-Dissertation.pdf>.

One copy is retained by the department. The second copy is forwarded to the Graduate School to be read by a graduate faculty member from another department who is designated by the Dean of the Graduate School to be his or her representative at the defense: the “Dean’s Designee.”

The candidate should also mail an electronic copy to the Graduate Secretary, who announces its availability to interested department members and invites the faculty and graduate students of the department to attend the defense.

Finally, the candidate is responsible for supplying copies of the defense draft to the director(s) and committee member(s). These faculty should be consulted to determine their expectations of electronic or hard copies of the dissertation.

6.6.2 Procedures for the Defense and Deposit of the Dissertation

At the Defense:

The nature of the defense derives from the second definition of *defend*: “to support or maintain, as by argument or action; to justify” (*American Heritage Dictionary*). Scholarship, by its very nature, requires that it be articulated clearly and persuasively and be subjected to critical review by others.

Thus, the defense is a forum in which the candidate's work is scrutinized by members of the academic community to ascertain whether the candidate can (1) satisfactorily explain the significance of his or her new contribution to scholarship in a particular field and (2) articulately respond to questions, concerns, and criticisms about the work, thereby demonstrating a command of all aspects of the work and how it fits within a disciplinary framework.

The defense normally takes from 90 to 120 minutes. It is convened by the Director of Graduate Studies as a non-participant and is chaired by the dissertation director. The defense consists of three parts:

- (1) a public presentation of the work by the candidate (about 20 minutes)
- (2) a restricted examination by the dissertation committee
- (3) questions from the dean's designee and other guests

A candidate's preparedness for the defense depends largely upon the quality of the dissertation itself. Indeed, because no candidate can reasonably hope to defend a poor dissertation, the director and committee will take very seriously their responsibility not to consent to the defense of a poor dissertation. At the same time, it is also possible to fail the defense of a defensible dissertation; a successful outcome of the defense cannot be assumed just because a defense date has been approved.

Upon completion of the defense, the candidate and guests are excused while the committee decides whether the defense was successful and whether the dissertation requires further revisions before the candidate submits the final copy to the Graduate School. These decisions are immediately conveyed to the candidate in person and are then reported to the Graduate School. If the defense is not successful, the dissertation director will meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss the specifics of the case and to agree upon an appropriate course of action.

Following a successful defense:

The dissertation committee signs the Graduate School's Approval of Thesis, Dissertation, or Documentation form. Sometimes a dissertation will be approved as-is, without further revision beyond the defense draft. At least as often, final approval of the dissertation will depend upon final revisions to be completed by the candidate. At the defense the director(s) and committee member(s) will determine which of them must review and approve the final revisions before it may be deposited.

The post-defense version of the dissertation must be prepared in accordance with the Graduate School requirements and deadlines. The Graduate School schedule should be consulted prior to the defense: <http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/deadlines-dates-doctoral.shtml>. The candidate

submits the post-defense version electronically, following the guidelines on the Graduate School website and completing the submission on or before the scheduled deadline.

Usually, for a given graduation date, the deadline for submitting the post-defense version of the dissertation is only a few days later than the deadline for conducting the doctoral defense. The closeness of the deadlines should be considered when scheduling the defense. It is possible that revisions requested at the defense will exceed what can realistically be accomplished in just a few days, and the candidate should be aware of that possibility when scheduling the defense. The examiners are in no way obliged to tailor the extent of revisions they request according to the amount of time available between the defense date and the deposit deadline.

After the post-defense version of the dissertation is deposited, the doctoral candidate will be contacted by the readers in the Graduate School and supplied with detailed instructions regarding corrections and preparation of the final electronic submission of the dissertation.

7. Field and Course Offerings

The department offers specialized study in the traditional fields of graduate study in English. In the Ph.D., students not only may specialize in one of these fields, but on the basis of available Graduate Faculty and curriculum may also design a special field. The Graduate Faculty demonstrates strong research, publication, and teaching credentials in both the traditional as well as the more innovative fields of contemporary English studies. The faculty's areas of expertise are listed in Section 13 of this handbook. Students are welcome to discuss the nature of study in these fields with any of the faculty.

To support these fields, the Graduate Faculty has approved a variety of 600-level courses and 700-level seminars in each area. A regular rotation of all of these courses has been established by the Director of Graduate Studies and area faculty, and students can expect that a suitable variety of courses will be repeated over any two-year period. Under a number of special topics (e.g., ENGL 604, ENGL 607, ENGL 629, ENGL 707, ENGL 703), the department regularly offers courses in developing areas of research and teaching. These courses may often be repeated as the topic changes; consult the Graduate Catalog for limits on repeating topics courses and seminars.

All students in the graduate program, at whatever level of classification, may take 600-level courses, and with prior coursework OR with the approval of the instructor and the Director of Graduate Studies, 700-level courses. No undergraduate courses in English carry graduate course credit, though graduate students may take undergraduate coursework in English or any other department for the experience of the course. Graduate students in English may also take graduate courses in other departments, but they must have approval to include them in a master's or doctoral program of study. If a graduate English course is designated as a permit course, that permit is obtained from the Graduate Secretary with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

8. Standards and Evaluations

The department is concerned to maintain high standards in its graduate programs and regularly evaluates the students, faculty, and curriculum in these programs. Graduate courses are approved only after scrutiny by the Graduate Faculty, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee, and the Graduate Council. Faculty are admitted to Full Graduate Faculty and then Senior Graduate Faculty status only after scrutiny of their teaching, research, and publishing credentials by the department, the College, and the Graduate School. Only Senior Graduate Faculty members are permitted to direct dissertations.

Graduate students are evaluated from the time of their application for admission to the program until the time of their graduation. The Graduate School requires that students maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average in graduate courses (which means that every grade of C must be balanced by a grade of A), and graduate students are urged to familiarize themselves with the Graduate School policies on minimum grade point average. Faculty members may assign a grade of Incomplete in extraordinary or emergency circumstances. The Incomplete grade can be reversed to a letter grade within 120 days from the last day of classes in the semester it was given. Beyond this point, the grade becomes an "F" on the student's transcript. Courses graded Incomplete do not count toward degree requirements. With permission of instructors of courses and the Director of Graduate Studies, students may audit courses. Audited courses do not, however, fulfill degree requirements.

9. Graduate Assistantships

The department offers financial support in the pursuit of graduate degrees in the form of graduate assistantships. Typically, these are teaching assistantships in the First-Year Composition program.

Graduate students in the M.A. or Ph.D. programs who hold assistantships but have not previously taught in NIU's First-Year Composition program are required to take ENGL 600, Internship in the College Teaching of English. ENGL 600 is a course in the pedagogy of teaching freshman rhetoric and composition and is taken during the first fall term of the assistantship.

9.1. Graduate Assistantship Applications

Application for assistantships is made to the Director of Graduate Studies by February 1 each year. Applications for admission and for assistantships are considered at the same time, so if an applicant's admission credentials are incomplete, a decision on an assistantship will be delayed. The application for the Assistantship is available on the Graduate School web page via this link:

<https://www.hr.niu.edu/hrs/files/employment/3700-graduate-assistant-application.pdf>

Requirements for appointment:

Graduate assistantships are offered on a competitive basis based on budget, academic record, scholarly potential, and teaching experience and interest, among other factors. Decisions regarding appointments to teaching assistantships are made by the Admissions Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies. To be eligible, applicants must be admitted to a degree program in English. The first round of offers of assistantship appointments are typically made by mid-March for the nine months of the academic year that begins the following August.

9.2. International Students

Because graduate assistantships are primarily devoted to the teaching of First-Year Composition, the department generally does not grant assistantships to non-native speakers of English in their first year in the department. International students who wish to teach in the Department of English and whose native language is not English must take the SPEAK Test and achieve a suitable score before they can teach in the department.

9.3. Renewal of Appointment

Graduate assistantships are awarded annually. Students will be considered for renewal of their appointments to graduate assistantships as long as they are making satisfactory progress toward their degrees, are performing their assigned roles and responsibilities satisfactorily, and are conducting themselves appropriately and professionally in the department and on campus. Renewal of graduate assistantship funding is not automatic and is not guaranteed. Renewals are offered based on budget and on review of academic and professional performance and are subject to approval by the Graduate Studies Committee. Evidence of performance may take the form of grades and academic records and observations and reports from students, staff, and faculty members.

The Graduate Studies Committee generally approves a maximum of two years of assistantship funding for M.A. students and a maximum of five years of assistantship funding for Ph.D. students. In determining maximum periods of assistantship funding, the Graduate Studies Committee counts assistantship funding and awards from other departments and units on campus toward the two-year maximum at the M.A. level or toward the five-year maximum at the Ph.D. level.

In special circumstances, the Graduate Studies Committee may approve a sixth year of funding to Ph.D. students to support completion of their degrees. This additional year is not granted routinely, and the Graduate Studies Committee allocates sixth-year funding to individual

students depending on budget, recruitment of new applicants to the program, and review of the quality of the sixth-year student's work and progress toward degree. No Graduate Studies Committee is bound by the procedures adopted by its predecessors. Exceptions may be made to meet departmental staffing needs.

9.4. Teaching Assignments

Graduate assistants typically teach ENGL 103 and 203, the 6-hour sequence of composition courses required of all undergraduate students at the university. Teaching, tutoring, or research assignments given outside this sequence are determined by the Director of Graduate Studies, the First-Year Composition Director, and the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

9.5. Categories of Teaching Assistants

9.5.1. Interns (TIs: Students without Teaching Experience at the College Level)

Contract: 9 months

Teaching duties: normally 1 course of first-year composition fall semester and 2 spring semester

Required enrollment: ENGL 600, two terms (3 hours credit per semester); typically additional 2 graduate courses/6 hours each term (fall and spring semesters)

Stipend: Partial tuition waiver for the fall and spring semesters, partial tuition waiver for the summer term immediately following, and a stipend paid in regular intervals over the nine months of the spring-fall academic calendar.

9.5.2. Teaching Assistants in the M.A. Program (TAs: students with teaching experience at the college level)

Contract: 9 months

Teaching duties: normally 2 courses fall semester and 1 course spring semester

Required enrollment: typically 3 graduate courses/9 hours each term (fall and spring semesters)

Stipend: Partial tuition waiver for the fall and spring semesters, partial tuition waiver for the summer term immediately following, and a stipend paid in regular intervals over the nine months of the spring-fall academic calendar.

9.5.3. Teaching Assistants in the Ph.D. Program (TA I, II, III, IV, V: students with teaching experience at the college level)

Contract: 9 months

Teaching duties: normally 2 courses fall and spring semesters

Required enrollment: typically 3 graduate courses/9 hours each term (fall and spring semesters); for TA-I instructors (those teaching at NIU for the first time), this must include two terms of ENGL 600 (3 hours credit per semester).

Stipend: Partial tuition waiver for the fall and spring semesters, partial tuition waiver for the summer term immediately following, and a stipend paid in regular intervals over the nine months of the spring-fall academic calendar.

9.7. Fellowships

The university offers several types of fellowships. The fellowships offer stipends and carry a 12-month partial tuition waiver. Fellows are full-time students. They are not required to teach or do any work in the department, although they may choose to teach one course.

University Fellowship: Competitive, for M.A. students.

Dissertation Completion Award for advanced Ph.D. candidates: Competitive, for Ph.D. students in their final year of completing the dissertation.

Other fellowships may be available in a given year; contact the Director of Graduate Studies for information. (See also Awards, section 10.4. in the Handbook.)

10. **Special Programs and Awards**

10.1. **Oxford University**

The department offers a five-week program of study each summer at Oxford University, in which students can earn up to six hours of graduate credit. Courses are offered by NIU faculty and sometimes by the faculty of Oxford. Students reside at Oriel College and have access to Oxford libraries and to research facilities in London, such as the British Museum. Specific information about the faculty, courses, and costs are available from the Graduate Secretary late in the fall

10.2. **Newberry Library**

The English department is a member of the Newberry Library Center for Renaissance Studies. Each semester a number of special seminars are offered at the Newberry by national and international scholars in fields related to the library's collections. The Director of Graduate Studies announces these courses as information is received from the library. Students may take these courses with the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies. Students may also use the collections at the Newberry for research purposes.

Information about research at the Newberry (and other university libraries in the region) is available from the Director of Graduate Studies.

10.3. **Awards**

A number of awards have been established to recognize the work of graduate students in English:

- The Graduate Faculty Oxford Fellowship, the Russell Durning Family Memorial Fellowship, and the Jeannie A. Hains Endowment provide assistance to students enrolled in the Oxford Program.
- Rhoten Smith Assistantships available for minority students on appointment as graduate assistants. The Assistantships permit minority students to have a reduced teaching load.
- The annual Arnold Fox Award for Excellence in Research Writing recognizes outstanding research by graduate students.
- The Gustaaf Van Comphout Dissertation Support Scholarship is available annually to support completion of a dissertation on an early American topic.
- Robert T. Self Graduate Award supports a student currently in the process of writing a dissertation in the Department of English.
- Junior Schriber Scholar Award supports a student currently in the process of writing a dissertation in the Department of English on subjects of women's language and literature from the perspective of feminist theory and analysis.
- The Harlan Teller Award is announced in April for the best dissertation completed in the previous calendar year.
- Several fellowships/scholarships are administered by the Graduate School. For information, see <http://www.niu.edu/grad/funding/fellowships.shtml>

The procedures, application forms, and deadlines for the above awards will vary from year to year. Most are awarded competitively. Look for announcements from the Director of Graduate Studies.

11. The English Graduate Student Association (EGSA)

The English Graduate Student Association coordinates a number of formal activities within the graduate program, such as:

- scholarly symposia and workshops
- social gatherings
- sponsorship of speakers through the Graduate Colloquium Series each semester
- election of a representative to the English Graduate Studies Committee as a voting member
- nomination of a graduate student to the University Graduate Colloquium Committee
- nomination of a graduate student representative to the University Graduate Council

All graduate students in English are members of the English Graduate Student Association, and all graduate students are invited to participate in EGSA activities. Officers are elected by the graduate student body.

11.1. Graduate Conference (MCLLM)

Each spring semester, graduate students sponsor a conference, the Midwestern Conference on Literature, Language, and Media, featuring keynote speakers selected by the graduate students. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to participate in the conference and to take advantage of the opportunity it provides for professional development: presentation of papers in language, literature, and film, and discussions with colleagues from a variety of schools.

See the MCLLM website for information on the latest embodiment of this long-running conference: <https://niu.edu/continuing-professional-education/educators/conferences/mcllm.shtml>

12. Job Placement

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the services provided by the department Job Placement Advisor. As Ph.D. candidates near completion of their degrees and before starting on the job search, students can work with the advisor to put together a placement dossier.

Students can also gain experience through mock interviews. Information about the department's job placement services, including contact information for the current job placement advisor, can be found at <https://engl.niu.edu/why-english/placement.shtml>.

Even before searching, students should look at the MLA Job Information List and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, so that they can get an idea of what lies ahead. The MLA Job Information List is initially released in mid-September and updated periodically throughout the following year. It is available free of charge online.

All students, but particularly doctoral students, should consider joining the Modern Language Association. Student rates are reasonable and, as members, students receive announcements of meeting programs and thus opportunities for the submission of papers for presentation at various sessions during the meeting. Students may also remain abreast of calls for papers, jobs, and professional exchange by joining the college section of the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE). Students with interests in linguistics should consider joining the Linguistic Society of America (LSA).

Additionally, students should rely on dissertation directors and other mentors for job placement support. Students may wish to contact recent graduates through the department for advice on job searches, placement, and publishing. The professional careers of alumni are continuing reflections on the English department and are of utmost interest to the faculty, whom students should feel free to consult for recommendations and assistance.

13. The Graduate Faculty

All faculty listed below are members of the Graduate Faculty in English, and as such are eligible to serve as members of dissertation or M.A. thesis committees and also to co-direct dissertations or theses.

Asterisks (*) indicate senior membership of the Graduate Faculty in English. Senior members of the Graduate Faculty are eligible to serve as directors of M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations.

Graduate students putting together thesis or dissertation committees are advised that at least half of the members of such committees must be senior members of the English department.

The balance of thesis and dissertation committees (1 member in committees of 3, 2 members in committees of 4) may be filled with Graduate Faculty in departments other than English and/or the other Graduate Faculty listed below without asterisks. The latter group includes both full members of the tenure-track faculty and Graduate Faculty Scholars (who are typically retired English faculty who have maintained graduate faculty credentials).

* Melissa Adams-Campbell (Ph.D., Indiana University), Early American literature

* Gulsat Aygen (Ph.D., Harvard University), Linguistics

- * Scott Balcerzak (Ph.D., University of Florida), Film and media studies
 - * Alexandra Bennett (Ph.D., Brandeis University), Renaissance and 17th century literature
 - * Betty Birner (Ph.D., Northwestern University), Linguistics
 - * Joseph Bonomo (Ph.D., Ohio University), Creative Writing, Non-fiction writing
 - * Nicole Clifton (Ph.D., Cornell University), Medieval literature and language
 - * Lara Crowley (Ph.D., University of Maryland), 17th-century British literature
 - * Timothy Crowley (Ph.D., University of Maryland), 16th-century British literature
 - * Michael Day (Ph.D., University of California-Berkeley), Rhetoric and composition
- Deborah DeRosa (Ph.D., University of North Carolina), 19th-century American literature
- * Susan Deskis (Ph.D., Harvard University), Medieval literature and language--
retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar
 - * Jeff Einboden (Ph.D., University of Cambridge), 19th-century American literature
 - * Philip Eubanks (Ph.D., University of Illinois), Rhetoric and composition, technical writing--*retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar*
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- * Ibis Gómez-Vega (Ph.D., University of Houston), 20th - and 21st-century American literature, ethnic American literature
 - * David Gorman (Ph.D., Columbia University), Literary theory
 - * Ryan Hibbett (Ph.D., Southern Illinois University), 20th-century British literature, poetry
 - * Elizabeth Kahn (Ph.D., University of Chicago), English education, curriculum and instruction
 - * Amy Levin (Ph.D., City University of New York), Women's Studies and Women's Literature, Museum Studies, Victorian Literature, African-American Literature -
retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar
 - * Doris Macdonald (Ph.D., Louisiana State University), Applied linguistics, TESOL—
retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar
 - * Brian May (Ph.D., University of Virginia), 19th- and 20th-century British literature
 - * Thomas McCann (Ph.D. University of Chicago) English education, curriculum and instruction
 - * Amy Newman (Ph.D., Ohio University), Creative writing, poetry
 - * Bradley Peters (Ph.D., University of Iowa), Rhetoric and composition

- * Kathleen Renk (Ph.D., University of Iowa), 20th-century British literature and Postcolonial literature—*retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar*
- * Jessica Reyman (Ph.D., University of Minnesota), rhetoric and composition, writing studies, technical writing
- * Timothy Ryan (Ph.D., University of Nevada, Reno), 20th-century American literature, African American literature
- * John Schaeffer (Ph.D., St. Louis University), Rhetoric, Renaissance and 17th-century literature—*retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar*
- * Robert Self (Ph.D., University of North Carolina), Film and Literature—*retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar*
- * Diana Swanson (Ph.D., University of Minnesota), 19th- and 20th-century British fiction, feminist theory, women's studies—*retired, Graduate Faculty Scholar*
- * Mark Van Wienen (Ph.D., University of Illinois), 19th- and 20th-century American literature