

# English - Literature Option, M.A.

## DEPARTMENT

MA in English - Literature Option, M.A.  
MFA in Creative Writing, M.F.A.  
MN in Creative Writing, Minor  
MA in English-Rhetoric and Writing Studies Option, M.A.  
BA in English - Creative Writing Option, B.A.  
MN in Literature of Diversity, Minor  
BA in English - Literature Option, B.A.  
BA in English Studies, B.A.  
MN in English Literature, Minor  
CERT in Composition, Certificate of Adv. Study  
CRED in Single Subject Credential - English

## REQUIREMENTS

Department of English

### Master of Arts Degree Requirements

#### Literature Option

The Master of Arts program in English, Literature Option, serves several categories of students: those teaching high school and community college, those anticipating doctoral studies, those studying creative or expository writing, and those simply interested in extending and intensifying the knowledge acquired in their undergraduate studies.

#### Admission

Admission to the Master of Arts program in English assumes preparation equivalent to an undergraduate major in English or a related field in the liberal arts. Students who do not already have a bachelor's degree in English will need to take 16 units of upper-division undergraduate preparation in order to attain classified standing and before being allowed to enroll in English graduate seminars. These courses are prerequisites and will not count toward the 30 units of the M.A. Such students must successfully complete the following prerequisite courses:

1. ENGL 105, Introduction to Literary Analysis
2. British Literature: One of ENGL 146, 147, 150, 151, 152, or 156
3. American Literature: One of ENGL 153, 154, or 155
4. World Literature: One of ENGL 112, 113, 114, or 167

In lieu of meeting the above undergraduate course requirements for classified standing, students may take the Subject Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and submit a score above the 50th percentile. A GRE score in literature is not required for admissions into the program, but is recommended for students intending to pursue a doctorate.

To achieve classified standing, both English and non-English majors must have achieved a GPA of 3.0 or better in their major. International students must also submit IELTS or TOEFL scores. A minimum Band 7 score is required on the IELTS; minimum Band scores of 7 are also required in the Writing and Reading subsections. A minimum overall TOEFL score of 94 is required; minimum scores of 22 in the Reading subsection and 24 in the Writing subsection are also required.

In addition, all candidates must submit a writing sample to the graduate committee, whose approval is necessary for admission to the program. This writing sample is due to the department by April 15 for admission the following fall semester, or by Oct. 15 for admission the following spring. Applicants are encouraged to apply as early in the previous semester as possible for eligibility for Admissions, Financial Aid, and Teaching Associateships.

The admission writing sample should be devoted to a sustained analysis (8-12 pages in length) of a text or related texts; it should demonstrate comprehensibility in exposition, clear and logical organization and presentation of ideas, and should establish a sound scholarly argument with thorough and complete documentation. The critical analysis should be modeled on MLA style guidelines and will reflect a knowledge and awareness of contemporary analytical theory in literary studies.

The admission writing sample will be evaluated by members of the English Department to determine whether the applicant is denied entry into the M.A. program or admitted under either Classified or Conditionally Classified Standing. After understanding suggested coursework and obtaining no less than a B in such course(s), those admitted under Conditionally Classified Standing will be given one opportunity to submit one additional revised or new writing sample for review. If the second writing sample is not approved, the candidate will not be admitted into the program.

### Requirements

The M.A. in English, Literature Option is a 32-unit program, divided among core requirements and electives. Under the direction of a graduate coordinator, each student prepares and submits a coherent program, individually designed within the following framework:

#### Core Requirements

ENGL 205 (4 units)

ENGL 250T and/or 280T (12 units)

ENGL 299 (Thesis) (4 units)

Approved electives in English or other fields (see Specific Requirements) (12 units)

#### Total (32 units)

ENGL 205 should be completed during the first year of a student's program of study. The maximum number of combined ENGL 290 and 291 units that may be applied to a student's program is 4 units. Students will usually enroll in ENGL 299 (2 units each) over two consecutive semesters.

### Specific Requirements

**Breadth Requirements:** The following breadth requirements provide the necessary foundation for advanced literary study. They may be completed either at the undergraduate or graduate level:

- Chaucer (one course)
- Shakespeare (one course)
- British Literature (two additional courses)
- American Literature (one course)
- World Literature (one course)

Most core courses must be completed in the English Department; however, electives may be selected from outside departments in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator. Of the 30 units required for completion of the M.A. degree in English, Literature Option, no more than 8 units may be from undergraduate, upper-division courses. Undergraduate, upper-division courses that do not count towards the English major may not be used for the M.A. degree.

**Foreign Language Requirement:** The English Department requires candidates for the M.A. in English, Literature Option to demonstrate a reading knowledge of one foreign language. This requirement can be satisfied at the undergraduate or graduate level through two years (four semesters) of coursework in a modern language other than English, one year (two semesters) of coursework in classical languages, or by taking a translation examination approved by the English Department. Students must satisfy this requirement prior to advancing to candidacy.

**Graduate Writing Skills Requirement:** The university mandates that M.A. candidates demonstrate the ability to write "commensurate with society's expectations of persons who hold advanced degrees" and "in formats and styles appropriate to their disciplines." In order to comply with this requirement, the department evaluates a sample essay that emerges from work in a graduate seminar. Evaluation can occur at any point once the program has begun; it must be met before the candidate can advance to candidacy and thus qualify to write a culminating project. Students must satisfy this requirement prior to advancing to candidacy.

Consult the English Department's graduate coordinator every semester for program planning.

## FACULTY

The English Department consists of 26 full-time faculty whose teaching fields cover every area of literary studies and the humanities, including film and folklore. Most of the faculty have published books, textbooks, and articles in their disciplines, five have received outstanding teaching awards at the university, and one has received an outstanding teaching award for the entire CSU system. In addition, the faculty includes a number of lecturers, part-time instructors and teaching assistants, and the department operates an English writing lab staffed by tutors trained to work with students on an individual basis.

For faculty phone numbers and e-mail, see the campus directory.

For more on the faculty, see the faculty pages.

The faculty pages are updated by the department or program.