

English - Graduate Programs

Objectives

The Department of English offers a wide variety of graduate courses to meet the needs of students with a diversity of interests and academic backgrounds who wish to enhance their awareness of their literary and cultural environment by additional formal instruction or to increase their professional competence.

The MA in English is designed to enable students to learn about, critique, and work in teaching, scholarship, writing, or other fields which value a strong background in language, rhetoric, and the study of culture through texts.

Early in the program, each student takes one core course that serves as an introduction to theory as it is currently used in English scholarship. Each student plans an individual program of coursework with the help of the Graduate Advisor (english.gradadvisor@uta.edu (matheson@uta.edu)). This program draws on the Department's varied courses, which offer students ways to study literature, rhetoric, and criticism, as well as methods of studying culture through texts and traditions of discourse.

The MA in English provides a strong grounding in scholarly methods and in theory, making it an ideal preparation for doctoral study in disciplinary or interdisciplinary programs. MA graduates in English pursue careers in journalism, educational administration and services, publishing, and many business fields that demand writing and communication skills. The MA in English is also useful for prospective or experienced teachers who want both to sharpen their ability to teach literature and writing and to advance professionally.

The PhD in English prepares students at the most advanced stage in the interpretation and composition of texts. The program emphasizes rigorous critical study in the fields of rhetoric, composition, critical theory, cultural studies, pedagogy, and literary studies. Rather than offering separate tracks, the program allows students, in consultation with the Graduate Advisor and the dissertation committee, to design a program of work that best suits their particular scholarly interests and career goals. The combination of a diversity of course offerings, required and elected courses, and the requirement that each student define a focus that reflects his or her intellectual and career interests provides students with the flexibility to adapt to changes in English studies. Specifically, the PhD in English prepares students for careers in writing, including electronic and technical writing, as well as in teaching at community colleges, small colleges, or research universities. The Department trains students for college-level teaching in several ways, including graduate courses in the teaching of literature and of composition. Doctoral students in English present papers at scholarly conferences, publish essays in scholarly journals, and participate in other professional activities.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Please consult the Director of First Year Writing, Dr. Justin Lerberg (jlerberg@uta.edu), for more information on Graduate Teaching Assistantships.

Admissions Requirements

Admission Procedures

In addition to the basic graduate admission requirements of UT Arlington described in this Catalog in the Admission section under University Policies & Requirements, the Department of English requires all international students to have speaking, reading, and writing competence in English. For both the MA and the PhD, we consider four different admission criteria:

- a. GPA
- b. GRE
- c. Writing sample
- d. Letters of recommendation

Prospective students must submit all the required materials and scores—i.e., official transcripts, GRE scores, a writing sample, and recommendation letters—in order for their application to be processed. All criteria are considered together, in a holistic way, and no single factor will eliminate a prospective student from consideration. For unconditional admission, candidates must meet the following standards for at least three of the four criteria.

Criteria for Admission: MA Program

- a. A minimum GPA of 3.0 in undergraduate work, with a minimum of 3.4 in the English major or upper-level English courses. Applicants who did not major in English should have at least 12 hours of upper-level undergraduate coursework in English. Non-majors who do not meet the upper-level English coursework requirement may still apply, but will likely need to take leveling courses (see below).
- b. GRE scores: a minimum of 153 on the verbal scale and 4.5 on analytic writing. We will not consider the math scores. We do not require the English subject test.
- c. A writing sample of 10 to 15 pages that demonstrates a sophisticated prose style and the ability to construct complex arguments.
- d. Three letters of recommendation that attest to the prospective student's intellectual and scholarly potential. At least two of these should be from former professors.

GRE Waiver

UT Arlington undergraduates whose GPA equals or exceeds the minimum described above and who have graduated in the last three years with a major in English (or closely related program) qualify for a waiver of the GRE admissions requirement.

Deferred Decision

A deferred decision may be granted when a file is incomplete or when a denial is not appropriate.

Provisional Admission

An applicant who is unable to supply all required documentation prior to the admission deadline but who otherwise appears to meet admission requirements may be granted provisional admission.

Probationary Admission

For both the MA and PhD programs, students may be admitted on probation under one of two scenarios:

- a. The prospective student's application materials do not meet two of the four standards, but are outstanding in the remaining two categories; or
- b. The prospective student's materials come extremely close to meeting the standards in at least three of the four areas.

Students on academic probation must make no grade lower than a B in the first 12 hours of their graduate work in order to remain in the program.

Denial

Admission will be denied if the application materials:

- a. Do not meet the standards in three of the four categories; or
- b. Do not meet the standards in two of the categories, and in the remaining two categories meet the standards but in an unexceptional manner.

Leveling Courses

Students who wish to pursue the MA but who do not have an undergraduate major in English may be required to take between 3 and 12 hours in specified advanced undergraduate courses and make no grade lower than a B. These courses will not be counted for graduate credit, but instead will provide the necessary background for pursuit of the advanced degree.

Degree Requirements

Master of Arts

- a. ENGL 5300 THE PROFESSION OF ENGLISH STUDIES is required. It must be taken within a student's first 12 hours of study.
- b. ENGL 5310 INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL THEORY is required. It must be taken within a student's first 12 hours of study.
- c. The program has thesis and non-thesis options.
- d. The thesis option is a 30 credit-hour program and requires 24 hours of coursework (a three credit-hour core course and 21 hours of electives) and at least six hours of thesis. The degree culminates with defense of the thesis.
- e. Students who would like to pursue the thesis option must apply for it no sooner than their 18th hour and no later than their 24th hour of coursework. A student who elects to write a thesis must select a topic in consultation with his/her thesis director. Before the student registers for thesis hours, a Thesis Committee (a director and two readers) must be established.
- f. The non-thesis option requires a 36 credit-hour program of coursework (a three credit-hour core course and 33 hours of electives). The final requirement for a non-thesis MA is submission of a portfolio. This will consist of a variety of writing assignments designed to prepare the student to enter the professional and/or academic workplace.
- g. Students are allowed to take up to 9 hours of graduate coursework in other departments in the College of Liberal Arts. In some circumstances, courses outside the College of Liberal Arts may be approved.

Admission Requirements

In addition to the basic graduate admission requirements of UT Arlington described in this Catalog in the Admission section under University Policies & Requirements, the Department of English requires all international students to have speaking, reading, and writing competence in English. For both the MA and the PhD, we consider four different admission criteria: (1) GPA; (2) GRE; (3) writing sample; and (4) letters of recommendation. Prospective students should submit all the required materials and scores—i.e. official transcripts, GRE scores, a writing sample, and recommendation letters—in order for their application to be processed. All criteria are considered together, in a holistic way. No single factor will eliminate a prospective student from consideration. For unconditional admission, candidates must meet the following standards for at least three of the four criteria.

Criteria for Admission: PhD Program

- a. A minimum GPA of 3.5 in the student's MA in English or a very closely related field. (If the MA is not in English, we will consider the undergraduate GPA as well as that of the MA. Moreover, if the MA is not in a very closely related field, the prospective student will be admitted to the MA program in English, not the PhD.)

- b. GRE scores: a minimum of 156 on the verbal scale and 4.5 on analytic writing. We will not consider the math scores. We do not require the English subject test.
- c. A writing sample of 15 to 20 pages that demonstrates a sophisticated prose style, the ability to engage in intellectually rigorous modes of analysis, and a strong knowledge of rhetoric, composition studies, literary studies, cultural studies, or interdisciplinary critical theory.
- d. Three letters of recommendation that attest to the student's intellectual and scholarly potential. At least two of these must be from former professors; at least one must be a professor from the student's MA program.

Deferred Decision

A deferred decision may be granted when a file is incomplete or when a denied decision is not appropriate.

Provisional Admission

An applicant unable to supply all required documentation prior to the admission deadline but who otherwise appears to meet admission requirements may be granted provisional admission.

Probationary Admission

For both MA and PhD, students may be admitted on probation under one of two scenarios: (1) if the prospective student's application materials do not meet two of the four standards, but are outstanding in the remaining two categories; or (2) if the prospective student's materials come extremely close to meeting the standards in at least three of the four areas. Students on academic probation must make no grade lower than a B in the first 12 hours of their graduate work in order to remain in the program.

Denial

Admission will be denied if the application materials (1) do not meet the standards in three of the four categories; or (2) if the materials do not meet the standards in two of the categories, and in the remaining two categories meet the standards but in an unexceptional manner.

Degree Requirements

Doctor of Philosophy

- a. The PhD requires thirty semester hours of coursework beyond the MA, followed by a minimum of 9 hours of dissertation work.
- b. ENGL 5300 THE PROFESSION OF ENGLISH STUDIES is required. It must be taken within a student's first 12 hours of study unless they have already taken ENGL 5300 while in the MA program.
- c. ENGL 5310 INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL THEORY is required. It must be taken within a student's first 12 hours of study unless they have already taken ENGL 5310 while in the MA program.
- d. All students are also required to take ENGL 5311 FOUNDATIONS OF RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION or ENGL 5359 ARGUMENTATION THEORY as early in their programs as possible.
- e. Students are allowed to take up to 9 hours of graduate coursework in other departments in the College of Liberal Arts. In some circumstances, courses outside the College of Liberal Arts may be approved.
- f. The PhD requires basic proficiency in translation in one natural language other than English.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the Graduate Advisor or Graduate Coordinator in planning their coursework, in order to develop a coherent focus and to ensure that they take all required courses. Near the end of coursework, students must establish a dissertation committee and identify the chair, who will become their primary advisor. The committee will help students develop three subject area reading lists for their written comprehensive examination, which will be taken after they complete their coursework and satisfy the foreign language requirement. While studying for the comprehensive exam, students may enroll in ENGL 6391 GRADUATE READINGS, supervised reading for the PhD exam, graded R. By the end of the first semester after successfully completing the comprehensive examination, the student must submit a dissertation prospectus to their committee. The dissertation must be an original, substantial and significant contribution to a scholarly field. Students should work closely with the chair of their committee while researching and writing their dissertation. While researching and writing their dissertation, students must enroll in dissertation hours (ENGL 6399 DISSERTATION, ENGL 6699 DISSERTATION or ENGL 6999 DISSERTATION). In the final semester of dissertation work, students may enroll in ENGL 7399 DOCTORAL DEGREE COMPLETION. Once the student, the chair of the committee, and the primary readers agree that the dissertation is sufficiently completed, the student may schedule the defense. The student must furnish each committee member with a copy of the dissertation, including notes and bibliography, at least three weeks prior to the defense date. The defense of the dissertation is oral. The defense is open to all members of the faculty, graduate students and invited guests of the university community. Questioning of the candidate will be directed by the student's dissertation supervising committee, but any person attending the defense may participate. Committee members may request that the dissertation be further revised and may withhold final approval of the dissertation until the revisions have been made. For more specific information regarding degree requirements, please consult the Graduate Handbook of the Department of English.