

**The M.A. Program
in English and American Literature**

**Office of Graduate Studies
Department of English
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**Fall 2019
SC, JW, JK**

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General Requirements Satisfactory Progress Toward the M.A.

All students who are enrolled in the M.A. program in the Department of English are expected to make continuous, satisfactory progress toward the degree as specified by the criteria below. A student who does not meet these criteria may be dismissed from the graduate program.

Grades

1. Students must maintain a minimum g.p.a. of 3.0 for all graduate courses attempted at the University of Houston.
2. Students must receive a grade of B- or higher in each course that is applied to the degree program.
3. Students who receive a grade of C+ or lower in 12 hours of graduate course work at the University of Houston will be ineligible for the Ph.D.
4. Students must not take more than one incomplete a year, with a maximum of two INCs during coursework. Students whose circumstances have necessitated exceeding this limit must consult with the DGS and follow the procedure laid out in Rate of Progress, 5.

Rate of Progress

1. Students must successfully complete at least 12 credit hours of seminars or special problems courses in any two-year period.
2. Students must successfully complete 75% of all seminars or special problems courses attempted for graduate credit.
3. Successfully completed courses include only those assigned grades of S or B- or higher.
4. Students must fulfill any conditions of admission within two years of matriculation. Exceptions to this rule must be specified on the letter of acceptance or Graduate Approval/Disapproval form.
5. Students who experience a significant setback (e.g., health, natural disaster, family-related events, caretaking, etc.) that causes disruption to their progress (incompletes, withdrawal, etc.) may consult with the Director of Graduate Studies to explain their circumstances and draw up a plan to resume progress, which must be approved by the DGS.

Continuous Enrollment

1. Students must enroll in at least three credit hours of graduate coursework each long semester.
2. For an exemption of this requirement, students must apply for a leave of absence from the MA. The application will be reviewed by the department and college. Information regarding the college's Leave of Absence policy can be found here: <http://publications.uh.edu/content.php?catoid=33&navoid=11946>.
3. Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment or fail to apply for a leave of absence must petition for re-entrance into the MA program.

Time Limitation

Students must complete all requirements for the M.A. within five years of matriculation. No course—whether earned at the University of Houston or transferred from another institution—taken more than five years prior to graduation may be applied to the M.A.

Conduct

All students must abide by the UH Student Code of Conduct contained at http://www.uh.edu/dos/_files/student-code-of-conduct-2019-2020.pdf. Engaging in prohibited conduct could trigger a complaint directed by any member of the university community to the Dean of Students and cause a Disciplinary Hearing that could potentially expel the student from the University.

Department, College and University Requirements

Students who fail to meet the above requirements and all general requirements of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and the University of Houston may be dismissed from the program.

The general requirements for graduate study at the University of Houston are found at www.uh.edu/grad_catalogue/garr/index.htm

Department Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students

Graduate students and involved faculty are encouraged to settle any differences amiably and informally. In the event that an informal resolution is not possible, students should contact the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The DGS will then attempt to mediate a resolution. If this is not possible, the Chair of the English Department will be contacted to work to settle any issues between faculty and students in a satisfactory manner. If these steps still do not resolve the issue, the student is encouraged to file a grievance with the English Department's elected Election, Rules, and Governance (ERG) committee. Once a grievance is filed, ERG will convene to adjudicate the grievance. If it is determined that the grievance can be heard within the scope of ERG's charge, the student and faculty will be contacted if further information is needed for ERG to produce a ruling on the grievance. Once a ruling is determined, both student and faculty are expected to abide by the determination of ERG.

If a student still does not agree with ERG's ruling, they are welcome to take their grievance to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, as detailed below.

CLASS Grievance Procedure for Graduate Students

Graduate students and involved faculty should make every effort to settle their differences amiably and informally. In the event that an informal resolution is not possible, students are required to resolve any grievance according to the grievance procedure established the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. The CLASS Grievance Procedure for Graduate Students is found at <http://www.uh.edu/class/students/graduate/academics-planning/policies-procedures/class-graduate-grievance-policy-procedure-may-2018.pdf>

UH English Graduate School Rights and Responsibilities

Graduate Students have a right to the following:

1. Right to Respect

Graduate students have the right to be considered members of the scholarly and academic community, and to be treated fairly and respectfully by members of both the administration and the faculty.

Graduate students have the right to perform scholarly activities, work, teach, and conduct research in an environment free from exploitation, discrimination, harassment, or unreasonable expectations or conditions.

Graduate students have the right to be free from exploitation from faculty members who see the students' lesser authority as an opportunity for personal advantage.

2. Right to Respect of Time and Effort

Graduate students have the right to refuse to perform tasks that are not related to, or are in conflict with, their academic or professional development, or tasks in excess of their obligations as students and employees.

Graduate students have the right not to be coerced into performing tasks in grievous excess of other students.

Graduate students have the right to ownership and access to their intellectual property and to co-authorship in publications to which they have contributed significant content or research, consistent with the generally accepted standards of their fields of study.

3. Right to Academic Freedom

Graduate students have a right to an intellectually stimulating and diverse academic environment that includes members from historically underrepresented groups.

Graduate students have the right to academic freedom and the university shall not curb graduate students' right to exercise this freedom, or use it as grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the university.

4. Right to Data Access

All access shall be provided in a timely manner and in writing.

- *Grievance policy*

Graduate students have the right to be made aware of all available Department and University avenues for grievances and be given clearly defined channels for the receipt and consideration of graduate student complaints concerning instruction and evaluation.

Graduate students have the right to be given the opportunity for full-faith consultation and mediation before actions are taken against them, should be given a fair opportunity to correct or remedy deficiencies in their academic performance, and to defend themselves at disciplinary hearings.

- *Degree Requirements*
 Graduate students have a right to specific and concrete requirements for achieving an advanced degree. These requirements should be communicated clearly to them upon entrance to the graduate program.

 Graduate students have a right to expect that new policies regarding expectations enacted during the course of a graduate student's studies shall not negatively affect those who were admitted prior to the change.
- *Required classes*
 Graduate students have the right to take required classes. This means that either required courses be taught with sufficient frequency not to hinder a fair opportunity to achieve the "normative time to degree," alternative courses be offered, or such courses be dropped as a formal requirement.
- *Academic file*
 Graduate students have the right to inspect any of their own educational records, except as waived by the graduate student (e.g., confidential letters of recommendation).

 Graduate students have a right to provide a written explanation for documents in their files. The explanation shall be included in the graduate student's educational records.
- *Time to degree*
 Graduate students have the right to know the "normative time to degree" and the "average time to degree" within a specific graduate program.
- *Attrition rate*
 Graduate students have the right to know a program's student attrition rate and, if available, the predominant reasons for lack of program completion.
- *Hiring rate*
 Graduate students have the right to access information regarding expectations of job placement and time expectations regarding the availability of careers upon completion of their degree.

 Graduate students have a right to know about job placements of department graduates, as that information is available.
- *Knowledge of Financial Support Availability*
 Graduate students have a right to an accurate and comprehensive description of available funding opportunities and the likelihood of financial and resource support within their program.

Graduate students have a right to a thorough description of the requirements and qualifications necessary for academic employment, training, and financial support within the Department and the University.

- *Teaching Assignments*

Graduate students have the right to know how their teaching assignments are decided and that these assignments are done in a fair and equitable way.

Graduate students have the right to be informed about all teaching opportunities (including co-teaching, teaching upper level classes, and specialty assignments) and have the right to apply for and participate in these opportunities.

5. Right to Compensation and Support

Graduate students have a right to compensation that meets the standard of a fair and reasonable living wage (as defined by city level wage and cost of living data), and part time (defined as under twenty hour) employment stipends should be proportionate to the standards met for full time appointments. This should be regarded as the baseline for compensation, not as the average or standard wage.

Graduate students have a right to compensation packages that are regularly evaluated to ensure they match the cost of living standards.

Graduate students have a right to access affordable and comprehensive health insurance.

Graduate students have a right to adequate resources being supplied to support teaching and research work including adequate graduate student space and individual work stations.

6. Right to Professionalization

Graduate students, of all levels, have a right to substantial professional development as an essential aspect of graduate and professional students' present and future professional lives, and the Department should offer regular training on: submitting articles for publication, how to create and tailor job documents, professional associations and conferences, and effective job searches and interview techniques as the minimum standard.

Graduate students have a right to enroll in classes offered by other UH departments, provided space is available and they meet the prerequisites.

7. Right to Feedback and Guidance

Graduate students have a right to be evaluated by the faculty of their program in accordance with fair procedures, in matters of both employment and academic success, solely on the basis of the graduate student's professional qualifications and conduct, and previously agreed upon criteria for evaluation.

Graduate students have the right to timely communication between graduate students, faculty, advisors, and program coordinators.

8. Right to Confidentiality

Graduate students have a right to professionalism and reasonable confidentiality in their communications with professors.

Graduate students have a right to expect that a student's performance or behavior should only be discussed for professional purposes and in a collegial manner, and should not be discussed with another student without express consent from the student being discussed.

9. Right to be Part of the Department Community

Graduate students have a right to representatives on standing and ad-hoc committees where appropriate, including hiring committees, and be given the opportunity to participate in discussions about university-wide changes that affect their day-to-day lives.

Graduate students have the right to be informed, in a timely manner, of the creation of new committees that will address issues directly related to graduate students, and given the opportunity to select or recommend a graduate student representative.

Graduate Students have the following responsibilities:

1. Responsibility to Conduct Themselves Professionally

Graduate students have a responsibility to conduct themselves, in all educational activities, in a manner befitting an academic colleague. Graduate students' behavior should be a credit to themselves, the higher academic unit, and the university.

2. Responsibility to Respect Others

Graduate students have a responsibility to help promote an intellectually stimulating and diverse academic environment and to help foster a professional climate in which all faculty, staff, and students (both graduate and undergraduate) feel safe.

3. Responsibility to Respect Others' Time

Graduate students have a responsibility to be aware of time constraints imposed on other faculty, staff, and fellow students.

4. Responsibility to Communicate Appropriately

Graduate students have a responsibility to communicate regularly with faculty, mentors, and advisors in matters related to research and progress within the graduate program.

Graduate students have a responsibility to use professionalism and reasonable confidentiality in their communications with professors, fellow students, and those they teach.

5. Responsibility to Uphold Ethical Norms in Research and Scholarship

Graduate students have a responsibility to uphold ethical norms of the academy and provide accurate and honest reporting of research results, research methodology, and scholarship.

6. Responsibility to Work to the Best of Their Ability

Graduate students have a responsibility to fulfill their teaching and research obligations to the best of their knowledge, training, and ability; to carry out their job responsibilities in a

conscientious and timely manner; and to perform their duties in accordance with all relevant University, state government, and federal government rules and regulations.

Graduate students have a responsibility to focus on their academic career and apply energy toward the advanced degree within normative time, except when special circumstances apply.

Graduate students have a responsibility to increase their own learning, thus increasing their teaching effectiveness and individual scholarship over time.

7. Responsibility to Ask Questions

Graduate students have a responsibility to take the initiative in asking questions that promote their understanding of the academic requirements and the financial particulars of their specific graduate program.

8. Responsibility to Participate in Community

Graduate students have a responsibility to contribute to building a healthy department community, enriching the administration, academic development, and the social environment of the department.

9. Responsibility to Work for Sustainability

Graduate students have a responsibility to demand sustainable policies of the University and to both practice and promote habits that protect the environment and raise environmental consciousness.

10. Responsibility to Revisit Rights and Responsibilities Statement

Graduate students have a responsibility to periodically revisit these rights and responsibilities and update them to best reflect the high standards and expectations of the Department.

General Requirements for Successful Completion of the M.A. in English

The M.A. handbook sets forth the general requirements for M.A. students in the Department of English. Students must also be familiar with the college and university policies and regulations governing graduate study and can find this information at www.uh.edu/grad_catalogue/garr/index.html. After being admitted to the M.A. program students must complete their coursework toward the degree according to the guidelines in this handbook.

Minimum requirements for admission

- B.A. in English or 12 upper division hours in English and American literature
- 3.0 g.p.a. in undergraduate studies
- GRE general test

Requirements of the degree

- 36 hours of coursework

Distribution of coursework

- 6 hours of bibliography, literary theory, rhetoric, composition, pedagogy, or linguistics
- 6 hours of Early Literature *
- 6 hours of Later Literature *
- 3 hours of Advanced Pedagogy Workshop OR Advanced Academic Writing Workshop
- 15 hours of Elective Courses

* Early British literature is defined as British literature before 1800 and early American literature is defined as literature before 1865.

Enrollment and Residency

Graduate students must enroll in a minimum of three credit hours in each long semester (spring and fall) until completion of the M.A. program, unless granted a leave of absence. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment may result in dismissal from the program.

Program of Study

M.A. students are required to complete 36 credit hours of graduate coursework according to the requirements of the degree plan set forth on page 8 of the M.A. handbook. Students must complete all requirements for the degree within five years of matriculation.

Transfer Credit

Students may petition to transfer a maximum of nine credit hours of graduate coursework in English from other institutions to the M.A. program at the University of Houston. A course taken more than five years prior to graduation may not be applied to the M.A.

Postbaccalaureate Credit

Students may petition to apply a maximum of twelve credit hours of graduate coursework taken at the University of Houston to the M.A. A course taken more than five years prior to graduation may not be applied to the M.A. To petition to apply postbaccalaureate courses to the M.A. degree plan, students must submit an Academic Record Course Adjustment form to the Office of Graduate Studies and the Office of the Dean for approval.

Coursework Requirements

Course Load

The University of Houston currently defines full-time graduate study as nine credit hours of graduate coursework in the fall and spring semesters. Six credit hours constitute full-time study in each six-week summer semester. In the long semesters, full-time students must enroll in at least six hours of formal courses. The remaining three hours may be Reading and Research hours (see pages 5 and 6), Master's Essay, or College Teaching of Language and Literature, a course for new teaching assistants.

Course Selection and Advising

Course selection is governed by the specific requirements of the PhD, the objective of which is to work toward increased sophistication in his/her creative work and scholarship. Students will meet with the Graduate Advisor each semester to select courses for the subsequent semester. Students must obtain the Graduate Advisor's permission to enroll in graduate courses in the Department of English and other departments at the University of Houston.

Graduate Courses Outside of the Department of English

Students may be permitted to take a maximum of nine hours of graduate courses outside of the Department of English. Students must consult with the Graduate Director prior to enrolling in courses outside of the department to determine if such courses will be applied to the PhD.

Seminars

Graduate seminars are designed for students who have substantive academic preparation in a specific area. Graduate seminars offer students the opportunity to develop intensive knowledge in a specific field and to do scholarly research and scholarly writing on a specialized topic in that field. In addition to reading and discussing primary and secondary texts, seminar assignments typically include student presentations and a writing requirement of 6,000 to 10,000 words.

Individual Study Courses

The heart of graduate studies is independent research. Unlike the undergraduate curriculum in which almost all of a student's work is confined to discrete, three-hour organized classes, the graduate curriculum is built on a complement of organized seminars and independent research. Formal seminars provide an important foundation for subsequent learning and the faculty who conduct them offer students valuable professional models. However, reading, research and writing

undertaken outside the organized seminar increasingly define the nature and quality of graduate education as students move toward completion of the PhD

Students have the opportunity for individual study courses under two rubrics: English 7398: Special Problems and English 8198-8698: Reading and Research. Special Problems courses and Reading and Research hours are distinct course categories and are not interchangeable in our course catalog and on the doctoral degree plan. The distinctions are explained below. When a student and professor agree to work together on either of these courses, both should be clear about the kind of course they are planning and about their expectations of each other's involvement. They should also be clear with the Graduate Studies Office about their intention; otherwise, students may be unable to receive the appropriate credit for the course.

- ***Special Problems Courses:*** These courses offer students an opportunity to (1) conduct substantive research in a specialized area of scholarship with a view to developing a research area for the prospectus defense or (2) concentrate on a specific aspect of creative work with a view to developing the creative dissertation's critical foreword with an individual member of the faculty. Such courses should not overlap with or replace existing formal seminars or workshops within the graduate curriculum but provide the means for students to devote time to an exceptional project that complements and builds on their previous coursework. For this reason, Special Problems Course should be taken later on in one's coursework, ideally in the final two semesters.

Special Problems Courses are weighted equally with formal classroom courses and consequently require substantial contact time with the faculty member (at least biweekly during the semester) since they fulfill degree requirements in a student's program. Depending on their structure, content, and goals, they could potentially satisfy any of the degree requirements in the doctoral program. Because they are weighted equally with graduate seminars and satisfy degree requirements, Special Problems courses are given letter grades and require an amount of reading and writing commensurate with formal courses. There should be a substantial final project. The form required for these courses (available in the Graduate Studies Office) asks the student to provide a detailed course description. The description of a Special Problems Course in literature should include a detailed reading list of literary and critical texts, a statement of the number and focus of writing assignments, the frequency of meetings, the amount of assignments and the specific degree requirement that the proposed course fulfills. The description of a Special Problems Course in creative writing should include a statement of the number and focus of writing assignments; a list of literary and critical texts, where appropriate; the frequency of meetings; and the specific degree requirement that the proposed course fulfills. Doctoral students are allowed to apply a maximum of two Special Problems Courses to their degree plan.

- ***Research and Reading Hours:*** These non-credit bearing hours afford students the opportunity to pursue, as a part of their minimum course load requirement, an independent study of various areas and topics in literature and language under the guidance of a member of the faculty. Typically, students enroll for Research and Reading Hours when they would profit from time and faculty consultation to read additional texts from a prior seminar, complete a creative manuscript or revise an article for publication. The expectation is that the students will take the initiative in using Research and Reading Hours to become familiar with the areas of expertise and scholarly interests of individual faculty members and to identify their own areas of concentration. Research and Reading hours can be important in

preparing a student for the kind of independent reading and writing that is expected of a dissertation student, a scholar and a writer. Research and Reading hours are, thus, an important opportunity for students to shape their graduate study and to select the faculty who will guide and supervise their work.

Unlike Special Problems courses, Research and Reading Hours are not weighted equally with formal classroom courses, and they neither fulfill category requirements in a student's program nor count toward the student's academic program. Accordingly, the formal requirements for Research and Reading Hours are less than those for Special Programs courses. The student and professor are expected to meet at least three times during the semester of enrollment in Reading and Research hours. Students will receive a grade of (S) Satisfactory or (U) Unsatisfactory for Research and Reading Hours.

Because Research and Reading Hours do not count toward the student's academic program, they should be used sparingly before the dissertation phase. They are nonetheless very useful if used to productive ends. When students wish to enroll in Research and Reading Hours, they must complete a form (available in the Graduate Studies Office) that identifies the specific project for the Research and Reading Hours and the faculty member who will supervise the project.

Specialized Track Workshops

After two semesters of coursework have been completed, MA students should enroll in either English 6325: Practicum in the Teaching of English (designed for MA students interested in career advancement in teaching and pedagogy, primarily on the junior high and high school levels) or English 6393: Research Colloquium (designed primarily for students interested in continuing their education on the doctoral level). Both of these are intensive workshop courses resulting in either a teaching portfolio (English 6325) or a focused research essay (English 6393).

Graduate seminars are designed for students who have substantive academic preparation in a specific area of English studies. Graduate seminars offer students the opportunity to develop intensive knowledge in a specific field, and to do scholarly research and scholarly writing on a specialized topic in that field. In addition to reading and discussing primary and secondary texts, seminar assignments typically include student presentations and a writing requirement of 6,000 to 10,000 words.

Master's Essay

In the final year of study, the M.A. student may elect to write a Master's essay with the objective of producing a substantive, polished critical essay. The Masters essay should resemble an article submitted for journal publication in length, critical framework, and sophistication.

In the penultimate semester of the program, the student will submit a two-page description of the proposed project with the approval of a member of the faculty who will guide the student in writing the Master's essay. Following approval of the graduate studies committee, in the final semester of the Master's program, the student will enroll in English 7399: Master's Essay. This course will replace three hours of elective credit toward the M.A.

Graduation

M.A. students must meet all department, college and university requirements for the degree prior to graduation. The department requirements are set forth in this handbook and the college and university requirements are found at www.uh.edu/grad_catalogue/garr/index.html.

Students must be enrolled for graduate credit in the semester in which they graduate, and must submit an application for graduation to the Graduate Advisor. The current academic calendar will provide the application deadline.

Progression to the Ph.D.

Exceptionally strong students in the M.A. program may apply for admission to the Ph.D. program in the Department of English after completing 24 credit hours toward the Master's degree. Admission to the doctoral program is not automatic and is competitive. M.A. students who wish to progress to the doctoral program must submit a full application, including new letters of recommendation from faculty with whom they have studied in the M.A. program, a new critical writing sample from their M.A. course work, and a new statement of intent. The Graduate Studies Committee will review this application during the regularly scheduled review of applications for the doctoral program.

Successful applicants to the Ph.D. program would complete the 36 credit hours for the Master's degree at which time they would officially receive the M.A., their degree status would change to Ph.D., and 6 elective hours from the M.A. program would then be applied to the doctoral degree plan. The M.A. that is received *en passant* to the Ph.D. in the Department of English at the University of Houston is effectively a 30 credit hour degree.

M.A. Program Review

The Graduate Studies Committee of the Department of English will regularly review the requirements and policies for the M.A. program. Upon review, if the Graduate Studies Committee determines the need for a revision of requirements or policies as stated in the M.A. Studies Handbook, it will bring its recommendation to the faculty of the Department of English for their approval.

Degree Plan M.A. in Literature

Name _____

Admission Date _____

Courses (36 hrs.)

Number	Course	Semester	Professor	Grade
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SIX CREDIT HOURS IN TWO OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Bibliography & Research Methods (3 hours)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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Literary Theory (3 hours)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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Rhetoric/Composition/Pedagogy/Linguistics (3 hours)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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SIX CREDIT HOURS EARLY LITERATURE (British pre-1800, American pre-1865)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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SIX CREDIT HOURS LATER LITERATURE (British post-1800, American post-1865)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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THREE SPECIALIZED TRACK CREDIT HOURS (Adv. Pedagogy or Adv. Academic Writing)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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FIFTEEN CREDIT HOURS ELECTIVES

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____