



THE UNIVERSITY of  
**NEW ORLEANS**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES



# Graduate Student Handbook

## Online Master of Arts in English



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## I. Objectives of the Graduate Program in English

The Online Master of Arts degree prepares students for careers in teaching or writing or for further graduate study leading to the doctorate. The program features advanced study in British and American literature, in professional writing and editing, and in rhetoric and pedagogy. The program requires students to complete one of two areas of concentration: Literature, or Rhetoric/Professional Writing; additional areas of concentration will become available as the program develops.

## II. The *UNO Catalog* and *English Graduate Handbook*

Graduate students are expected to adhere to the requirements stated in all sections of the UNO Catalog that pertain to their programs and to their remaining in good standing with the Graduate School and the University. The catalog, available online in Webstar and at <http://www.uno.edu/registrar/catalog/index.aspx>, contains information on such diverse topics as admission to candidacy, student loans, career planning and placement services, and transfer credit. You should familiarize yourself with its contents.

The handbook you are reading now is the specific guide to the Online MA in English. You should become very familiar with its contents.

## III. Advising: The Graduate Coordinator

Before students enroll in courses each semester, they are advised by the Graduate Coordinator (via phone and/or email), who assists students in planning their programs and choosing their classes. Students are advised that permission is required for each course. Students are not allowed to self-select courses or go into Webstar and register for courses for which they have not received permission. Once a student has been advised, the Graduate Coordinator will issue permissions in Webstar. These permissions should be used in a timely manner or they will expire.

Once a student enrolls in courses, any changes to the student's schedule must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator. Students are able to drop courses in Webstar but not enroll in a new course without permission. Students should also be advised that course availability in Webstar is not always accurate. Permissions may have been issued that have not yet been used, making a class "full" when it appears to have seats available in Webstar. Please contact the Graduate Coordinator first to check on course availability before making any changes (i.e., don't drop a course until you are sure you can get into the new course you hope to replace it with).

The Graduate Coordinator keeps a cumulative record of each student's progress in his or her office (LA 297) and updates it each time the student is advised, using the "Record of Progress in the MA Program" (Appendix 4). You may keep track of your own progress, too, by filling out that same document. Doing so will enable you to recognize where you stand, see how far you have to go, and understand what options remain.

Besides working closely with the Graduate Coordinator, you are also encouraged to consult with other members of the graduate faculty about your course of study and career objectives. (However, faculty are not able to issue permissions for courses. Always contact the Graduate Coordinator about getting into a class.)

Through an email distribution list, the Coordinator also keeps students informed of important deadlines and future course offerings; much advising is handled through email as well. **You are required to maintain an email account (enrolled UNO students receive one free).** You must check this account regularly, or you might miss an important deadline, the beginning date of each semester's advising period, or other important information.

## IV. Other Specifics Concerning the Online Master of Arts in English

### A. Course Requirements--General

The Online Master of Arts program in English requires the completion of 36 hours of coursework. MA students who were not undergraduate English majors are required to take up to 15 additional hours to make up for deficiencies; the Graduate Coordinator will determine additional requirements and add them to the student's Record of Progress. (Requirements for admission can be found on the university website.)

All graduate courses (and only graduate courses may be counted toward your degree) are numbered as specific 5000-, 6000-, or 7000-level courses. By governing by-laws, you are required to take at least half of your coursework in 6000-level courses or above.

You must maintain a 3.0 GPA in your coursework in order to remain in good standing in the program; you must also have at least a 3.0 GPA in order to graduate. According to Graduate School guidelines, no more than six semester hours of credit with a grade of C may be applied to a Master's degree.

Every MA student must take a set of five core courses:

1. The introductory course--ENGL 6280: Introduction to Graduate Studies in English
2. One course in British literature
3. One course in American literature
4. One course in Rhetoric.
5. One course in Writing.

## B. Concentrations.

At some point during your program, you must decide to concentrate either in Literature or in Rhetoric/Professional Writing (including editing, journalism, technical editing, professional editing, and professional writing). The Graduate Coordinator will help students determine the appropriate classes to fulfill the requirements for each concentration. (Core courses are not part of a concentration, so if you took, say, a three-hour course in Shakespeare as a part of the core, you must complete nine additional hours of literature so as to complete your concentration.)

## C. Electives

MA students will usually have 12 hours of electives. If a student writes a thesis, the thesis can count for 3 of those elective hours.

In addition to regular course offerings, you may elect to take ENGL 6397: Directed Study (3 hours) under the supervision of a graduate faculty member who agrees to direct the course. Except in unusual cases, Directed Study is restricted to students in the later stages of their programs. Students must secure prior approval of their planned study in that course from both the director of the study and the Graduate Coordinator (work up a written syllabus, including readings, of a page or so with the director of the study, both of you sign it, and submit it to the Graduate Coordinator).

## D. Graduate Courses in Other Fields

With the approval of the Graduate Coordinator, a student can take up to 6 hours in courses in disciplines other than English as long as those courses are cognate with and will enhance a student's degree. Talk to the Coordinator about this.

## E. Transfer Credit

As stated in the UNO Catalog, "a maximum of one-third of the credit hours required for the degree transferred from other schools may be used in a master's degree program, if approved by the program and the College," "the student must be currently enrolled, must have completed at least 9 hours of graduate course work in a degree program at UNO," and "only credits earned in courses with a grade of "B" or higher may be transferred." Application for graduate credit must be initiated through the Graduate Coordinator.

## F. The Written Comprehensive Examination

At some time early in their course of studies, students should decide if they want to take two 3-hour written comprehensive exams, or one such exam and write a thesis (see below about the thesis). The written examination is based upon reading lists and course work. Examinations are offered in American Literature, Early British Literature, Later British Literature, Professional Writing, and Classical Rhetoric. Reading lists and questions for each field can be found in appendices to this handbook.

The exam is offered in the middle of each fall semester, spring semester, and summer semester. Students must sign up for their chosen fields at least a month before the exam is offered; dates are announced toward the beginning of each semester. Students who live in the vicinity of campus can take their exams with the on-site students at the scheduled time, always a Saturday.

For students who cannot come to campus, arrangements will be made with an online proctoring service or a campus that provides proctoring services near where the student lives. Modest fees are associated with such services.

Students are not allowed to use notes or texts during the exam, but they are allowed to use copies of the reading lists, which are found in the appendices. To ensure objectivity in the grading, student exams are coded only by student identification number. Each part of the exam is written and graded by graduate faculty members who specialize in the chosen field. The names of faculty who evaluate the exams are not announced prior to the exam.

Students who fail an exam have the option of retaking the exam in the same field, but only once and at the set exam time in a later semester. A second failure in that field means that a student must find another way to fulfill the degree requirements.

### G. Thesis Option

Students who choose the thesis option complete their coursework requirements by taking one 3-hour comprehensive examination, and they write and defend a thesis. Students who select the non-thesis option write two 3-hour comprehensive exams.

Students in the M.A. program who wish to continue on to doctoral study are strongly encouraged to write a thesis. This exercise strengthens the critical writing skills expected in doctoral study, and it may help the student locate a topic for a doctoral dissertation or develop a publishable manuscript. Those who intend to finish at the M.A. level may wish to write the thesis for various reasons. Those in professional writing can gain additional experience by writing one in their field. A creative writing thesis is also an option.

Although the thesis is usually drafted late in the program, students should begin looking for topics early on. Often a professor may suggest development of a topic a student has already investigated in a course. The topic may also emerge from an interest that has no direct connection with any of the courses a student has taken. Students should feel free to explore ideas for a thesis topic with members of the graduate faculty or with the Graduate Coordinator. Although the thesis topic must have the approval of the Graduate Coordinator and the major professor, the choice of topic is the prerogative and the responsibility of the student; topics are never assigned by the department.

Guidelines for drafting a thesis are included in Appendix 3 to this handbook.

A student may write a thesis in literary criticism, or may elect to do a thesis in creative writing, in rhetoric, or in professional writing. Requirements for each type of thesis are provided in Appendix 3.

Students working on the thesis enroll in ENGL 7000 (Thesis Research). This course may be repeated, but regardless of the number of times it is taken, only three hours of credit for this course may be applied toward the student's degree. Credit is awarded and a grade assigned only on acceptance of the thesis by the department and the Graduate School.

A defense of the thesis is scheduled by the major professor when the final draft of the thesis has been approved by the full committee. The defense can be held onsite for local students or via Skype or some such similar service for students who cannot come to campus. It is an opportunity for students to further explain what motivated the thesis, how it was conducted, what was learned from the process, and how it might be expanded or revised into a publishable piece of writing. Students should consult the director of the committee for more information on what to expect in the defense.

## H. Miscellaneous

### Progress Through the Program

The online M.A. can be completed in between two and three years, depending on how many hours a student takes and whether or not summer courses are taken. Students requiring additional coursework (if they do not have a B.A. in English) will, obviously, take longer.

The Graduate School, following the UL System’s stipulation, requires completion of M.A. programs within six years from the time of initial enrollment.

Below are two sample semester-by-semester lists of courses for a student taking 36 hours, concentrating in American Literature, and writing a thesis. (Another comp exam could be substituted for the thesis, but keep in mind that it is generally not recommended to two comps in one semester.) Note that during the final semester, a student should not expect to take 2 courses and write a thesis and take a comp exam. One course along with a thesis and exam is fine.

Sample #1—Three-year program, 6 hrs. per semester, without summers

<u>Fall 2017</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Graduate Studies (core course)</li> <li>• American Literature (core course)</li> </ul>	<u>Spring 2018</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Literature (core course)</li> <li>• Elective</li> </ul>
<u>Fall 2018</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhetoric (core course)</li> <li>• American Literature (course in concertation)</li> </ul>	<u>Spring 2019</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Literature (course in concertation)</li> <li>• Elective</li> </ul>
<u>Fall 2019</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Writing course (core course)</li> <li>• American Literature (course in concertation)</li> <li>• Take comprehensive exam (no hours)</li> </ul>	<u>Spring 2020</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thesis hours (3 hrs.) and defend thesis before deadline</li> <li>• Elective</li> </ul>

Sample #2—Two-year-program, including summers and some 9-hr. semesters

<u>Fall 2017</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Graduate Studies (core course)</li> <li>• American Literature (core course)</li> </ul>	<u>Spring 2018</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Literature (core course)</li> <li>• Rhetoric (core course)</li> <li>• American Literature (course in concertation)</li> </ul>	<u>Summer 2018</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elective</li> </ul>
<u>Fall 2018</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Literature (course in concertation)</li> <li>• Professional Writing course (core course)</li> <li>• Elective</li> </ul>	<u>Spring 2019</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Literature (course in concertation)</li> <li>• Thesis hours (3 hrs.) and defend thesis before deadline</li> </ul>	<u>Summer 2019</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take comprehensive exam (no hours)</li> <li>• Elective</li> </ul>

Note: It is generally not possible to write a thesis over the summer. Students must also be enrolled in something (thesis hours or a course) during the semester in which they graduate.

### The Grade of "Incomplete"

In cases of extreme hardship, a student may request the grade of "Incomplete" in a given course. It is up to individual instructors to grant such requests.

For grades of incomplete in 5000-6000 level courses, the student has until the final day of classes during the next semester of enrollment to complete the unfinished work. In rare cases, extensions of these deadlines are possible upon petition to the Graduate School.

### Library Privileges

Graduate students have full access to the UNO Library's collections and online databases. Some books are available online. Graduate students also may request materials from Interlibrary Loan. Copies of articles, book chapters, or stories are usually delivered electronically. Graduate students are allowed to check out UNO Library books for 3 weeks at a time; those who are registered for thesis research may check out books for the entire semester (in order to obtain this privilege, students must verify their enrollment in ENGL 7000 or 7040

## I. Completing the Degree

Students in their final semesters need to follow these steps to insure completion of the degree:

1. File the application for candidacy form with the Graduate Coordinator's office no later than the semester before the final semester. (Students will be notified each semester of the deadlines for filing this form.)
2. Confirm that all degree requirements have been met: for most students, this means 36 hours of coursework, comprehensive exam, and thesis defense (if the thesis option has been selected), or two comprehensive exams (if the thesis option is not selected). Review

your academic record with the Graduate Coordinator when necessary, and especially when choosing courses.

3. Register for something (ENGL 7000, 7040, another course). Students cannot receive a degree unless enrolled in the final semester.
4. Complete the Application for Graduation with the Registrar's Office and pay the diploma fee (\$50). Students who apply for the degree during early registration in the final semester will have the fee added to the fee bill; students applying after this time must pay on the spot. (Students who pay early but are unable to graduate that semester should notify the appropriate person in the Registrar's Office before the eighth week of that semester; they will then save the additional \$5 ordinarily billed when one reapplies for the degree the next semester.)

Students who select the thesis option must pay careful attention to thesis guidelines and procedures (see Appendix 3).

## V. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Reading Lists for the Comprehensive Examinations.

Below are the reading lists for the six areas of the comprehensive examinations. Normally, you will want to take the comprehensive exam in the area of your concentration, but there may be a reason to take an exam in a different area.

## A. British Literature to 1660: Medieval and Renaissance Literature

In addition to being responsible for the following texts and the critical and historical readings assigned in individual courses, graduate students are encouraged to read widely in period, critical, and intellectual history.

### **1. Medieval Literature**

#### **Poetry**

*Beowulf*. Dual-language edition. Trans. Chickering

“The Dream of the Rood” & “The Wanderer.” *Oxford Anthology of English Literature*.

Ed. Kermode et al.

Geoffrey Chaucer. *The Canterbury Tales* and *Troilus and Criseide*. *The Riverside Chaucer*.

Ed. Benson et al.

William Langland. *Piers Plowman* (B text). Trans. Donaldson

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. *Medieval English Literature*. Ed. Garbaty. Also trans. Borroff

*Pearl*. *Medieval English Literature*. Ed. Garbaty. Also trans. Borroff

*Middle English Lyrics*. NY: Norton, 1974

#### **Prose**

Wulfstan. “The Sermon of the ‘Wolf’ to the English.” *Anglo-Saxon Prose*. Ed. Swanton

Margery Kempe. *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Trans. Windeatt

Sir Thomas Malory. First and last two tales. *Works*. Ed. Vinaver

#### **Drama**

*The Second Shepherds’ Play*. *Medieval English Literature*. Ed. Garbaty

*Everyman*. *Middle English Literature*. Ed. Garbaty

### **2. The Earlier Renaissance (Tudor)**

#### **Poetry**

Edmund Spenser. *The Faerie Queene* (“Letter to Raleigh,” Book I and Book III); “Epithalamion”;  
*Amoretti*

Philip Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella*

Queen Elizabeth I. Poems (selections)

Elizabethan lyric poems (selections from Sir Thomas Wyatt; Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey;  
Christopher Marlowe; William Shakespeare)

Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke. Translations of the Psalms

#### **Prose**

Sir Thomas More. *Utopia*

Sir Philip Sidney. *Defense of Poesy*

Queen Elizabeth I. “To the Troops at Tilbury” (August 9, 1588) and “The ‘Golden Speech’ to  
Parliament” (November 30, 1601)

Walter Raleigh. Preface to *The History of the World* and *The Discovery of ... Guiana* (excerpts)

John Foxe. *Actes and Monuments* (excerpts)

“The Homily against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion” (from *The Book of Homilies*)  
Thomas Hariot, *A Brief and True Report of the New-Found Land of Virginia* (excerpts)

### **Drama**

Thomas Kyd. *The Spanish Tragedy*  
Christopher Marlowe. *Doctor Faustus*  
William Shakespeare. *Othello, Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Measure for Measure, Henry IV, Part I, Henry V, The Tempest, Antony and Cleopatra, The Winter's Tale, Richard III, A Midsummer Night's Dream*

### **3. The Later Renaissance (Stuart, Commonwealth, and Restoration)**

#### **Poetry**

John Milton, *Paradise Lost* and *Lycidas*  
Selections from seventeenth-century poetry: John Donne, George Herbert, Ben Jonson, Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, Andrew Marvell, John Milton, Henry Vaughan, Richard Crashaw, Thomas Traherne, Mary Wroth, Katherine Philips, Aemilia Lanyer, Anne Finch

#### **Prose**

King James Version of the Bible (Preface; Genesis; Psalms [selections]; 1 Gospel)  
Sir Francis Bacon, selected essays  
John Milton. *Areopagitica*  
Civil War letters and memoirs (Hutchinson, Halkett, Osborne)  
Hobbes. *Leviathan* (chapter 13)  
Excerpts from *querelle des femmes* tracts and conduct books  
Diaries and biographies (excerpts from Samuel Pepys, John Evelyn, and John Aubrey)  
Aphra Behn, *Oronooko*

#### **Drama**

Francis Beaumont, *Knight of the Burning Pestle*  
Elizabeth Cary. *The Tragedy of Mariam*  
Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton. *The Roaring Girl*  
Cyril Tourneur. *The Revenger's Tragedy*  
John Ford. *A Woman Killed With Kindness* or *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*  
Ben Jonson. *Volpone*  
John Webster. *The Duchess of Malfi*  
John Milton. *Samson Agonistes*

## B. British Literature After 1660

For the purposes of the exam, the recommended reading list is divided into 6 periods-- Restoration, Eighteenth Century, Romantic, Victorian, Modern, Contemporary. These are the traditional literary historical periods within the broader area, British literature 1660-present. Students should familiarize themselves with works in all 4 genres--poetry, prose fiction (short story, novella, and novel), nonfiction prose, and drama. The faculty in this field also stress that students should build up their knowledge of literary, social, and cultural history in the periods covered on the exam by consulting the headnotes to historical periods in the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Volumes I and II.

The reading list offers considerable choice among authors and titles; in addition, substitutions may be made on occasion. Students should consult faculty with expertise in the area in question or the graduate coordinator.

### **1. Restoration**

#### **Poetry**

John Dryden

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea, "A Nocturnal Reverie" and "The Introduction"

#### **Prose Fiction**

Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*

#### **Nonfiction Prose**

John Dryden, *Of Dramatick Poesy*

John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

Mary Astell

#### **Drama**

William Wycherley, *The Country Wife*

John Dryden, *All for Love*

Thomas Otway, *Venice Preserv'd*

William Congreve, *The Way of the World*

### **2. Eighteenth century**

#### **Poetry**

Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, *Essay on Criticism*

Samuel Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*

William Collins, "Ode on the Poetical Character," "Ode to Evening"

Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College"

Oliver Goldsmith, "The Deserted Village"  
George Crabbe, "The Village," Book I  
William Cowper, "The Castaway"

### **Prose Fiction**

Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas*  
Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*  
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* or *Moll Flanders*  
Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa* or *Pamela*  
Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones* or *Joseph Andrews*  
Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*  
Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*  
Tobias Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*  
Frances Burney, *Evelina*

### **Nonfiction Prose**

Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, selections from *Tatler* and *Spectator*  
Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal*  
James Boswell, *The Life of Johnson*  
Samuel Johnson, selections from *Rambler* and *Idler*; *Preface to Shakespeare*; *Lives of the Poets*  
(selections)  
James Boswell, *London Journal*  
Frances Burney d'Arblay, from *Journals*  
Hester Thrale (Piozzi), *Thraliana*

### **Drama**

George Lillo, *The London Merchant*  
Oliver Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer*  
Richard Sheridan, *The School for Scandal*  
John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*

## **3. Romantic**

### **Poetry**

William Blake, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*; *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*  
William Wordsworth, EITHER a) "Tintern Abbey," "The Two April Mornings," "Simon Lee,"  
"We Are Seven," "Strange Fits of Passion Have I Known," "She Dwelt Among the  
Untrodden Ways," "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower," "A Slumber did My  
Spirit Seal," "I Travelled among Unknown Men," and the "Immortality" Ode OR b) *The  
Prelude*  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, "Kubla Khan," "Dejection: an Ode,"  
"Frost at Midnight," "This Lime Tree Bower My Prison," "The Eolian Harp," "The  
Nightingale: A Conversation Poem"  
George Gordon, Lord Byron, *The Vision of Judgment* or selections from *Don Juan* or *Childe  
Harold's Pilgrimage*

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Alastor*, “Mont Blanc,” “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty,” “Ode to the West Wind”

John Keats, *Hyperion* or *The Eve of St. Agnes*, “La Belle Dame sans Merci,” “Ode to a Nightingale,” “Ode on Melancholy,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” “To Autumn”

Anna Letitia Barbauld, “Washing-Day,” “The Mouse’s Petition,” “A Summer Evening’s Meditation,”

“The Rights of Woman,” “To Mr. Coleridge,” “Eighteen Hundred and Eleven, A Poem”

Charlotte Smith, selections from *Elegiac Sonnets* (e.g., “The partial muse has from my earliest hours,” “Written at the close of spring,” “To the South Downs,” “To spring,” sonnets to the river Arun,

“Written in the church-yard at Middleton in Sussex”), *The Emigrants*, *Beachy Head*

Letitia Elizabeth Landon, “Six Songs of Love, Constancy, Romance, Inconstancy, Truth, and Marriage,”

“The Fairy of the Fountains,” “Verses” (“Lady, thy face is very beautiful”)

Felicia Hemans, *The Forest Sanctuary*, “Arabella Stuart,” “Properzia Rossi,” “The Switzer’s Wife,”

“The Image in Lava,” “The Homes of England”

### **Prose Fiction**

William Godwin, *Caleb Williams*

Jane Austen, any novel

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*

### **Nonfiction Prose**

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

William Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (Chapters 1-4, 13-14, 17-22--up to “Satyrane’s Letters”)

Percy Bysshe Shelley, “A Defence of Poetry”

Joanna Baillie, Introductory Discourse to *Plays on the Passions*

### **Drama**

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Cenci* or *Prometheus Unbound*

George Gordon, Lord Byron, *Manfred* or *Cain: A Mystery*

Joanna Baillie, *Plays on the Passions*

## **4. Victorian**

### **Poetry**

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam* or “Mariana,” “The Poet’s Mind,” “The Lady of Shallot,”

“The Palace of Art,” “The Lotos-Eaters,” “Ulysses,” “Tithonus,” “Locksley Hall,” “Tears, Idle Tears,” “Come Down, O Maid”

Matthew Arnold, "Isolation. To Marguerite," "To Marguerite--Continued," "The Buried Life,"  
 "Dover Beach," "The Scholar Gypsy," "Thyrsis," "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse"  
 Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* or *Sonnets from the Portuguese*  
 Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess," "The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church,"  
 "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," "The Statue and the  
 Bust," "Andrea del Sarto," "Cleon," "One Word More," "Caliban Upon Setebos; or  
 Natural Theology in the Island," "A Toccata of Galuppi's," "Rabbi Ben Ezra"  
 Christina Rossetti, "Goblin Market," Song ("When I am dead, my dearest"), "After Death,"  
 "Dead before Death," "In an Artist's Studio"  
 Gerard Manley Hopkins, "God's Grandeur," "The Windhover," "Spring and Fall: to a young  
 child," "Spring," "As Kingfishers Catch Fire"  
 Thomas Hardy, "Hap," "Neutral Tones," "The Darkling Thrush," "Drummer Hodge," "Channel  
 Firing," "The Convergence of the Twain," "He Never Expected Much"

### **Prose Fiction**

Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*  
 Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*  
 Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*, *Great Expectations*, or *Bleak House*  
 William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*  
 George Eliot, *Middlemarch*  
 Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* or *Cranford*  
 Thomas Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* or *Jude the Obscure*

### **Nonfiction Prose**

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* ("Of Individuality, As One of the Elements of Well-Being"),  
*Autobiography* ("A Crisis in My Mental History"), and *The Subjection of Women*  
 (selections), "What Is Poetry"  
 John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice* ("The Nature of Gothic"), *Modern Painters* ("Of the Real  
 Nature of Greatness of Style"), and "The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century, Lecture  
 I"  
 Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (Introduction, Conclusion, "Leonardo da Vinci")  
 Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," *Culture and Anarchy*  
 ("Sweetness and Light," "Doing as One Likes," "Hebraism and Hellenism"), Preface to  
*Poems* (1853)  
 Thomas Carlyle, "Characteristics," "The Spirit of the Age," *Sartor Resartus* (Book II)  
 Oscar Wilde, *Intentions* ("The Critic as Artist," "The Decay of Lying"), *The Soul of Man Under  
 Socialism*  
 Selected essays by George Eliot, Harriet Martineau, Jane Carlyle

### **Drama**

Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

## **5. Modern**

### **Poetry**

W. B. Yeats, “No Second Troy,” “The Second Coming,” “Sailing to Byzantium,” “Leda and the Swan,” “Among School Children,” “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop,” “The Circus Animals' Desertion,” “Adam's Curse,” “Easter 1916,” “Lapis Lazuli”  
W. H. Auden, “Spain 1937,” “Musée des Beaux Arts,” “Lullaby,” “In Memory of W. B. Yeats,” “In Praise of Limestone,” “The Shield of Achilles”  
T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”

### **Prose Fiction**

James Joyce, *Dubliners* or *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*  
E. M. Forster, *Howards End* or *A Passage to India*  
Joseph Conrad, “Heart of Darkness” or *The Secret Agent*  
D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* or “The Fox” and “The Captain's Doll” or selected stories (e.g., “The Prussian Officer,” “The Odor of Chrysanthemums,” “The Rocking-Horse Winner”)  
Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* or *Mrs. Dalloway*  
Katherine Mansfield, “The Little Governess,” “Bliss,” “Prelude,” “At the Bay,” “The Daughters of the Late Colonel”  
Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier*

### **Nonfiction Prose**

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*  
Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*  
Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*  
George Orwell, selected essays (e.g., “A Hanging,” “Shooting an Elephant,” “Politics and the English Language”)

### **Drama**

J. M. Synge, *Playboy of the Western World*  
G. B. Shaw, *Major Barbara*  
Noel Coward, *Private Lives*  
Sean O'Casey, *Juno and the Paycock*

## **6. Contemporary**

### **Poetry**

Philip Larkin  
Ted Hughes  
Thom Gunn  
Seamus Heaney  
Eavan Boland  
Derek Walcott  
Edward Kamua Brathwaite

Grace Nicholls  
Lorna Goodison  
Wole Soyinka  
Christopher Okigbo  
J.P. Clark

**Prose Fiction**

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*  
Iris Murdoch, *An Accidental Man* or *The Green Knight*  
John Fowles, *The Ebony Tower*  
Jane Gardam, *Queen of the Tambourine* or *Old Filth*  
Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*  
Rachel Seiffert, *The Dark Room*  
Nadine Gordimer, *July's People*  
J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* or *The Life and Times of Michael K*  
Peter Carey, *Jack Maggs* or *True History of the Kelly Gang*  
Colm Tóibín, *The Blackwater Lightship* or *Mothers and Sons*  
William Trevor, *Two Lives*  
Kazuo Ishiguro, *A Pale View of Hills*  
Kiran Desai, *The Inheritance of Loss*  
Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*  
Alice Munro, *The Love of a Good Woman*

**Nonfiction Prose**

V. S. Naipaul, *The Death of Eva Perón*  
Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch*

**Drama**

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*  
Harold Pinter, *The Homecoming*  
Wole Soyinka, *The Road*  
Athol Fugard, *MASTER HAROLD . . . and the boys*  
Tom Stoppard, *Travesties*

## C. American Literature

In addition to being responsible for the texts listed below and the critical and historical readings assigned in individual courses, graduate students are encouraged to read widely in period, critical, and intellectual history.

All entries marked “selections” indicate those supplied in any major anthology such as Norton, Heath, or Harper.

### **1. Colonial and Early National Periods**

#### **Fiction**

Susannah Rowson, *Charlotte Temple* (selections)

#### **Poetry**

Anne Bradstreet, “The Prologue” and the family poems or Edward Taylor (selections from *Meditations*)

Phillis Wheatley (selections)

#### **Non-Fiction Prose**

Sermon. Jonathan Edwards, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”

Sermon. John Winthrop, “A Modell of Christian Charity”

Captivity Narrative. Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*

Autobiography. Jonathan Edwards, *Personal Narrative*, or Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative...* (selections), or Sarah Kemble Knight, *Journal* (selections)

History. William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation* (selections), or John Smith, *The Generall Historie* (selections), or William Byrd, *The History of the Dividing Line* (selections)

One of the following: Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography*, or J. Hector St. Jean de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (selections)

### **2. 1800-1865**

#### **Fiction**

Washington Irving, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” “Rip Van Winkle”

James Fenimore Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans* or *The Pioneers*

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* and short stories (selections)

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

Herman Melville, *Billy Budd* and *Benito Cereno* or *Moby-Dick*

Rebecca Harding Davis, “Life in the Iron-Mills”

One of the following: Edgar Allan Poe, *Narrative of A. Gordon Pym* or any five tales; Harriet Wilson, *Our Nig*; Fanny Fern, *Ruth Hall* \*\*\*

#### **Poetry**

Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself,” “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”

Emily Dickinson (any twenty poems)

**Non-Fiction Prose**

Henry David Thoreau, "Where I Lived," "Economy," "Higher Laws," "Spring," and "Conclusion" from *Walden*

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* and "Self-Reliance"

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life*, or Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Margaret Fuller, "The Great Lawsuit" from *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*

One of the following: Washington Irving, *A Tour on the Prairies*; or Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years before the Mast*; or Herman Melville, *Typee*; or Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail*

**3. 1865-1914**

**Fiction**

Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Henry James, any novel or novella

William Dean Howells, *The Rise of Silas Lapham* or *A Hazard of New Fortunes*

Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*

One story by each of the following: Sarah Orne Jewett, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Constance Fenimore Woolson, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Charles W. Chesnutt, George Washington Cable, Grace King, Sui Sin Far, Edith Wharton, Stephen Crane

Two of the following: Willa Cather, *My Antonia* or *O! Pioneers*; Stephen Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage*; Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*; Jack London, *Martin Eden* or *Call of the Wild*; Frank Norris, *The Octopus* or *McTeague*; Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth* or *The Age of Innocence*

**Non-Fiction Prose**

Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (selections)

Jane Adams, *Hull House* (selections)

Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (selections)

Theodore Roosevelt, "The Strenuous Life"

Zitkala-Sa (selections)

**4. 1914-2000**

**Poetry**

T.S. Eliot or Ezra Pound (selections)

One of the following: H.D., Marianne Moore, or Gertrude Stein (selections)

One of the following: Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens or William C. Williams (selections)

One of the following: Claude McKay, Langston Hughes or Countee Cullen (selections)

One of the following: Elizabeth Bishop, Gwendolyn Brooks, Adrienne Rich, Sylvia Plath (selections)

One of the following: Robert Lowell, Denise Levertov, Allen Ginsberg, John Ashbery (selections)

One of the following: Amiri Baraka, Marilyn Hacker, Robert Hass, Charles Bernstein, Marilyn Chin (selections)

### **Fiction**

One of the following: William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *As I Lay Dying*, *The Sound and the Fury*, *Go Down, Moses*

One of the following: Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* or *In Our Time*; F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*; Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives*

One of the following: Richard Wright, *Native Son*; Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*; Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* or *Passing*

One of the following: Toni Morrison, *Beloved*, *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *Song of Solomon*

One of the following: N. Scott Momaday, *House Made of Dawn*; John G. Neihardt and Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*

One novel or story collection by one of the following authors: Rudolfo Anaya, John Barth, Saul Bellow, Sandra Cisneros, Louise Erdrich, Ellen Glasgow, Norman Mailer, Cormac McCarthy, Walker Percy, Annie Proulx, Thomas Pynchon, Marilynne Robinson, Leslie Silko, William Styron, Maxine Hong Kingston, Ann Tyler, John Updike, Alice Walker

One short story by one of the following authors: Sherwood Anderson, James Baldwin, Donald Barthelme, Raymond Carver, John Cheever, Bernard Malamud, Bobbie Ann Mason, Joyce Carol Oates, Flannery O'Connor, Tillie Olsen, Katherine Anne Porter, John Steinbeck, Eudora Welty

### **Drama**

Eugene O'Neill, *The Iceman Cometh* or *Long Day's Journey into Night*

Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire* or *The Glass Menagerie*

One of the following: Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*; Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; Marsha Norman, *Night, Mother*; Tina Howe, *Painting Churches*; August Wilson, *Fences*; Sam Shepard, *True West*; William Inge, *Bus Stop*; Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*; David Mamet, any play; Wilder, *Our Town*; Wendy Wasserstein, *The Heidi Chronicles*

### **Non-Fiction Prose**

Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*

John Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks*

Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*

Mary McCarthy, *Memoirs of a Catholic Girlhood*

Richard Rodriguez, *Hunger for Memory*

## D. Rhetoric and Composition: Classical Rhetoric

### Primary Texts

- Anon. Book IV of Rhetorica ad Herennium, in Bizzell & Herzberg, which is important for style. However, a grasp of individual figures of speech and thought (which are discussed in Book IV of *Herennium*) is perhaps best obtained by studying Quinn, below.
- Aristotle. On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse. George Kennedy, Tr., Oxford, 1991 (vii-xiii; 3-66; 80-113; 119-134; 163-204; 257-282. Use the outline on 13-22 for guidance. Some of Aristotle's lists can be skimmed).
- Aristotle. Poetics. Any modern edition.
- Bizzell, Patricia and Bruce Herzberg, eds. The Rhetorical Tradition. Bedford, 1990. General Introduction; major introductions to Parts One, Two, and Three, and introductions to authors mentioned on this list.
- Cicero. De Oratore. Harvard UP, 1954. (However, the selections in Bizzell and Herzberg are sufficient.)
- Plato. Gorgias and Phaedrus, in Bizzell and Herzberg.
- Quintilian. Institutio Oratoria, Books 1-3. Harvard UP, 1920, and the sections of the Books 10 and 12 found in Bizzell and Herzberg.
- ALSO the selections from Gorgias, Isocrates (Antidosis, Selections), Peter Ramus, Thomas Wilson and Margaret Fell, found in Bizzell and Herzberg.

### Secondary Texts

#### *Books*

- Clark, Donald L. Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education. Greenwood Press, 1977. The best all-round discussion of classical rhetoric. Study thoroughly.
- Crowley, Sharon, and Debra Hawhee, Ancient Rhetorics, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Allyn & Bacon, 1999. A successful and usable modern text that includes many illustrations of the relevance of classical concepts to modern writing; touches on kairos, stasis, the topics, the progymnasmata, etc.
- Kennedy, George A. Classical Rhetoric & Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised. North Carolina Univ. Press, 1999. A good general reference on topics mentioned in the theory questions below; need not be read cover to cover.
- Murphy, James J., and Richard A. Katula. A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric, 2/e. Hermagoras Press, 1995. Some excellent synopses here; also useful for many questions, and for general reading.
- Quinn, Arthur. Figures of Speech: 60 Ways to Turn a Phrase. Hermagoras Press, 1993. Probably the best lively discussion of important figures of speech.

#### *Articles*

- Bitzer, Lloyd, "The Rhetorical Situation." 1-14 in Philosophy and Rhetoric, 7:1, 1968. Available via JSTOR on the internet. Connects with *kairos*.
- Kinneavy, James. "Kairos: A Neglected Concept in Classical Rhetoric." 81-105 in Rhetoric and Praxis: the Contribution of Classical Rhetoric to Practical

- Reasoning. Jean Dietz Moss, ed. Catholic University of America Press, 1986.
- McBurney, James H. "The Place of the Enthymeme in Rhetorical Theory. 169-190 in Landmark Essays on Classical Greek Rhetoric. Edward Schiappa, ed. Hermagoras Press, 1994.
- Raymond, James C. "Enthymemes, Examples, and Rhetorical Method." 140-151 in Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse. Ed. Connors, Ede, Lunsford, Southern Illinois University Press, 1984.

## E. Professional Writing

To know professional writing well, you must have some preliminary knowledge of rhetoric as well as good practical understanding of the practice of several fields, including journalism, technical writing, editing, and nonfiction writing.

### 1. General

Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, especially the passages in Book II on ethos and pathos (on this same subject, see D. L. Clark, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, on ethical and emotional appeals).

Tim Peeples, ed. *Professional Writing and Rhetoric: Readings from the Field*. 2002

Strunk and White. *The Elements of Style*

Joseph Williams. *Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*

### 2. Journalism

Jeffrey Wilkinson, August Grant, and Douglas Fisher. *Principles of Convergence Journalism*. Oxford Univ. Press, 2009. Discusses changes that have been occurring in journalism with the advent of the digital age.

*News Reporting and Writing*. The Missouri Group. 9<sup>th</sup> Ed., 2008. A standard text for general reference, *not* to be read cover to cover.

Robert Shenk. "Writing for the News Media," in *The Naval Institute Guide to Naval Writing*, Third Ed. Available from the graduate coordinator or associate graduate coordinator.

### 3. Technical and Organizational Writing

Anderson. *Technical Writing: A Reader-Centered Approach, current edition*. A fine textbook for broad reference, *not* to be read through cover to cover. Be familiar with the various major genres, i.e., proposals, letters and emails, reports, graphs and charts, internet-related documents, etc.

Sky Marsen, *Professional Writing*. Palgrave, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2007. Another modern text, one that discusses digital

media and some journalism as well as professional and business writing. For general reference.

The United States Air Force Academy Executive Writing Course (the best brief summary of "Plain English"): <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/training/booklet.pdf>

### 4. Editing

Karen Judd. *Copyediting: A Practical Guide*. General guide to copyediting, with exercises. 2001.

Avon J. Murphy. *New Perspectives on Technical Editing*. (Readings.) 2010

Carolyn Rude and Angela Eaton. *Technical Editing*. A comprehensive text. 2010

Robert Van Buren and Mary Fran Buehler, *The Levels of Edit*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Jet Propulsion

Laboratory, California Institute of Technology. Explains an important editing concept, widely used

(often called "degrees of edit"). See:

[http://www.technical-expressions.com/learn2edit/levels-of-edit/levels\\_of\\_edit.pdf](http://www.technical-expressions.com/learn2edit/levels-of-edit/levels_of_edit.pdf)

## **5. Nonfiction**

William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*

Robert Atwan, *Ten on Ten*

William Smart, *Eight Modern Essayists*

## Appendix 2: Sample Questions for the Masters Comprehensive Written Examination

Again, these questions and the associated reading lists (found in Appendix 1) are effective for students entering the program as of Fall, 2012. [Those who entered the program prior to that date and who take a test prior to Fall, 2014, may choose whether to take an earlier test (which is based on one of the earlier reading lists), or a revised one (which will be based on one of the lists found in Appendix 1).]

All questions on area exams will be drawn from the following question lists. Actual exams will present students with a limited number of these questions from which to choose. In some areas, students will be asked to write a one-hour essay and a two-hour essay; in others, students will write on two questions for 90 minutes apiece. Students who take the exam in the rhetoric/writing areas will write a 90-minute essay followed by completion of a 90-minute *praxis* section.

As you study, keep in mind:

- 1) Students should be familiar with the reading lists.
- 2) Students are not expected to have in-depth knowledge of secondary sources unless such sources are included on the reading list.
- 3) Students should demonstrate both familiarity with a work and familiarity with the broad thematic, philosophical, and historical movements of the period in which it was written (as can be gleaned from class notes and from review of the Norton Anthology introductions, for example).
- 4) Students should substantiate their points with specific examples, analysis and/or illustration, and (if appropriate) application (plot summaries are inadequate and will be cause for the student's failure).
- 5) Each exam response should meet the writing standards for an adequately written essay exam. That is, exam essays should contain an interpretive thesis and a related discussion. This thesis should address the exam question as posed.

## A. Sample Field Exam Questions for British Literature I: Medieval and Renaissance

### Part I: One hour

Students will explicate a short medieval or early modern lyric poem as fully as possible, including its extraliterary (historical, theological, scientific, etc.) implications. They will also be asked to provide a gloss for any words whose meanings have changed historically. They will have two or three poems to choose from, to be provided at the exam.

### Part II: Two hours

The student will select one of three topics. He or she will be expected to discuss at least THREE WORKS (note that all questions also require discussion of at least one work from each period), drawing on materials from the reading list, from coursework, and from major texts not written in English (e.g., Dante, Petrarch, etc.):

1. Discuss the evolution of the use of revenge as a motif or plot device in drama from medieval morality or mystery plays through Jacobean tragedy. How has the cultural and artistic value of stage depictions of revenge changed? What is the significance of these changes? Use at least one medieval morality or mystery play, one play by Shakespeare, and one non-Shakespearean revenge tragedy in your answer.
2. Compare the ways in which images drawn from nature function in medieval and early modern poetry. Do some poets or genres appear to be more ecologically aware than others? Does the artistic role of the pastoral change from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Defense of Poesie*, argues that the primary purpose of literature is “the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue.” Using *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Paradise Lost*, and the poem or poems of your choice, analyze the ways in which early British literature does or does not succeed in promoting and improving virtuous behavior.
4. The medieval courtly love tradition appears to grant substantial power to a beloved but unattainable lady. Using two medieval and two early modern poems, at least one of which is by a woman, discuss whether this power is real or apparent, and discuss the ways in which the relationship between lovers and their beloveds did or did not change in early modern literature.
5. There are very few surviving works by medieval and early modern women writers. Using three of these works, including at least one by Queen Elizabeth, argue whether or not women in these periods were writing *literature*.
6. Undergraduates often complain bitterly about being asked to read Chaucer or other medieval writers in Middle English. Using at least two medieval and one early modern literary work, argue whether or not these works should be presented to students in editions in which the grammar and spelling is modernized, or as the work is “translated”

into modern language. What is gained and what is lost in terms of the works' meaning, artistry, and accessibility?

7. Comic works from the medieval and early modern periods often rely on inversion and misrule for their humor. What is the political and social value, and danger, of inversion and misrule? Use at least one medieval drama, one early comedy by Shakespeare, and one other comic work in your answer.
8. Critic Maynard Mack, in his analysis of the Jacobean plays of Shakespeare, argues "one of the prime needs of Jacobean writers, as the intelligible and on the whole friendly universe of the Middle Ages failed around them, was quite evidently to face up to what men are or may be when stripped to their naked humanity and mortality, and torn loose from accustomed moorings." Using the plays *Everyman*, *King Lear*, and at least one other drama, argue whether or not Mack is correct in his assessment.
9. In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare asserts that the function of dramatic art is "to hold as it were the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" (3.2.18-20). Assuming this is also true of poetry, what do Chaucer's *Wife of Bath*, Shakespeare's *Dark Lady*, and the women to whom John Donne addresses his lyric poetry reveal about the status of medieval and early modern women? Would women writers from this period agree? You are free to use additional poems in your answer.
10. Not only in separate treatises, but also in the speeches of characters in traditional literature, the conscious use of classical rhetoric is often discernible. Argue how the art of rhetoric plays an important part in some of the prologues and tales in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* OR in some plays of Shakespeare's Second Tetralogy (*Richard II*, *1* and *2 Henry IV*, and *Henry V*) OR in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

## B. Sample Field Exam Questions for British Literature 1660-present

The exam is three hours in length. The student will be given four of the following sixteen questions and, following the instructions (provided below in full below) will write a ninety-minute essay in response to TWO of them (ninety minutes on each question).

### **General instructions:**

The M.A. field is subdivided into 3 overlapping periods: **1660-1830, 1780-1920, and 1850-present.** *Examinees will answer questions in 2 of these periods.*

Select two different questions from the list below and write a well-developed essay for each, applying each question to a period you have chosen (above). Incorporate the discussion of a minimum of 5 works by 5 different authors into each essay. There may be no overlap in the minimum 5 authors for each question. In other words, you must discuss a minimum of 10 different authors in the exam. Additionally, you must discuss at least 2 of the 4 major literary genres (poetry, prose fiction, nonfiction prose, and drama). In each essay, you are required to write about more than 1 traditionally defined literary historical era. (The traditionally defined literary historical areas correspond to the breakdown on the British Literature 1660-present reading list.)

Please title your essay and indicate the selected period of the M.A. field that you are covering in the title of your essay (e.g., “War, Literature, and the Future,” 1850-present).

1. Select 1 of the 4 major literary genres (poetry, prose fiction [long or short], nonfictional prose, or drama) and discuss developments, changes, and innovations in it during the selected period.
2. Discuss the interest in processes of mind or psychology in the literature of the selected period. How do formal, stylistic, and other literary matters in the chosen works reflect an increasing interest in the human mind?
3. Discuss the changing depiction of marriage or the family in the selected period.
4. Narratives of self-development have been prominent in British literature, not only in the novelistic subgenre of the bildungsroman, but in poetry and other genres as well. Discuss narratives of self-development in more than 1 genre in the selected period.
5. The long history of British colonization, encompassing countries as far flung as Ireland and Australia, continues to leave its mark on literature. Discuss the impact of empire and colonization on the literature of the selected period. You may wish to consider some of the following: the problem of defining history; the question of language and communication; the importance of myth; and the dynamic relations between colonizers and colonized.

6. *One of the following:*
  - A. In recent centuries, the changing social status of women is reflected both in their increasing ability to openly and actively engage in the literary arena and in the increased focus on representations of women in literature. Discuss the relationship between the changing status of women and representations of women in the selected period. (If you wish, you may focus only on the works of female authors, but this is not a requirement of the question.)
  - B. The changing status of gays and lesbians is reflected both in their increasing ability to openly and actively engage in the literary arena and in the increased focus on representations of same-sex relationships in literature. Discuss the significance of same-sex desire and relationships in literature of the selected period.
7. It has often been said that ultimately all human activity is devoted to the gaining and using of power, and literature participates fully in this endeavor. Select 1 of the 3 periods, and for each of the chosen works describe the kind of power and its source(s).
8. Throughout the history of human culture, the conceptualization of order in the universe has been a persistent preoccupation. What kind of order do the writers of this period affirm or deny, and how do their works produce this literary effect?
9. Over our time period, science has assumed cultural centrality. Some writers wholly embrace the ascendancy of science, but others question its limits and consequences. In the selected period, discuss works that are shaped by a response to science and explain in each case where each author stands.
10. War has often shaped the culture, politics, and literature of the periods in which it has occurred. Discuss the pervasive influence of war as it is reflected in works of the selected period. This might include pro- and anti-war attitudes but might also include ideas of what larger things war is a symptom or reflection of in human nature or a particular nationalism.
11. Literature often reflects the individual's sense of his or her place in relation to society, sometimes part of it and sometimes apart from it. The self sometimes is developed by opposition to and sometimes by adherence to society. Discuss this relationship in works in the selected period.
12. Satire has been a constant mode in our literature, but its targets and methods have varied. Focusing on satirical works within the selected period, describe *both* the authors' principal targets and their methods of satirizing those targets
13. In an epoch witnessing the emergence of the scientific worldview, astonishing industrial and technological advances, and the diminishing of religious authority, attitudes toward the natural world altered significantly. With these and other relevant factors in mind, discuss literature's representations of nature in the selected period.???\*??

14. Throughout history, literature in all genres comments on its own role and function. Taking into account relevant prose fiction (the short story, novella, novel), poems, prefaces, and essays, examine the role of literature as well as the self-conception and self-presentation of the artist in the selected period.
15. Throughout the periods under consideration, traditional Christianity was often challenged and sometimes even rejected altogether. Though many embraced and defended their faith, others sought spiritual fulfillment through other means, sometimes in belief systems of their own creation. Consider some of the causes of this crisis of faith and discuss literature's response to it.
16. The Industrial Revolution transformed Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as Britain became the "workshop of the world." The concomitant emergence of the modern city, at once "the supreme triumph of civilization and civilization's most catastrophic mistake," in the reckoning of one critic, had a profound impact on sensibilities. Discuss the ways in which the literature of the selected period registers this cultural transformation.

### C. Sample Field Exam Questions for American Literature

The three-hour examination will consist of two parts, described below. Students may not focus on the same works in both parts of the exam.

#### **Two-hour Questions:**

The first part of the American Literature examination will include at least three of the following questions. The student will choose one of them on which to write an essay in a two-hour period, drawing upon materials from the **American Literature Reading List** and from course work. The student should include in the discussion at least **two genres** (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama), at least **four writers from diverse backgrounds**, and works representing a **broad historical spectrum** (Colonial and Early National, Antebellum, Late Nineteenth-Century, Modern, and Contemporary).

1. Notions of ideal and real manhood, manliness, and masculinity have evolved over the course of American history, often in relation to other important themes in our literature, such as the frontier, the wilderness, the yeoman farmer, the man of sensibility, the Europe/ America relationship, the American Adam, racism, and identity politics. The changing conceptions of manhood might also be examined in relation to specific intellectual/ religious/ political movements. Discuss the notion of ideal and real manhood in American Literature.
2. Reflect upon the depiction of marriage, as a custom, a fate, a duty, a pastime, or whatever definition appears to fit, in American narratives.
3. For many American authors, the natural world has been one of the defining characteristics of "America." How have authors treated nature in their works (as refuge, obstacle, projection of a divinity, maternal entity, aesthetic object, material to be consumed, wilderness to be tamed, etc.)?
4. A problematic aspect of American culture concerns a shifting attitude toward place. Indeed, travel memoirs, "road" stories, and foreign settings predominate in the literature from its beginnings. While "home" may be held in esteem, belittled, or (alternatively) associated with oppression, traveling is as often regarded as full of promise as it is of peril. Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* ends his narrative determined still to "light out for the territory ahead," despite having found a "home." Yet later Elizabeth Bishop's traveler asks, "*Is it lack of imagination that makes us come/ to imagined places, not just stay at home?*" Examine how writers in different periods and different genres depict the nature of travel, whether in fleeing home or the past, in crossing frontiers, or in some other way.
5. W. E. B. Du Bois famously declared that the 20th century would be defined by "the problem of the color-line," though certainly U.S. literature reveals an extensive history of deliberations on race and racial difference. In the long view, literary texts represent race as a shifting construct very much shaping and shaped by dominant cultural discourses of the day, such as abolitionism, religion, science/evolution, naturalism, Jim Crow, etc.

Race emerges as a social formation that has been debated, adapted, and contested. Choose a set of texts from different literary/historical periods and analyze how race is represented. Consider the significance of this representation in relation to each text's respective cultural moment.

6. Calvin Coolidge once said, "The business of America is business." Many American writers would agree. Discuss attitudes toward business and capitalism as a force in American culture in American literature.
7. One theory of our national literature holds that physical violence has been depicted as a regenerative force, rallying divergent parties (or individuals) to join a national (or colonial or community) purpose. This theory does not account for works in which physical violence is depicted as disintegrative and entropic. In many works, both impulses operate simultaneously. Compare and contrast depictions of physical violence in American literature.
8. The traditional feminist view of domesticity is that it has confined women and prohibited them from participating in public life. Yet the private sphere of the home has been hallowed not only as the domain of women but also as the repository of the children's most sacred values, values that should extend into the public sphere. It is also important to remember that not all women have had the luxury of reigning in and from the domestic sphere. In what ways, then does American literature both promote "separate spheres" for (certain) women and men and collapse or merge those spheres?
9. American writers often address the problems of creating or sustaining a community, real or imagined. A community might be defined by any combination of terms: religious, regional, utopian, political, sexual, and/or economic. Writers may examine both internal and external threats to such a community and offer various remedies for these threats. Discuss such themes in works evenly distributed by period and genre.
10. Most American literature responds in some fashion to major historical change. Such change may be intellectual, political, religious, economic, ideological, technological or any combination of these. Historical change also may take the form of specific events, such as the Civil War, or larger patterns, such as immigration, or technological innovation, such as the introduction of the automobile. Writers may look backward to historical change or address historical change as it bears upon the present. Discuss the manifestation of historical change in American literature.
11. Contemporary Queer Theorists and scholars of sexuality in literature attend to the "perverse" nature of desire in literary texts that does not necessarily represent explicitly gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender characters, or even explicitly "sexual" scenes. Rather they suggest that we read all literary texts for embedded sexual and erotic relationships that might subvert, transcend or exceed heterosexual norms. Analyze how U.S. literary texts represent the complexity of desire and intimacy in ways that (perhaps unintentionally) challenge heterosexual norms.

12. The "transnational turn" in the study of American literature has led to important emphasis on the relationships between and across nations and nation-states. The cultural historicization of the concept of "nation" entails a close look at how empire, colonization, revolution, and nation-state formation have been represented in literature. Consider how U.S. literature represents "America" in relation to other nations, and/or "the domestic" in relation to "the foreign." You might consider characters, settings, and/or narrative perspectives in your analysis.

**One-hour questions:**

The second part of the exam will include at least three of the following questions. The student will choose one of them on which to write an essay in a one-hour period, drawing upon materials from the **American Literature Reading List** and from course work.

1. Literary representations of the body have worked to produce evolving definitions of subjectivity and what is considered "human." Human bodies are often situated in relation to machines and/or animals as points of comparison/contrast. Consider two texts from different historical periods and analyze how constructions of the human body figure into a particular conception of the human subject. Authors to consider: Emerson, Douglass, Melville, Cather, Norris, London, Faulkner, Wright, Hemingway, Steinbeck, Moore, Morrison, Proulx, McCarthy, Silko.
2. Recent genre studies have focused on how literary modes have intersected and overlapped as much as they have been distinct. For example, slave narratives and Sentimentalism or Naturalism and Modernism can be said to share key tropes and narrative conventions in terms of how characters, themes, plot, and narration are presented and structured. We now see genre and literary style as much more hybrid. Choose one of the following texts and argue for its inclusion in at least two different literary traditions: Oludah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative...*; Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*; Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; Mark Twain, *Pudd'n'head Wilson*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*; Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*; Charles Chesnutt, *House Behind the Cedars*; Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*; Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives*; Richard Wright, *Native Son*; Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*; Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*; Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon*.
3. Autobiographical narrative is a dominant mode of writing during the Colonial and Early National periods. Discuss two narratives by authors in this list, noting the form, purpose, and intended readers of each: Bradford, Crèvecoeur, Edwards, Equiano, Franklin, Knight, Rowlandson. Draw conclusions about the dominance of this genre during these periods.

4. Didactic or moral literature usually offers examples of immoral people and behavior as a way of defining good people and behavior. Works of autobiography and history, which may also be didactic, often define good behavior by contrasting it with bad behavior. Discuss the *bases* for defining undesirable conduct in two works of the Colonial and Early Nationalist periods. Authors to consider: all.
5. Regionalist or local color literature performed an important cultural function in the post-Civil War decades by helping the nation to appreciate regional differences and reintegrate its various sections, often through humorous depictions of locals. The narrative approach of these stories, however, varied: some regionalist stories depicted the region through the perspective of an outside observer while others narrated the region from within. Compare/contrast the narrative strategies used in stories by two of the following authors, drawing a conclusion about whether those strategies frame a sympathetic, humorous, and/or critical depiction of the region and its inhabitants: Cable, Chesnutt, Chopin, Jewett, Freeman, Woolson, King, Sui Sin Far, Twain, Zitkala-Sa.
6. Examine how two of the following respond (either directly or indirectly) to Emersonian Transcendentalism as explicated in "Self-Reliance:" Davis, Douglass, Fuller, Thoreau, Whitman.
7. Many pre-Civil War women writers employed "sentimentalism" in their texts, asking their readers to sympathize with characters who represented maligned groups in order to make larger statements about citizenship and democratic ideals. Compare/contrast the specific strategies used to evoke sympathy in the reader and how those strategies contributed to the overall meaning of works by two of the following authors: Fern, Davis, Jacobs, Rowson, Stowe, Wilson.
8. In "The Story of an Hour" (1894), Kate Chopin writes about Mrs. Mallard's feelings upon her husband's death:

*She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.*

*There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.*

*And yet she had loved him--sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!*

What ideas about women's roles and identities is Chopin giving voice to here? And how do those ideas intersect or compete with other nineteenth-century American authors'

views about women's roles? Discuss two works by authors in this list: Dickinson, Fern, Fuller, Freeman, Gilman, Hawthorne, Jacobs, James, Jewett, Stowe, Harriet Wilson, Whitman.

9. Discuss the way or ways in which one of the following works critiques racism and/or slavery, paying particular attention to narrative strategies, such as autobiography, and/or literary conventions: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*; *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself*; Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; Melville, "Benito Cereno"; Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
10. Choose one of the following poems and explicate it in detail, paying close attention to its formal structure, point of view, use of metaphor, literal development, mood, attitude toward its subject, and theme. Is there anything identifiably "American" about this poem? Poems to consider: Pound, "The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter"; Rich, "Diving into the Wreck"; Stevens, "The Snow Man" or "The Emperor of Ice Cream"; Bishop, "Armadillo." Texts of these will be provided at the exam.
11. T.S. Eliot asserts in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" that "The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality." Comment on the validity of this assertion with reference to two of the following poems: Frost, "Mending Wall"; Ashbery, "And *Ut Pictura Poesis* Is Her Name"; Bishop, Filling Station; Hughes, "The Weary Blues" or "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"; Moore, "Poetry"; Plath, "Words"; Pound, "In a Station of the Metro" or "The Jewel Stair's Grivance"; William Carlos Williams, "Tract" or "Danse Russe" or "The Young Housewife"; Stevens, "Anecdote of the Jar"; Ginsberg, "America"; Lowell, "Skunk Hour."

## D. Sample Field Questions for Rhetoric and Composition: Classical Rhetoric

The first question (for which students have 90 minutes), is on theory. The second question on the exam entails praxis, for which students also have 90 minutes.

### Theory

On the exam, students will be asked to respond to one of the following questions (there will be some choice):

- 1) Although the classical rhetoricians all had strong opinions on character in general, they understood the relation of character to rhetoric somewhat differently. To what degree do such rhetoricians as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Isocrates and Quintilian agree that moral character (not *ethos*, per se, but related to it), is essential to the practice of rhetoric? Must one be a good person in order to be a good speaker or writer? Discuss at least three of these writers in some depth.
- 2) Explain Aristotle's concept of *enthymeme*, discuss how an enthymeme differs from a syllogism, and give several extended examples of how one would use enthymemes effectively in an argument. How important is this concept of enthymeme to classical rhetoric?
- 3) Based on Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Clark, and either Crowley/Hawhee or Murphy, outline as comprehensively as you can the important parts of the whole discipline of classical rhetoric, and how these parts fit in with one another.
- 4) To what extent is "rhetoric" as understood by the classical rhetoricians based on literature or "poetic"? That is, how important is the development of the faculty of imagination to the development of the well-rounded rhetorician? And how well-read in literature should a rhetorician be? Exemplify your points thoroughly with pertinent reference to at least three major figures.
- 5) Consider (with reference to two or three authorities) what is known as "stasis theory," which you may also find referred to as "status," or "states." How is the rhetorician working in judicial rhetoric helped by using the standard questions which this method of invention offers? Discuss stasis or status theory with detailed reference to one or two hypothetical, historical or literary cases of judicial rhetoric to show how the method worked.
- 6) Consider the pedagogical aspects of the *progymnasmata* described by Quintilian and other classical rhetoricians. Discuss how specific exercises prepared one for, respectively, epideictic, judicial, and deliberative rhetoric. Make pertinent reference to at least three sources.
- 7) Consider the figures of speech (understood to include schemes and tropes, etc.). To what extent can these uses of language be understood not merely to dress up a discourse,

but also make it instrumentally effective? Be sure to discuss at least six or eight specific figures in your answer.

8) What are the essential parts of the organization of an essay or speech, according to classical rhetoric experts from Aristotle and other ancients to Crowley and Hawhee? Are there two parts, four, six, or eight? What are the key functions, and in what order should they be performed?

9) The first classical canon “invention” or discovering what to say or write, is understood by many to be the “trunk root of rhetoric” (so that when Ramus excised it from his view of rhetoric and gained popularity, the discipline atrophied). According to its extensive practice and tradition, provide a definition of invention, discuss its fundamental importance to classical argumentation, and address how should one go about researching a topic, or finding what to say. In the course of your answer draw on at least four works, three of them primary sources.

### Praxis

For the praxis part of the exam, you will be required to answer either question 1 or 2 below about one of the following famous actual or literary speeches below (in some cases, as you will see as with Churchill, Elizabeth, Lincoln and Shakespeare below, the “speech” listed is actually 2 or 3 short speeches). There will be some limited option as to which question to answer.

- Odysseus, Phoenix and Ajax, *Iliad*, Book 9, “The Embassy to Achilles.”
- Chaucer, *The Pardoner’s Tale*.
- Milton, *Areopagitica*.
- Shakespeare, *Henry V*: “The feast of Crispian,” “Once more into the breach,” ..... and “How yet resolves the governor”
- Queen Elizabeth, “To the English Troops at Tilbury,” & “The Golden Speech”
- Lincoln, “Gettysburg Address,” & “Second Inaugural Address”
- Annie T. Allen, appeal to Mustapha Kemal
- Winston Churchill, “Blood, Sweat and Tears,” “The Miracle of Dunkirk,” and “Their Finest Hour”
- Douglas McArthur, “Farewell speech at West Point”
- Martin Luther King, “I Have a Dream”

1. **Means of Persuasion.** Define and analyze all three of the traditional means of persuasion found in the speech (or speeches) selected, and argue as to which one of those means – ethos, logos and pathos – is dominant.
2. **Style.** Characterize in some depth the style of this speech (or set of speeches). Does the speech use imagery effectively? Does it make use of comparison or contrast, repetition, metaphors, similes, personifications? Does it rely on specific figures of speech, or draw on known references? Is it presented in a plain, medium, or grander style? Is it more personable, or more distant? What else can you say about the “voice” of the speaker?

## E. Professional Writing Exam Questions:

On the exam, students will be asked to respond to one of the following theoretical questions, and to do the praxis exercise (there will be some options for the theory question):

### Theory

#### *General*

1. Consider the three classic means of persuasion—ethos, logos, and pathos. Are these means of persuasion relevant to technical and organizational writing? To journalism? What examples can you cite? Refer frequently to professional and/or rhetorical authorities as you answer this question.
2. Discuss the issue of ethics in professional writing. When and where do issues of ethics or moral responsibility arise? What examples can you cite of ethical issues that have arisen in the past? What responsibilities do professional writers have to their employers, to the public, to their clients or customers, or to themselves?
3. Discuss the changing modes of professional writing introduced by the computer, including email and the internet. What advantages have these new technologies offered, and what difficulties have they introduced? What has remained the same? Discuss particular issues involving digital media in technical writing, journalism, and/or other fields of professional writing in the course of your essay.

#### *Technical Writing, Writing in the Workplace, and Editing*

4. Discuss the varied possibilities of *audience* typically confronted in modern organizational and technical writing. What differing backgrounds might the people have who one must write for; what differing jobs might they have; what various needs might they have; and what implications does such diverse audience makeup have for writers attempting to guide, inform or persuade?
5. Identify, according to the technical writing textbooks you have read—as well as some technical writing theory—several major ways in which technical or organizational writing typically differs from academic writing such as essays on literature. Illustrate your points in detail, and with some reference to authorities.
6. Discuss the advantages of the concept of “levels of edit” (sometimes titled “degrees of edit” or something similar); discuss how one employs this concept; also consider what talents an editor must have to work at each of these levels.

#### *Nonfiction*

7. Four books on the reading list—Hairston’s *Successful Writing*, Strunk and White’s *The Elements of Style*, Williams’s *Style*, and Zinsser’s *On Writing Well*—aim to show their readers how to be effective writers. Write an essay answer that explains and evaluates the design and methods of three of these four.

8. The first of the following two paragraphs is from a published essay; the second is from a book review that appeared in *The New York Times*. Explain which of the paragraphs is more in need of an editor, supporting your opinion with specific reference to several of books on the reading list for Professional Writing. Then revise the paragraph. [Note: this is a sample question. On the exam, the reading selections within this question will be similar to but not identical to those given here.]

- A. One holds the knife as one holds the bow of a cello or a tulip by the stem. Not palmed or gripped nor grasped, but lightly, with the tips of the fingers. The knife is not for pressing. It is for drawing across the field of skin. Like a slender fish, it waits, at the ready, then go! It darts, followed by a fine wake of red. Even now, after so many times, I still marvel at its power, cold, gleaming, silent. More, I am still struck with a kind of dread that it is I in whose hand the blade travels, that my hand is its vehicle, that yet again the terrible steel-bellied thing and I have conspired for a most unnatural purpose, the laying open of the body of a human being.
- B. The combination of reasonably reliable contraception controlled by women and their increased economic independence has fundamentally and probably forever altered a broad pattern of sociosexual life rooted in our evolutionary history. For all the vast impact of what we have built around us, more significant still is the effect of the industrialization of our bodies, of having gained control of our reproductive inner tissues as we have of our productive outer world. And while the most visible and active expression of this has been feminism and the social changes with which it is associated, there are other underlying family and reproductive patterns that are becoming discernable also, to which *The Redundant Male* and *Making Babies* guide us in rather different but related ways.

### *Journalism*

- 9. Write a short essay demonstrating how the five principal defenses for libel are used to provide protection for the premise of the First Amendment, as generally practiced by American journalists.
- 10. Discuss in detail the “inverted pyramid” method of writing a news story, including its main features, overall advantages, and best use. Comment on the way it differs from a “feature story.” Also comment briefly on variations of the inverted pyramid and on alternatives to its use.

## Praxis

On the exam, students must respond effective to one of these:

1. A case study involving decisions to be made about various modern organizational issues will be issued to students prior to the exam. On the exam itself, students will compose one or two technical documents, journalistic assignments, or editing assignments having to do with that case study: perhaps a business letter, a memo, an abstract or executive summary, a news release, a short feature story, and/or a graph or chart. Additional details and brief guidance will be issued at the exam itself, as needed.
2. A technical or organizational *editing* assignment. Students will edit an organizational or technical document for purpose, organization, clarity, style, and/or correctness. They must be prepared to use either traditional copyediting marks on hard copy, or the Track Changes and other features of the modern computer's word processor.
3. An exercise in Modes of Composing. In response to a prompt (typically, a news article), students will compose two documents: a publicity release and the opening 2-3 paragraphs of a *feature article*.

## Appendix 3: Guidelines for Preparing a Thesis

### INTRODUCTION

Students have the option to write a thesis in one of three fields: literary studies, creative writing, or professional writing. Requirements for the three options are described in more detail on the following pages.

The thesis is usually written during the last semester of students' master's work, after students have completed all (or most) other degree requirements. Although the thesis is drafted late in the program, all students should from their first semester give serious thought to whether or not they want to do a thesis and, if they do, what they might want to write about. As the timeline below indicates, the selection of a topic and preliminary research should have begun well before the semester during which a student registers for thesis credit (ENGL 7000) and plans to complete the thesis.

It is recommended that students choose a topic on which they have done some previous work, such as a research paper for a course or a directed study on the topic. In such cases, students should first approach the professor who supervised the previous work to ask if he/she is willing to serve as the thesis director. There have been instances, however, of successful thesis topics emerging from interests outside of a student's previous coursework. In any case, students should feel free to approach appropriate members of the graduate faculty to discuss possible topics. It is a good idea to examine the faculty webpages on the department's website to get a sense of each faculty members' areas of expertise and interest. (See also Appendix 4.)

The thesis is written under the guidance of a faculty director chosen by the student in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator. Two additional faculty members, chosen by the student and the thesis director (and subject to the approval of the Graduate Coordinator), serve as readers; the three faculty members (the director and the two readers) constitute the student's thesis committee. Committee members should be qualified in the general topic or area covered in the thesis, or else be experts in specific approaches or methods the student plans to use in the thesis. Unanimous approval of the thesis committee is required for the student to pass the thesis defense examination.

### PROCEDURES

#### A. Prospectus

Before faculty can make a commitment to serving on a thesis committee, students must prepare a formal three- to five-page prospectus in consultation with the proposed director of the thesis. Students should also consult with prospective readers. The prospectus must be formally approved by all members of the committee and then submitted to the Graduate Coordinator. (This can all be facilitated via email.) The Graduate Coordinator will store a copy of the prospectus for future reference. Approving the prospectus constitutes, for the faculty member, a commitment to serve on a student's committee.

The student should complete the prospectus in the semester preceding the semester of anticipated graduation. If the student intends to complete the thesis in a fall semester, he or she must complete the prospectus and have it approved by director, readers, and Graduate Coordinator during the previous *spring* semester (many faculty members are unavailable during the summer).

### B. Drafts/Timetables

A final copy of the thesis must be approved by all members of the committee no later than the tenth week of the semester, in order to schedule a defense by the twelfth week. (\*\*\*)See Graduate School website for each semester's official date for completion of theses and scheduling of defenses.) A committee may approve a thesis with the understanding that the student will complete minor revisions after the defense. The student should understand, however, that, despite the student's graduation plans, a committee is under no obligation to approve a thesis that is not ready.

To prevent last-minute disappointments, the student should stay in close contact with the committee--and particularly the director--throughout the process of drafting the thesis, being sure to have approvals at each step of the way. The student should also leave ample time--no less than one week, and preferably two--for the committee to read and respond to the thesis at each stage.

It is the student's responsibility to discuss and plan with the director a reasonable timetable for preparation of the thesis. The student should never assume that a faculty member will be available during the summer, nor expect a professor to serve on a committee when that professor is on leave.

Given the general availability of all committee members, a suggested schedule is presented below. Consult the Graduate School website for specific instructions and deadlines. Students doing a creative thesis should keep in mind that their director may require a prospectus and first draft before the end of the semester prior to the semester in which the student plans to graduate.

1. Approved Prospectus: end of semester before semester of planned graduation
2. First draft: 4th week of semester of planned graduation; should be distributed to entire committee
3. Final draft: 8th week
4. Approved final draft: 10th week
5. Defense: 12th week
6. Complete revisions required by the committee
7. Submit manuscript for review with the Graduate School
8. File Completed Manuscript with Graduate School by the deadline posted on their website

If the student experiences difficulty having drafts returned by readers in a timely manner (within two weeks), the student should contact the thesis director or the Graduate Coordinator.

Students who fail to meet the deadline for the thesis defense should still try to hold the defense during the same semester. Students who complete the defense late and have only post-defense revisions and final filing of the thesis with the Graduate School to complete are eligible to

register in the following semester for ENGL 7040 (Examination or Thesis Only). Students who do not meet these conditions are ineligible for enrollment in ENGL 7040 and must register again for ENGL 7000, a much more expensive course. (Note also that there are limits on the number of times one may enroll in ENGL 7040, and that there are also limits on how many enrollments in ENGL 7000 can be used to constitute “full time” for federal loan purposes.)

### C. Consultations/Readers' Comments

The student should consult regularly with both the director and readers of the thesis throughout the planning and writing process. In some cases, a meeting with the entire committee may be desirable, either upon completion of the prospectus or upon completion of the first draft.

Readers and the director are responsible for providing the student with written and verbal responses to the prospectus and all drafts of the thesis that they are given. Committee members should keep one another informed of their responses.

Under no circumstances should a committee member be expected to approve, at the last minute, a thesis that she or he has not seen until the very end of the process.

### D. Thesis Defense

Once the thesis has been approved by all members of the committee, a defense is scheduled by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in English. Upon the student's satisfactory response to questions from committee members about the content and form of the thesis, examination approval sheets are signed, and, assuming that all other requirements have been fulfilled, the student is certified for graduation. The defense may be held onsite, for local students, or via Skype or some similar service, for students who cannot come to campus.

### E. Manuscript Preparation

Students are responsible for conforming to the manuscript format specified in the current "Thesis and Dissertation Manual" on the Graduate School's website. The Graduate School has very precise requirements concerning margins, grade of paper, etc. Failure to observe these regulations will result in rejection of the thesis by the Graduate School.

The English Department requires that students use MLA style for citations, documentation, and notes. Students should familiarize themselves with the guidelines presented in the current edition of the *MLA Style Manual*. If questions arise, students should consult the Graduate Coordinator.

## LITERARY STUDIES or RHETORIC

The thesis in literature or rhetoric is an essay approximately thirty to forty pages long that

- a. emerges from a review of the relevant scholarship;
- b. performs a sustained analysis of its subject; and
- c. makes a contribution to its discipline.

The 3-5-page prospectus should outline the general topic, approach, and tentative conclusions of the thesis and proposing a working bibliography.

### PROFESSIONAL WRITING THESIS

**ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS:** A student must have completed at least 6 hours at UNO in journalism or professional writing or editing courses, to be eligible to write a professional writing thesis.

The professional writing thesis should be at least 30 pages long. A 3-5-page prospectus should outline the general topic, approach, audience, and purpose. A bibliography of sources to be consulted should also be appended. (Sources may include websites, news sources, trade publications, interviews, legal documents, professional guidelines, documented industry standards and practices, style guides, and other sources appropriate to the field in which the thesis is being written.)

The professional writing thesis may be a work of nonfiction analysis, reportage, feature writing, travel writing, technical writing (such as a manual, proposal, or analysis), promotional material, or other type of writing from the field of professional writing. In any case, the student should select a topic and approach that will allow for an in-depth piece of writing appropriate to a thesis.

Students interested in a professional writing career should consider what kind of final product would be suitable for them to show prospective employers, as the purpose of a thesis is to provide not only a capstone to a program of study but also to help launch the student into a future endeavor.

### CREATIVE THESIS

**ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS:** A student must have completed at least 6 hours at UNO in creative writing courses, 3 of which must be at the 6000 level, to be eligible to write a creative thesis. At least 3 of those 6 hours should be in the genre in which the student will write the thesis.

The thesis committee shall include at least one faculty member with a doctorate in a field other than creative writing and at least one faculty member with demonstrated expertise in writing the selected genre.

A detailed statement and analysis describing influences (authors, schools, specific works), the student's intent, choices made regarding structure of text, point of view, style, narrative sequence and/or the revision processes involved must be submitted with the final draft of the manuscript.

Students writing a creative thesis may be required by their committee to complete a prospectus and first draft before the end of the preceding semester. Please consult with your thesis director for expected deadlines.

**FICTION:** A minimum of 75 pages of publishable quality, composed of a collection of short stories or a single, complete work of fiction.

A prospectus and a writing sample (about 20 pages of fiction) must be submitted to the thesis director and other committee members before such a thesis is approved.

**POETRY:** A minimum of at least 25-30 pages of poetry, of publishable quality.

A prospectus and a writing sample (5-8 poems) must be submitted to the thesis director and committee members before such a thesis is approved.

**NONFICTION:** A minimum of at least 75 pages of nonfiction, of publishable quality, composed of a collection of essays or a single, complete work of creative nonfiction.

A prospectus and a writing sample (about 20 pages of nonfiction) must be submitted to the thesis director and other committee members before such a thesis is approved.

## Appendix 4: Record of Progress in the Online M.A. Program

**Name:**

**Entered Program:**

**Date Last Adv:**

**Hours Required:** 36 (plus addtl hrs. if no BA in Engl)

\* Maximum half of courses at 5000-level

\* Must maintain 3.0 GPA

**Core = 15 hrs.      Course #                      Term                      Course Title                      Grade**

Intro GS				
Am Lit				
Brit Lit				
Rhetoric				
Prof. Writing				

**Concentration = 9hrs.**

**Field:**


**Electives = 12 hrs.**

(May include 3 hrs. of ENGL 7000, Thesis Research)


**Comprehensive Exam #1**

Field:  
Date Passed:

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**Comprehensive Exam #2**

Field:  
Date Passed:

**OR  
Thesis**

Prospectus  
Turned in—date:  
Committee Members  
CHAIR:  
Second Reader:  
Third Reader:

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**NOTES:**

## Appendix 5: Graduate Faculty in English and Research Areas

RANDOLPH BATES	Ph.D., Tulane University (Nonfiction, Fiction, and Poetry Writing, Modern American and British Literature)
ANNE BOYD-RIOUX	Ph.D., Purdue University (American Literature, Women's Literature, American Studies)
EARLE V. BRYANT	Ph.D., Harvard University (African-American Literature, American Literature)
DAN DOLL	Ph.D., Purdue University (Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature)
NANCY LINCOLN EASTERLIN	Ph.D., Temple University (British Romanticism, Prose Fiction, Literary Criticism and Theory)
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