

Degree Requirements

These vary somewhat according to the option chosen (see below), but in general the MA program involves 30-33 credit hours of course work (at least 24 of which must be at the graduate level: courses numbered 700 or above; no more than two courses numbered from 600-699), demonstrated competency in the reading of one foreign language, and successful performance on a comprehensive examination. Coursework must also include English 700, Bibliography and Methods of Research. Furthermore, students who did not take "History of the English Language" (ENG 415 or 615) as an undergraduate must include it in their graduate degree program. A master's thesis, which carries six credits, is optional. Nine credits of the course work must be in literary periods before 1800, nine credits in literary periods after 1800, and the remainder of the credits may be in any period. Students may emphasize literary study or language study in their degree programs. A Thesis is optional but recommended. A foreign language translation exam (or equivalent) must also be passed.

Literature Option

Courses must be distributed as follows:

- Three courses (9 credits) in literature written before 1800
- Three courses (9 credits) in literature written after 1800
- English 700, Bibliography and Methods of Research
- Three additional courses (9 credits) in any period; or, if the thesis option is chosen, six credits in theses and one additional course (3 credits) in any period.

Language/Composition Theory Option

Courses must be distributed as follows:

- Four courses (12 credits) of language/composition theory courses chosen from 611, 612, 614, 616, 617, 619, 622, 701, 702, 711, 712, 719, 792, and 797
- Three courses (9 credits) of graduate-level literature courses in any period.
- ENG 700, Bibliography and Methods of Research or ENG 704, Theory and Practice of Textual Editing
- Six credits of thesis

English 791

English 791, "Teaching College Language and Literature," is a required course for all MA candidates awarded a Graduate Assistantship. However, this course does not count toward the 30 credits needed for the MA degree.

Admission Requirements

The Deadline for submitting applications is November 1st for spring admissions and February 15th for fall admission. The following are minimum requirements for admission to the program:

- BA or BS degree from an accredited institution, with an undergraduate GPA of 2.75. (NOTE: If the overall GPA is less than 2.75, then the GPA for the final 60 credits alone must be 3.0.)
- Students need not have been English majors, but must have a minimum of 21 semester credits in English courses above and beyond the freshman composition level, with a generally superior performance in these classes.
- Scores of 50th percentile on the General Verbal Tests and 25th percentile on the Advanced Literature Test of the Graduate Record Examination.
- Two letters of recommendation from professors familiar with the student's academic work on their letterhead stationary, send directly to the English Department.

Two sets of transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. One set is to be sent to the Graduate College, while the other goes directly to the English Department. Application deadlines for all programs are November 1 (spring) and February 15 (fall). The MFA program does not admit students in the spring.

The Thesis

A master's thesis, which carries six credits, is optional but recommended for all MA candidates. It is normally written during two consecutive semesters and must conform to the guidelines set forth by the Graduate College Catalog (<http://www.unlv.edu/pubs/catalogs/graduate/>) and the Graduate College's Thesis and Dissertation Manual (see http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/PDF_Docs/t&dmanual.pdf). The MA thesis should be an original contribution to knowledge about a suitable literary or linguistic subject and comprise about seventy-five pages. Thesis projects must be designed, developed, and written in close consultation with an appropriate thesis advisor and with the student's thesis committee.

Final Comprehensive Examination

A Final Examination is required of all MA students in all options. Candidates will prepare a reading list for the examination with the supervision and approval of their Faculty advisor and Examination Committee.

After no more than fifteen credits completed, students should choose an examination committee composed of three faculty members, one of whom is designated as Chair. The student should also choose one member of the graduate faculty outside the English department as the Graduate Faculty Representative to the Committee. Student and/or the Chair of the student's committee should contact this person. Students should obtain required signatures of all faculty members on the Appointment of Advisory Committee Approval Form signifying their willingness to serve on the committee. All necessary forms may be downloaded from the Graduate College Website.

The student should present to his/her committee a reading list composed of the works of twenty authors; at least seventeen of those authors should be chosen from a master list that can be found on the English Department Website. Works of three other authors that are not on the master list may also be chosen for the exam.

The student should arrange with one of the Departmental administrative assistants for a room in which the exam may be administered. (FDH 608 is often available for this purpose if scheduled far enough in advance.) If the student is taking an oral exam, she or he should confirm that all members of the Committee are free to attend the exam at the scheduled time.

The MA Exam is normally taken in the last semester of the student's Master's program. It may be either a three-hour written exam or a 60-90-minute oral exam over the reading list. The exam cannot be taken in the semester the committee is formed, and students must pass their exams before they may defend their theses. If taken during the semester of graduation, the exam must be scheduled no later than three weeks before the end of classes (the Graduate College designates deadline dates for each semester; see <http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/>). Many weeks should be allotted to preparation.

The student should bring the required paperwork to the exam, which can be downloaded from the Graduate College website so that committee members may sign the required forms. The Exam should be graded either "Pass" or "Fail." A grade of "Honors" is sometimes awarded; there is no place on the paperwork for this grade but the Chair of the student's committee may write him or her a letter stating that the Committee regarded the student's work of "Honors" quality. If the examination is judged a "failure," it may be retaken one time only. Either the written or oral format may be chosen when the exam is retaken. The Chair of the Examining Committee sends to

the Director of Graduate Studies a brief assessment (200 words; more if so desired) of the student's performance on the exam.

Committee members should communicate directly with one another as well as with the student during the preparation period. The full committee must be present at the exam. The committee chair brings the Final Examination for Advanced Degree Form to the exam, and when the exam is over and the student has left the room, the committee members evaluate the student's performance and sign the examination form. The committee chair then gives the signed form to the Graduate Coordinator.

For the written exam, committee members submit questions pertaining to the reading list to the committee chair for consideration. (Sample exams are available for consultation by committee members and students). The chair, with the assistance of the other committee members, uses these questions to develop an appropriate exam. The chair circulates the completed exam, along with the Final Examination for Advanced Degree Form, to the other members for evaluation. Each member reads the exam and signs the form. The committee chair then gives the form and the exam to the Graduate Coordinator.

Because the exam is at the graduate level, the questions will relate not just to the content of the readings but to the relevance of their historical periods, their genres, and their textual, literary-critical and theoretical dimensions. Together with the student, committees should work out some possible approaches to the readings and possible questions, developing a sense, through practice questions or otherwise, of what makes an appropriate answer.

The reading list forms the basis of the exam, and the selections should recognize diversity of genre, gender, culture, and period.

An example MA Exam Reading List follows:

BRITISH

1. CHAUCER: "General Prologue," "Miller's Prologue and Tale," "Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale" from *The Canterbury Tales*
2. SPENSER: *The Faerie Queene*, Books 1 and 3
3. SHAKESPEARE: *King Lear*
4. MILTON: *Paradise Lost*
5. POPE: "Eloisa to Abelard," "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," "An Essay on Criticism," "An Essay on Man," "The Rape of the Lock"

6. FIELDING: Tom Jones
7. KEATS: "La Belle Dame sans Merci," "The Eve of St. Agnes," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode on Melancholy," "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode to Psyche," "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer," "To Autumn"
8. AUSTEN: Pride and Prejudice
9. DICKENS: Bleak House
10. YEATS: "Adam's Curse," "Among School Children," "Byzantium," "Easter 1916," "The Lake Isle at Innisfree," "Leda and the Swan," "Sailing to Byzantium," "The Second Coming," "September 1913," "Under Ben Bulbin," "The Wild Swans at Coole"
11. JOYCE: Ulysses
12. WOOLF: To the Lighthouse, A Room of One's Own

AMERICAN

1. HAWTHORNE: The Scarlet Letter
2. TWAIN: Huckleberry Finn
3. DICKINSON: Selected poems (10 or so from e.g., 67, 89, 130, 131, 185, 198, 199, 214, 216, 249, 250, 258, 268, 280, 283, 301, 303, 305, 307, 308, 311, 321, 324, 327, 338, 341, 435, 441, 442, 448, 501, 512, 657, 709, 754, 883, 1072, 1129, 1138, 1445, 1545, 1651, 1732, 1737, 1755 [numbers from Johnson edition])
4. ELIOT: Four Quartets
5. FAULKNER: The Sound and the Fury
6. FROST: "After Apple Picking," "Birches," "Home Burial," "Mending Wall," "Once by the Pacific," "Out, Out," "The Oven Bird," "The Road Not Taken," "The Silken Tent," "Stopping by Woods"
7. BALDWIN: Go Tell It on the Mountain
8. KINGSTON: The Woman Warrior