

ENGLISH, MA

English MA Overview

The department offers programs leading to the Master of Arts in English, including an MA in English with a focused area of study in Renaissance Studies (Hudson Strode Program) and an MA in English with a focused area of study in Composition, Rhetoric, and English Studies (CRES).

Department faculty mentor students at all stages of their graduate experience, from coursework to teaching, from examinations to the writing of master's theses.

Graduate students in our Department not only have the opportunity to learn in an engaging environment but also to teach with steady training and mentorship. In their first year, most literature students teach in collaboration with a professor, leading discussion sections attached to large lecture literature classes. In their second year, students gain valuable classroom experience in composition classes.

Our program's scholarly and pedagogical preparation, as well as our detailed attention to professional placement, has enabled students to develop careers as teachers, scholars, publishers, and editors.

Admissions

While new applications to our graduate programs will continue to be read until admissions decisions have been made, the application deadline for best consideration for all funding opportunities is December 1.

Application to all graduate programs offered by the English Department is made through the University of Alabama Graduate School online application. Please note that the policies, procedures, and requirements listed below in some cases supersede or are more specific than the Graduate School's policies. Please follow the steps below to ensure a complete application:

- In the online application form all applicants must enter one of the following for the "Specialty Area" field: "Literature," "Renaissance," "Prose," "Poetry," "Prose & Poetry,"
- Upload the following supporting documents/information:
 - Statement of Purpose (the first line should mention the desired Specialty Area in the English Department). The Statement of Purpose describes your main research interests. Effective statements avoid generalizations and developmental narratives. Instead, they identify where you are with your work now and where you want to go. It can help to address the relationship between your writing sample and your research interests; and to connect your work to the faculty in the department. 500-750 words is usually right; just don't go over 1000.
 - Writing Sample:
 - This should consist of 10-20 pages of critical writing for the MA. The writing sample is usually a single essay written for an upper-level English course or an excerpt from a senior or honor's thesis. A strong essay positions your argument in relation to other scholars in the field.
 - For the **Strode Program**, the writing sample should be on some aspect of English Renaissance literature.
 - Names and institutional email addresses of three (3) referees who will submit letters of recommendation online via a link that will be sent to recommenders directly by the Graduate School. Please note that neither the Graduate School nor the Department of English can accept letters via Parchment.

- Unofficial transcripts from each institution of higher education at which you have completed 15 or more credit hours. Accepted applicants will be required to furnish official transcripts prior to enrolling.
- For second language speakers of English applying to the MA program, one of the following minimum language test scores is required. Note that this departmental requirement is more stringent than the Graduate School's requirement.
 - TOEFL IBT = 100
 - IELTS = 7
 - Pearson Test of English (PTE) = 68
 - DuoLingo English Test (DET) = 120

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Curricular Requirements

With the exception of students admitted into the master's program to pursue a Focused Area of Study in Renaissance Studies; Composition, Rhetoric, and English Studies; or Applied Linguistics /TESOL (requirements for those programs follow), all candidates for the master's degree are required to take a total of 30 graduate semester credits (or a total of 32 credits if the student completes the teaching practicum EN 533) including the following:

Code and Title	Hours
Bibliography and Research	
EN 537 Intro to Grad Studies ¹	3
Critical Theory	
Select one of the following (or petition the DGS to fulfill this requirement with an alternative theory course):	3
EN 535 Literary Criticism	
EN 635 Literary Criticism	
Composition Pedagogy	
EN 533 Practicum Tchg College English	2
Electives	
All master's students must take at least three courses at the 600 level. The sample courses listed below does not represent an exhaustive list.	18
EN 637 Workshop In Academic Writing	
EN 639 Topics Rhetoric Composition	
EN 640 Spec Topics Sem American Lit	
EN 647 Seminar Southern Literature	
EN 648 Seminar African-American Lit	
EN 652 Composition Theory	
EN 663 Sem Renaissance Lit I	
EN 664 Sem Renaissance Lit II	
EN 668 Sem Renaissance Lit III	
EN 674 Sem 18th Century Literature	
EN 685 Seminar Victorian Literature	
EN 690 Modern British Literature	
Plans	
Select one of the following plans:	6
Plan I	

Thesis hours	
Plan II	
6 credits of electives	
Total Hours	32

Footnotes

¹ which is normally offered every fall and which students are encouraged to take in their first semester, for maximum benefit

Students not writing the thesis (Plan II) will take 6 credits of electives to acquire the 30 graduate semester credits for completion. Students writing a thesis (Plan I) will take 6 thesis hours. EN 533 Practicum Tchg College English and FWP orientation are conditions of employment for all graduate students who are teachers of record for EN 1xx courses. All courses are repeatable for credit if/when the topic or the instructor changes.

Additional information is in the Degree Requirements section of this catalog for all programs in the Department of English.

Plan II (non-thesis plan) students must complete at least 30 graduate semester hours of coursework in English. At least three of these courses must be at the 600 level. See the course requirements for all master's students cited above. During the fourth semester of the program, students must pass a written comprehensive examination as their "capstone experience." See details above.

Degree requirements for the MA in English with a Focused Area of Study in Renaissance Studies

Students admitted as candidates for the master of arts in English with a focused area of study in Renaissance studies are required to take the following:

Code and Title	Hours
Bibliography and research	
EN 537 Intro to Grad Studies	3
Critical theory	
Select three hours (or petition the Strode director to fulfill this requirement with an alternative theory course):	3
EN 535 Literary Criticism	
EN 635 Literary Criticism	
Medieval literature	
Select three hours	3
EN 662 Middle English Lit Ex Chaucer	
Renaissance literature	
Select six hours	6
EN 663 Sem Renaissance Lit I	
EN 664 Sem Renaissance Lit II	
EN 668 Sem Renaissance Lit III	
Shakespeare in Performance Practicum (a course offered every other spring, in years when there is not a Strode seminar)	
EN 667 Shakespeare Performance	3
Strode Seminar	
EN 669 The Strode Seminar	3
Interdisciplinary coursework	
Select three hours (subject to the approval of the Strode Director)	3

Composition pedagogy

EN 533 Practicum Tchg College English	2
Select Plan I (6 thesis hours) or Plan II (6 hours of electives)	6
Total Hours	32

Each student pursuing this focused area of study must also take 3 courses at the 600 level. A student writing a thesis (Plan I) will take 6 thesis hours (EN 599) and in consultation with the director of the Strode Program, drop 3 hours of coursework from his or her Renaissance focused area of study. EN 533 and FWP orientation are conditions of employment for all graduate students who are teachers of record for EN 1xx courses.

Degree requirements for the MA in English with a Focused Area of Study in Composition, Rhetoric, and English Studies (CRES)

The CRES MA specialization requires 30 graduate hours of coursework consisting of 12 hours in CRES core courses, 15 hours in approved general electives, and 3 hours in linguistics. For graduate teaching assistants, 2 additional hours in EN 533 are required.

A student writing a thesis (Plan I) will take 6 thesis hours (EN 599) and in consultation with the CRES coordinator, drop 6 hours from the focused area of study. A student not writing a thesis (Plan II) will satisfy the graduation requirement by completing an oral defense of a capstone paper.

Code and Title	Hours
Select twelve hours from CRES core	12
Bibliography and research	
EN 537 Intro to Grad Studies	
EN 653 Research Methodology	
Teaching	
EN 652 Composition Theory	
History and Theory of composition-rhetoric	
EN 532 Approach Teach Composition	
EN 638 Sem Rhetoric & Composition	
EN 651 Politics of Teaching Writing	
EN 658 History of Rhet/Comp II	
Digital humanities	
EN 512 Computers And Writing	
EN 654 Sem Visual & Digital Rhetoric	
Linguistics	
EN 620 Descriptive Linguistics (or other linguistics)	3
General electives	
Select 15 hours	15
Teaching Practicum	
EN 533 Practicum Tchg College English	2
Total Hours	32

EN 533 and FWP orientation are conditions of employment for all graduate students who are teachers of record for EN 1xx courses. A student writing a thesis (Plan I) will take 6 thesis hours (EN 599) and in consultation with the field advisor, drop 6 hours from her or his focused area of study. A student not writing a thesis (Plan II) will satisfy the

graduation requirement by completing an oral defense of a capstone paper.

Foreign language requirement. A reading knowledge of one foreign language is required. The foreign language requirement may be satisfied by one of the following:

- the certification through the appropriate department of a "B" average or the equivalent of two years of undergraduate-level study in a single foreign language, completed within five years of admission to the master's program; or
- proof of advanced proficiency in the form of an undergraduate major in a foreign language OR the certification of at least a "B" in two advanced literature courses (300-level or higher) taught in the foreign language, completed within five years of admission to the master's program, or
- passing the foreign language reading examination prepared by the Department of Modern Languages and Classics.

Students who are not native speakers of English may use their native language to fulfill this requirement. Students may petition their program director and/or the Graduate Studies Director for exceptions to these guidelines.

Transfer Credit

Graduate School Information on Transfer Credit.

Accelerated Master's Program

Graduate School information on the Accelerated Master's Program.

Comprehensive Exams

Master's comprehensive written exam. The master's comprehensive written exam is designed to be a "capstone experience" for students admitted as candidates for the master of arts in English, including those students pursuing a focused area of study in Renaissance studies but excluding CRES students. During the third semester of the program (fall semester of the second year), each student must propose four questions based on his or her coursework, along with a list of courses taken and papers written for them, to the MA Exam Committee. The committee, composed of the Graduate Faculty, will require the student to complete any necessary revisions to the questions by early January. The exam will be scheduled immediately after spring break in the student's final semester of the program. The student will choose two of the four questions and devote one and a half hours to each question. Exams will be expected to display a fluent and grammatically correct prose, organizational cogency making for clarity of presentation, an ability to analyze texts impressively, and a certain conceptual sophistication in framing arguments. The exams will be graded as Distinction, Pass, or Fail. A student will be allowed to retake the exam before the end of the semester in the event of a failure.

Practicum Requirements

Students with teaching assistantships must take the summer orientation before their first semester of service in addition to the practicum courses EN 533 Practicum Tchg College English during the year in which they begin teaching. All courses are repeatable for credit if/when the topic or the instructor changes.

Plan I - Thesis Process Requirements

Plan I (thesis plan) students must complete at least 24 graduate semester hours of coursework in English in addition to writing the thesis,

which must be a historical, critical, or otherwise analytical treatise. Thesis-plan students must take 6 semester hours of thesis research (EN 599 Thesis Research) in addition to their 24 hours of coursework for a total of at least 30 hours. At least three of these courses must be at the 600 level. For additional information regarding the master's thesis in English, visit the departmental website and contact the director of graduate studies in the English department.

Plan II - Non-Thesis Process Requirements

Plan II (non-thesis plan) students must complete at least 30 graduate semester hours of coursework in English. At least three of these courses must be at the 600 level. See the course requirements for all master's students cited above. During the fourth semester of the program, students must pass a written comprehensive examination as their "capstone experience." See details above.

Time Limits for Degree Completion Requirements

Graduate School information on Time Limits.

Academic Misconduct Information

Graduate School information on Academic Misconduct.

Withdrawals and Leave of Absence Information

Graduate School information on Withdrawals and Leave of Absence.

Academic Grievances Information

Graduate School information on Academic Grievances.

Grades and Academic Standing

Graduate School information on Grades and Academic Standing.

Graduate School Deadlines Information

Information on Graduate School Deadlines.

Application for Graduation Information

Information on the Application for Graduation.

Students admitted to the graduate program are guaranteed up to five years of full financial support (up to four years for the MFA; up to two years for the MA). All admitted students qualify for Graduate Assistantships, which include a stipend paid over nine months, and full payment of up to 15 credit hours of graduate tuition. Individual programs additionally offer one-time or ongoing stipend enhancements from our Capote, Loomis, and Harrison funds, and there are a variety of additional fellowship opportunities as well.

For information regarding current Graduate School policy on Graduate Assistant health coverage, please consult the Graduate School directly. The Graduate School will provide single-coverage health insurance for each qualified assistantship, based on the FTE (Full-Time Equivalency, or number of assigned work hours) of the appointment.

Graduate Assistantships

First-year Graduate Assistants with fewer than 18 hours of prior graduate coursework in English will be assigned to work in the Writing Center, serve under the supervision of a faculty member as small section discussion

leaders for 200-level literature lecture courses, or be assigned other duties as appropriate.

In the second year and beyond, Graduate Assistants usually teach two courses of first-year writing per semester. In this first year of teaching, GAs receive ongoing training and support from the department's composition specialists. Later, GAs are eligible to request other appropriate teaching opportunities, such as literature surveys, advanced composition courses, and creative writing courses.

Fellowships and Awards

New and returning graduate students are also eligible for awards other than assistantships, including

- Graduate Council Fellowships
- Dean's Graduate Recruiting and Opportunity Awards (renewable for a total of three years)
- McNair Graduate Fellowships (
- National Alumni Association Fellowships
- Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Doctoral Scholarships
- Alumni Heritage Scholarships

There are no separate application processes for these awards; all eligible students receive consideration. More information is here. Other awards, fellowships, special positions, and grants include

- Excellence in Teaching Awards – Open to all MA, MFA, and PhD students who have taught at least 2 semesters
- Excellence in Research Awards – Open to all graduate students
- Outstanding Service Awards – Open to all graduate students
- Buford Boone Fellowships – Open to all MA and PhD students
- Harrison Fellowships – Open to all MA and PhD students
- Truman Capote Fellowships (the number and value of these awards vary each year) – Open to MFA students
- Prison Arts Fellowships – Open to MFA students
- Black Warrior Review editorial positions – Open to MFA students

Research and Travel Funding

The department has use of the Henry E. Jacobs Fund and the Miriam Locke Scholarship to help with graduate student research and conference travel expenses. The Graduate School and the College of Arts & Sciences also offer significant assistance with research and travel costs. The Student Government Association and the department's own English Graduate Organization (EGO) are additional sources of research and travel funding, along with the Capstone International Center, which allocates funding for international research and travel.

Additional Information

More information about Strode Program funding is here.

More information about MFA Program funding is here.